

## **THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE DEFINED**

Our text today encompasses the last seventeen verses of the Sermon on the Mount. This message could not be more important. Although this is the last lesson from the hillside, it is certainly not the least. What we are dealing with makes the difference between salvation or reprobation; heaven or hell, life in misery or life abundantly.

In John 14:6, we read: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” In seventeen verses we see this one verse explained.

### **I. Jesus: The Way!**

In Matthew 7:13 and 14 Jesus said, “Enter 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: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

A. There is the popular way.

We hear much today about political correctness. Our Lord was not impressed by politics, nor did politicians sway him. He looked directly into the eyes of the political appointment, Pontius Pilate, just hours before His own death and said, “...thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin” (John 19:11b, c).

Most of the people are on this broad way. The majority is not always right. The popular way leads to destruction.

B. There is the restricted way.

Jesus called His way the strait way. This narrow passage representing salvation is the trajectory of the redeemed. The word “straight” has now come to mean moral restrictions, which in the believer’s worldview is actually moral excellence. The “straight” way is the “strait” way! In Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13, Jesus said, “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other....” James said, “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1:8).

C. There is a contrast of ways.

Isaiah 35:8 prophesies, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Hebrews 12:14 says, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

The consensus of opinion is that the "Jesus way" is too restricted and too hard. True, to follow God we must obey the command of Jesus who said, "...whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34b). But keep in mind, "The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Proverbs 4:19). "...The way of transgressors is hard" (Proverbs 13:15b). When John the Baptist came preaching, he came in fulfillment of Isaiah 40:4, in essence prophesying that Jesus would come and "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth" (Luke 3:5). The strait way aligns our crooked lives and makes smooth this rough path of earth for all believers. Proverbs 4:18 expresses, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Psalm 37:37: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

## **II. Jesus: The Truth!**

Matt. 7:15-20.

A. Discerning can be difficult.

Jesus gave the parable of the tares among the wheat in Matthew 13:24-30. Our Lord was illustrating that the Devil places his people in and among God's people in the church. The tare looks so much like the wheat, that you actually cannot tell which is which until it is harvest time. Farmers have said the difference in the tare and the wheat is when they are fully ripe the wheat bows its head, whereas the tare stands tall and upright. This makes the tare much easier to be identified and plucked away from the wheat. This also typifies the believer. The believer has humbled himself before the Lord, whereas the tare has never bowed in humility.

B. A lost person cannot perpetually do right.

Jesus said, "...by their fruits ye shall know them." (Matthew 7:20). A person who doesn't know Jesus will simply not have the capability to do right on a continual basis. Ephesians 2:2, 3 says, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." To the unconverted Pharisees, Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do..." (John 8:44a).

C. A saved person cannot perpetually do wrong.

In the same chapter (John 8), Jesus said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). You are free to do God’s will. You are so free, that you’ll find doing right all part of your new nature in Christ. Here’s what Paul said in Philippians 2:13, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

D. Judgment awaits the unbeliever.

Matthew 7:19.

E. The life we live bears testimony to who we are.

Notice the phrases, “bringeth forth” and “cannot bring forth.”

### **III. Jesus: The Life!**

Matthew 7:21-23.

A. The profession of faith is not always evidence of salvation.

In Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, “Not every one that saith...” Jesus said in Luke 6:46, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

B. Religious activity does not save us.

Matthew 7:22.

C. Knowing the person of the Lord Jesus is salvation.

John 14:6, How chilling the words spoken by our lord, “”...I never knew you....”

Conclusion:

Matthew 7:24-24

1. A saved person hears and obeys.
2. An unsaved person hears and rejects.
3. God sees beneath the surface.
4. Life’s storms will reveal our foundation.

