

Sermon Series: Spurred on to Holiness (and Power) by Immersing Ourselves into the Life of Christ Through the Eyes of the Apostles – A Harmony of All Four Gospels

Sermon Title: “What Jesus says About the Two Gates and Two Roads – One to Hell, One to Heaven”.

May 5, 2019

Today’s Scripture: See insert

Theme verse: Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. (ESV)

Introduction:

Main point: Now that Jesus has fully described the true Christian life and revealed the costs of following Him, He now asks for a full surrendered commitment to follow Him.

Context:

Exegesis

1. The kind of commitment/decision Jesus requires is not the kind most churches ask for today.
 - Not a show of hands, or a walk down the aisle, or kneeling at the front of the church or filling out a card at a crusade.
 - Notice that there are no emotional pitches thrown at the audience, no manipulation as many evangelists do today.
 - It is not the kind prompted by promises of an easy life.
2. But it is still a decision of the Spirit-prompted will to surrender and follow Jesus.
 - People do not become Christians by osmosis – definition of osmosis “The gradual or unconscious assimilation of ideas or knowledge.
 - Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, (ESV)
 - Joshua 24:14–15 “Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. [15] And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” (ESV)

- John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (ESV)
3. The choice is starkly clear. *“Enter by the narrow gate. For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that is leading to destruction, and many are they who enter by it; but narrow is the gate, and difficult the way, that is leading into life, and few are they who find it.”*
 - Jesus speaks of two gates and two paths or two roads. They do not parallel one another. They go in opposite directions. One cannot drive in the median between the two and still think he will get to the right destination.
 - Jesus did not say that people must choose to enter the wide gate. That choice seems to be automatic because of people’s sinful natures and the enormous draw of the culture around us.
 - Thus all men are already on the wide road. Romans 3:15–18 “Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known.” “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (ESV)
 - It’s not like we are on I-94 eastbound and have to make a choice between 694 or 494. No, if I-94 can be an analogy for the wide road of life then everyone is on it and the exit to eternal life is like an exit ramp to Osakis then on to a dirt road to West Union.
 - And the entrance ramp to I-94 or Jesus’ analogy of the wide gate is actually birth. No one I know chose to be born, but having been born puts one on the wide road from the very start.
 4. There are many people on the road to destruction.
 - So – if popularity equals validity (as many people actually believe) then the vast numbers are a strong influence upon people to think they are O.K.
 - The more our culture says that only really evil people go to hell, and the more pastors sidestep repentance, the more who will blindly go with the crowd until they drive off a fallen bridge into the Mississippi River, like what happen on I-35 in MPLS.
 - Most of the lanes on that broad road are labeled “Religion”.
 5. But, are those people on that road totally unaware of the tiny exit off the freeway to life? Not really.
 - We know Satan has blinded the eyes of unbelievers 2 Corinthians 4:4, but isn’t there some tiny little bit of light breaking through the darkness to cause non-believers to know that it is all a mirage?
 - Is the Holy Spirit whispering to every non-believer, “Don’t listen to his lies. Don’t believe what you think you are seeing. The fancy scenery you are looking at all along the way are plastic roses. The fancy houses and hotels and resorts you are looking at as you drive by at 75 miles per hour are all false fronts like they use in Hollywood. Behind them is slums and poverty and crime.” I believe he does.

- Romans 1:19–20 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (ESV)
6. The narrow gate is Jesus and that in itself might be what makes the choice hard. *John 10:7 So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. (ESV) John 10:9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. (ESV)*
- It’s hard for proud people to bend the knee and kiss the ring of the Son, because a person has to admit his own need of a Savior.
7. The narrow gate is found by only a few. . . . *and few are they who find it.*
- What percentage of the population do you think is finding the narrow gate? Here are the numbers:¹
 - In 1970 65% of the population was classified Protestant. Today it is 35%.
 - Only 22% of the population attend church weekly and that includes all churches and cults like Mormons or JW’s
 - 36 % call themselves “born-again” Christians.
 - 24% believe the Bible is the actual word of God and should be taken literally
 - Overall, the current research revealed that only 9% of all American adults have a biblical worldview. ²

To be continued . . .

Application

Which road will your children choose? 80% of all evangelical children are choosing the wide road that leads to destruction!!!

¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1690/religion.aspx>

² <https://www.barna.com/research/barna-survey-examines-changes-in-worldview-among-christians-over-the-past-13-years/>