**FEW BE THAT FIND IT**

**INTRODUCTION**

**SCRIPTURE READING....MATTHEW 7:13-14.... 13Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:14Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

 **A. Jesus shows that there is a way that leads to life and a way**

 **that leads to destruction.**

 **1. He shows that the way to destruction is broad, and many will**

 **go into destruction by it.**

 **2. He shows that there is a narrow way that leads to life, and**

 **few find it.**

 **B. Actually, He gives two illustrations: a gate and a road.**

 **1. One gate and road is: narrow, difficult, is entered by few,**

 **and leads to life.**

 **2. The other gate and way is: wide, broad, is entered by many,**

 **and leads to destruction.**

 **C. In this lesson we will concentrate on the expression, "and**

 **there are few who find it."**

 **1. Why do only a few find the narrow way?**

**I. BECAUSE THE WAY IS STRICT, RIGOROUS AND DIFFICULT.**

 **A. The word "strait" as used in the KJV, is not the word**

 **"straight" which means without curves, crooks or bends.**

 **1. It is spelled "s-t-r-a-i-t," which means nearly the same as**

 **the word "narrow" (the second word used here) and means**

 **"being narrow, restricted, hemmed in, hard pressed." As**

 **Paul said, "I am in a strait betwixt the two..." Phil. 1:23**

 **2. The KJV and ASV uses the two words interchangeably. KJV**

 **says, "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way," whereas**

 **the ASV says, "narrow is the gate, and straitened the way."**

 **a. The NJKV says, "Narrow is the gate and difficult is the**

 **way."**

 **B. Our Lord's use of words shows that the way to life is hard,**

 **rigorous and difficult.**

 **1. Many people do not enter the narrow way because of the**

 **difficulty involved.**

 **a. Being a Christian is the most challenging task ever laid**

 **upon anyone. It takes all that one has, and is, to be a**

 **faithful Christ.**

 **b. It takes one's whole being.**

**Matt. 22:37**

 **2. Most people shun a difficult task.**

 **a. Moses (Ex. 4). First, he said the people will not believe**

 **or hear me. God worked two miracles and said, "If they**

 **will not harken to the first sign, they will believe when**

 **they see the second."**

 **(1) Moses then made the excuse that he could not**

 **speak. Vs. 10 Notice God's answer. Vs. 11-12**

 **b. As we know, Moses accepted God's challenge and went**

 **on to be a great leader.**

 **3. There are many examples in the Scriptures of those who**

 **courageously accepted difficult challenges.**

 **a. Abraham left the Ur of Chaldees, not knowing where**

 **God was leading him for he looked for a city which has**

 **foundations.**

**Heb. 11:8-10**

 **b. Noah was not one who shunned a difficult task. Heb.**

 **11:7**

 **c. Rahab hid the Israelite spies from the King of Jericho**

 **because she had faith in the one true God. Joshua 2:11**

 **4. We need to determine that though living the Christian life**

 **may be often difficult, we will be up to the task.**

**Luke 9:23**

 **a. Let us continually remind ourselves of the reward.**

**Rom.8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17**

**II. Another reason many do not find the narrow way is BECAUSE OF**

 **PREJUDICE.**

 **A. "Prejudice" is forming an opinion, or holding to something as**

 **true, without examining the facts.**

 **1. Isaiah the prophet condemned this frame of mind.**

**Isa. 6:9-10**

 **a. This was quoted by Jesus and applied to the people of**

 **His time.**

**Matt. 13:14-15**

 **b. They were blinded to the truth because of their**

 **preconceived ideas.**

 **(1) They were looking for a Messiah who would sit upon**

 **the literal throne of David, destroy all their**

 **enemies, and restore the kingdom to its former**

 **power and glory.**

 **(2) Jesus tried to teach them that the kingdom would**

 **be a spiritual one.**

**Luke 17:20-21**

 **(3) When Jesus did not fit into their preconceived**

 **ideas, and when He began to expose their**

 **wickedness, they hated him and set about to**

 **destroy Him.**

 **B. Prejudice did not die with the scribes and Pharisees.**

 **1. Many today have their preconceived ideas of how the**

 **religion of Christ should be.**

 **a. For example, Jesus said, "Because strait..." (vs. 14)**

 **b. However, many proclaim, "Broad is the way that leads**

 **to life, and many there be which go in thereat."**

 **(1) "We are all going to the same place, but by**

 **different ways," they say.**

 **(2) They say, "If your teaching (of the church of Christ)**

 **is right, look at how many you are saying are wrong."**

 **(3) They have pre-conceived ideas that most all religious**

 **people will be saved, for they are good moral people.**

 **2. Let us put away prejudice and simply go to the Bible with**

 **open minds in order to learn what God wants of us.**

**2 Cor.13:5; 2 Pet. 1:10**

**III. Many do not find the way that leads to life -- BECAUSE OF**

 **DECEPTION.**

 **A. There are many false prophets in the world, disguised as**

 **preachers of the gospel.**

**2 Cor. 11:13-15;**

**2 Pet. 2:1-2**

 **1. It is significant that**

**Matt. 7:15-20 follows 7:13-14.**

 **2. Many well-known denominational preachers claim there are**

 **many ways to heaven.**

 **a. Billy Graham once said, "There are many right ways to**

 **heaven, but only one wrong way." Again, the opposite is**

 **true--there are many wrong ways, but only one right**

 **way.