

- I) V22-30 INTRO: And He went through the cities and villages, teaching and journeying toward
 - a) Jesus is slowly making His way to the city of Jerusalem, teaching and preaching as he went
 - 1) Obviously this was what He had been doing consistently for three years
 - 2) Lu 4:43-44 He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent". And He was *preaching in the synagogues of Galilee*.
 - 3) Mt 9:35 Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

- II) AS HE WAS JOURNEYING TOWARDS JERUSALEM: Somebody listening to Him asked a question
 - a) V23 Lord, are there few who are saved?
 - 1) I wonder if this is a sincere question: I suspect that it was not

- III) DURING THIS TIME: It was a widely held belief that all Israel would be saved
 - a) The Rabbis taught All Israelites have a share in the world to come for it is written Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands that I may be glorified (Is 60:21)
 - 1) They took this to mean that all Israel was automatically saved

- IV) JOHN THE BAPTIST: Had spoken against this mentality
 - a) He made it clear that salvation was not automatic, based on national identity
 - 1) Lu 3:8 Bear fruits worthy of *repentance*, and do not begin to say to yourselves, We have Abraham as our father. For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

- V) LATER: The apostle Paul would echo this teaching
 - a) Ro 2:28-29 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God
 - 1) KEY: Those listening thought Jesus would say all Jews went to heaven

- VI) V23-24 AND: He said to them strive to enter through the narrow gate for many I say to you
 - a) STRIVE: ag-o-nid'-zom-ahee: to enter a contest: to contend with adversaries, fight
 - 1) This word speaks of agonizing, and is the picture of a wrestling match; a fierce struggle
 - 2) It speaks of fully exerting yourself; straining every muscle in the struggle with your opponent

- VII) IMPORTANT: This is not saying that salvation is something you earn
 - a) Salvation is not the product of human effort or self-produced righteousness
 - 1) Salvation is through the grace of God, and not by human exertion or good works
 - 2) Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*
 - 3) Ro 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

- VIII) SO: What does Jesus mean when He says to strive to enter through the narrow gate?
 - a) Entering in to heaven should be done with determination, anticipating opposition
 - 1) The world, Satan, and our own flesh are opponents and the struggle is lasting, and fierce
 - 2) 1 Co 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*.

- I) NOTICE: We enter through the *narrow gate*
 - a) The Kingdom is not for those who are indifferent and apathetic
 - 1) More people look for an easy path, one of less demand and sacrifice
 - 2) THE FACT IS: Few see the value of seeking the Kingdom of God
 - 3) Job 21:15 Who *is* the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?'

- II) THE CHURCH: Is filled with those who are simply curious about religion, or even Jesus
 - a) They are interested in learning about Him, but not to the point of a fully committed life
 - 1) They are willing listen, but are not willing to forsake all and follow Him
 - 2) BARNA: Many people claiming to be Christians live lives indistinguishable from non-Christians

- III) IT HAS BEEN SAID: People living in the '50's were moral than the church today
 - a) I happen to think there is some truth in that
 - 1) THE REASON: They do not live like Jesus because they do not *think* like Jesus

- IV) KEY: Simply listening and agreeing does not constitute discipleship
 - a) You must do more than simply hear, you must submit to Him and follow Him carefully
 - 1) We must avoid an intellectual Christianity that stays in our head but does not work in life
 - 2) THE GATE: Is narrow, so you must squeeze through with humility

- V) V24 FOR MANY: I say to you will seek to enter and will not be able
 - a) It almost seems absurd to believe that there is only one way to enter heaven
 - 1) STILL: Jesus makes it clear that many will seek to enter in, and not be able to
 - 2) This is what has fueled missions/evangelism for centuries

- VI) KEY: Due to your presumption, you will assume that you can automatically enter in but are wrong
 - a) You are blessed to be Jewish, and have had tremendous privileges and blessings
 - 1) Ro 9:2 (You) are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen
 - 3) BUT: You still need to repent, and personally recognize Jesus as Messiah or are lost

- VII) V25 WHEN: Once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door and you begin to stand
 - a) The gate is open right now, but does not remain open after you die
 - 1) That is when the door will be finally and completely shut, and you cannot enter in
 - 2) Like when God closed the door of the Ark (Gen 7:16 And the Lord shut him in

- VIII) V25 YOUR RESPONSE: You begin to *stand outside* and *knock at the door* saying Lord Lord
 - a) They begin speaking to Jesus, calling Him Lord and saying that they had fellowship
 - 1) Lu 6:46 But why do you call Me Lord, Lord *and not do* the things which I say?
 - 2) Those who refused to strive to enter in will be left standing outside

- IX) V26-27 NOTICE: Then you will begin to say We ate and drank in Your presence and You taught
 - a) INTERESTING: It is not that they knew Him, but He says He He did not know them
 - 1) It does not matter if you say you know Him, if He says He never knew you!

- I) **V28-29 THERE:** Will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac
 - a) Abraham and his sons represent the Jewish race
 - 1) You will experience sorrow and rage when you see the redeemed in heaven

- ii) **KEY:** North, south, east and west represents the non-Jewish races that will be in heaven, also
 - a) Salvation is offered to all people, through Jesus
 - 1) Gen 28:14 Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
 - 2) Ro 9:25-26 As He says also in Hosea: I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them You are not My people, there they shall be called sons of the living God
 - 3) **SADLY:** You will be forcefully expelled, because you did not receive Messiah

- III) **V30 AND:** Indeed there are last who will be first and there are first who will be last
 - a) They believed that Jews automatically entered in, and only righteous Gentiles made it
 - 1) **POINT:** Everyone responding to God's grace finishes at the same time: a dead heat
 - 2) Jews had distinct advantages that Gentiles did not have, but by grace they all enter in

- IV) **V31-33 ON:** That very day some Pharisees came saying to Him Get out and depart from here
 - a) Pharisees opposed Jesus: He had already made enemies of them through His teaching
 - 1) Lu 11:53-54 The scribes and Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently and to cross examine Him about many things lying in wait for Him and seeking to catch Him in something He might say that they might accuse Him

- V) **INTERESTING:** It appears that they are concerned for His safety, when they actually are not
 - a) Obviously, Herod is in collusion with the Pharisees to get Jesus to leave the north
 - 2) Herod ruled Galilee and Perea, and had killed John: did not want another death on his hands
 - 3) **ALSO:** The Pharisees had more pull in the south, and they desired to get Jesus to go to Judea

- VI) **V32 AND:** He said to them Go tell that fox Behold I cast out demons and perform cures
 - a) That fox: Herod is cunning, trying to frighten Jesus into leaving his territory
 - 1) Jesus was on God's timetable, and at the precise time He would achieve His goal
 - 2) Man could not manipulate Jesus to alter His pace or His plan

- VII) **V33 NEVERTHELESS:** I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following for it cannot be
 - a) A **PROVERB:** Not all prophets died in Jerusalem, as in the case of John the Baptist
 - 1) **HIS POINT:** Jewish prophets were killed by their own people, and not foreign enemies
 - 2) Instead of a holy city, Jesus spoke of it as a city that kills its own prophets

- VIII) **V34-35 O JERUSALEM JERUSALEM:** The one who kills the prophets and stones those who are
 - a) He points out that ultimately, Israel will recognize Him as its Messiah at His return
 - 1) Zec 12:10 I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.
 - 2) Rev 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.