

Not Every One
(Part Four)

Third, you must enter this gate alone. The gate is narrow and there's only room for one person at a time to go through the gate. You must go through yourself – alone. This is not a collective experience. This is not a collective experience like joining a religion or joining a church. You must come all alone. It is intensely personal.

In Luke chapter fourteen and verse 26 Jesus said, “If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.” Hate in this verse does not imply malice or ill will toward one's family, but it means that devotion to family must take second place to one's devotion to Christ. All human relationships have to be set aside no matter how important they are, no matter how critical they are, and no matter how normal and natural they are. All your life you have run with the crowd. All your life doing what everybody else did. Now no one can help you, no one can go with you. You must do this alone. You must enter alone.

Fourth, you must enter the gate alone and with difficulty. Notice what verse 14 says, “Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Jesus said in Luke chapter 13 and verse 24, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” The implication in both Matthew and Luke is that entering the gate is not easy, it comes with many difficulties.

It is hard to find. In fact, verse 14 says, “few there be that find it.” It grieves me deeply that people try to make this easy. This is not easy. This is not an easy decision. The religious broad way is easy, “and many there be which go in thereat.” The religious broad way says it leads to heaven, but it leads to hell.

Jesus said nothing about the ease of entering. He made it very difficult for all who came in contact with Him. He said, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate.” The word “strive” means “to agonize.” Jesus went on to say in the same verse, “for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” This is amazing. This statement is absolutely amazing.

For all those who enter there is an agonizing. As your flesh hangs onto your sin, hangs onto your pride, and hangs onto your worldliness, it's difficult. So this gate is only entered by the serious and the zealous and the wholehearted and the desperate.

Jesus said, “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:10-14).

Now verse 9 of Luke 18 tells us that Jesus “spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.”

Scripture: Matthew 7:21-23

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