**

 **B. No one will be excused because he has been deceived.**

 **1. The scriptures repeatedly warn against false teachers. Eph.4:14; Col. 2:18**

 **a. We are to know them by their fruits--by what they teach**

 **and do.**

 **2. The Bereans showed the right way to determine if one is**

 **teaching truth.**

**Acts 17:11**

 **a. John's exhortation --**

**1 John 4:1**

**IV. Another reason many do not find the narrow way is because they**

 **SUCCUMB TO PEER PRESSURE.**

 **A. Many succumb to the pressures of family, friends, associates,**

 **religious leaders, etc.**

 **1. The parents of the man who was born blind failed to confess**

 **Jesus because they feared their religious leaders.**

**John 9:18-22**

 **a. It was not because they did not know (they had the**

 **strong, open testimony of their own son), but because of**

 **the pressures of men they did not take advantage of an**

 **opportunity to confess our Lord.**

 **2. Many of the rulers believed on Jesus, but did not confess**

 **Him because they wanted the admiration of their fellow men.**

**John 12:42-43**

 **3. For this same reason, many did not believe at all.**

**John 5:44**

 **B. For one to be of the narrow way, he cannot allow anyone to**

 **discourage, pressure, or in any way hinder him from finding and**

 **entering it.**

 **1. He cannot submit to wishes of anyone but God.**

**Matt. 10:37;**

**Luke 14:26**

**V. Another reason many do not find the narrow way is because WE FAIL**

 **TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT IT.**

 **A. Let us considers ourselves debtors as did Paul.**

**Rom. 1:14-15**

 **B. Let us be like the early Christians.**

**Acts 8:4; 1**

**Thess. 1:8**

 **1. We need to proclaim the word at every opportunity we have.**

 **a. We should not consider it a hard task or heavy burden,**

 **but a joy and privilege.**

 **2. If more of us were diligent in proclaiming the word at every**

 **opportunity, more would find the narrow way.**

 **a. Let us, as servants of the Lord, go out into the highways**

 **and hedges and compel them to come in.**

**Luke 14:23**

 **b. Lets us always be ready to give an answer to everyone.**

**1 Pet. 3:15**

 **c. Let us maintain the attitude of the prophet Isaiah**

**(Isa.6:8)**

**and Paul**

**(1 Cor. 1:16).**

**VI. Many do not find the narrow way because they are PREOCCUPIED**

 **WITH WORLDLINESS OR MATERIALISM.**

 **A. They are like the seed which fell among the thorns.**

**Luke 8:14**

 **B. Their problem is that they lack true interest in saving their**

 **own souls.**

 **1. They don't understand the value of the soul, not even of**

 **their own.**

**Matt. 16:26**

 **2. They do not fear God. As Paul said --**

**Rom. 3:18.**

 **a. They think that God is so merciful that somehow they**

 **will get by and God will save them after all.**

 **b. They need to come to understand the true nature and**

 **character of God.**

**Rom. 11:22**

 **c. God will render vengeance on all those who do not**

 **know Him and who do not do His will.**

**2 Thess. 1:6-9**

 **C. For one to find the narrow way, he must come to have a genuine**

 **interest in saving his own soul and escaping the wrath of God.**

**1. Any who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be**

 **filled.**

**Matt. 5:6**

 **a. One must come to love the truth.**

**2 Thess. 2:10**

 **b. Those who truly want to do the will of God shall know**

 **the truth.**

**John 7:17; 8:31-32**

**Concl.**

 **A. Why do only a few find the way that leads to life?**

 **1. Because the way is strict, rigorous and difficult.**

 **2. Because many are prejudiced--blinded to the truth.**

 **3. Because many have been deceived by false teachers.**

 **4. Because they succumb to the pressures of family, friends, or**

 **religious leaders.**

 **5. Because we, as Christians, fail to tell them about the**

 **narrow way.**

 **6. Because many are so preoccupied with the affairs of this**

 **life, they have no genuine interest in saving their own**

 **souls or escaping the wrath of God.**

 **B. Remember, Jesus gave only two choices. There is no third**

 **alternative.**

 **1. You can travel the easy road where nearly everyone is**

 **traveling.**

 **a. It is unrestricted. There is room for every opinion,**

 **doctrine and practice.**

 **b. You can do whatever comes naturally--be a lover of**

 **self, enjoy the pleasures of sin.**

 **c. There is no need of learning of the true religion or**

 **practicing it.**

 **d. But rest assured and remember: this way leads to**

 **destruction, eternal damnation.**

 **2. Or, you can travel the other road where there are only a**

 **few.**

 **a. This way is strict and difficult--setting before us a**

 **great challenge.**

 **b. Its boundaries are ordained by divine revelation--the**

 **way of truth.**

 **c. It requires sacrifice, self-denial, and obedience.**

 **d. But rest assured, this way leads to eternal life.**

 **(1) Jesus is encouraging us to travel it. "Enter ye**

 **in..."**

**Matt. 7:13**

 **(2) May God help us to travel in the narrow way which**

 **leads to life.**

**Chart:**

**Why Do Few Find The Narrow Way?**

**Because it is strict, rigorous and difficult.**

**Because many are prejudiced.**

**Because they have been deceived.**

**Because they succumb to peer pressure.**

**Because we fail to teach them about it.**

**Because they have no genuine interest in their souls.**