

Narrow Gate

Matthew 7:13 – 14 “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

- Context
 - This follows a concluding statement (12), so (13) appears to be the beginning of a new thought.
 - (15 – 20) Beware of false prophets. “By their fruits you shall know them.” Be careful whom you follow. So, the broad way is likely the path recommended by the bad leader.
 - (21 – 23) Performing religious activities, even miracles, is not the benchmark, but rather practicing righteousness.
 - (24 – 27) Hearing but not doing is foolish.
- The “narrow gate” concept may be applied to:
 - The (13 – 14) statement may be taken generically and applied to the population of the world.
 - Jesus’ first example (15 – 20) warns those who think they are entering by the narrow gate to be cautious in choosing a leader.
 - Jesus’ second example (21 – 23) warns those who think they are entering by the narrow gate to think broader than religious activities.
 - Jesus’ third example (24 – 27) warns those who think they are on the narrow road that hearing Jesus’ words but doing nothing about it is foolish.

Narrow Gate

Luke 13:23 – 25 Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and he will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from,’”

- Context
 - This is the beginning of a new thought
 - (24 – 25) The “narrow gate” enters into salvation (23).
 - (24) Some will seek to enter and be unable. “Unable” is not explained.
 - (25) Some will come too late. “Too late” is not explained.
 - (26 – 27) Association with Jesus is not sufficient. One must turn from iniquity.
 - (28) Being associated with Israelite history, the audience would be particularly sad to not have been able to join the faithful patriarchs. Note “thrust out.”
 - (29) People from all over the world will participate. The audience may have been thinking that this included the Diaspora, but Jesus probably meant the worldwide collection of believers.
 - (30) Those who are accepted will be a surprise to many, especially to those who thought they would be accepted but were not.
- The “narrow gate” concept may be applied to
 - (24) Focus on the fact that the gate is narrow, not on how much traffic there will be.
 - (25) Procrastination will be a major problem.
 - (26 – 27) Association is not the point.
 - (28) Being part of the right group is not the point.
 - (29) The target audience is bigger than you think.
 - (30) The evaluation criteria may be different than you think.