

## SMALL TALK

1. Have you ever been locked out of your house or car? What happened? How did you get in?

## VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Luke 13:22-30.** What question did someone have for Jesus? Why was the question asked? Consider Jewish expectations in contrast to 13:1-5; and Jesus parable in 13:6-8. (Many Jews believed that all Israel would be saved and that God was preparing the messianic feast for Israel. What did Jesus say that challenged this expectation?)
3. According to Jesus who will make it through the narrow door and who won't?
4. Why does Jesus call this door "narrow"? What makes it narrow? If God wants all kinds of people to be saved (13:29), why isn't the door wider?
5. In the context of Luke, who are the ones "outside the door" (Luke 11:23, 11:37-53, 12:9, 12:21, 12: 45-46; 13:3)? Why isn't eating and drinking with Jesus enough?
6. What does Jesus mean when he says "strive to/ make every effort to/ agonize to enter"? I thought we were saved by grace and not works! What kind of striving effort is he talking about?

## GETTING PERSONAL

7. How do you know whether you are "inside" or "outside" the kingdom (Luke 11:9, 12:31-32, 13:3, 13:5)?

March 14, 2021

## The Certainty

“The Door”

Today I want to talk to you about the door.

The door into the Kingdom of God. Because it is the door into the kingdom of God, it is also the door into the Kingdom of Heaven.

This is a very important topic, don't you think? You can not only know how to get into the Kingdom of God. Not only that. You can become certain that you are in. AND You don't have to wait till you die first to know for sure.

*Luke 1:4 (CSB) so that you may know the certainty of the things about which you have been instructed.*

### I. The door is OPEN

It is open to you. It is open to everyone. God wants everyone to enter this door into the kingdom of God. He knows not everyone will enter, but he wants everyone to enter, and he has an open invitation to the open door. How do I know that?

*1 Timothy 2:3–4 (CSB) This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

This isn't a door we enter after we die. If we have not already entered before we die, it is too late. The door is open now.

### II. The door is NARROW

*Luke 13:22-24 (CSB) He went through one town and village after another, teaching and making his way to Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> “Lord,” someone asked him, “are only a few people going to be saved?” He said to them, <sup>24</sup> “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because I tell you, many will try to enter and won't be able...”*

Let's back up. We need to ask, why did this person ask the question?

*<sup>23</sup>“Lord,” someone asked him, “are only a few people going to be saved?”*

Can you tell by the question that this wasn't what they were expecting. What were they expecting? Jews expected the entire nation to be saved by the Messiah. What was Jesus saying and doing that caused them to ask this question?

- Was it because Jesus' teaching was so strange and stringent?
- Because so many now opposed Jesus?
- Because He does not fit expectations
- Because so few are following Jesus?
- Was this a sarcastic way of saying, surely you can't be the Messiah after all, so few are following you

Jesus turns a vague question into a very personal challenge.

*“[YOU (built into the verb form)] Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because I tell you, many [many of YOU (implied)] will try to enter and won't be able to.*

What does Jesus mean when he says “strive to/ make every effort to/ agonize to enter through the narrow door”? I thought we were saved by grace and not works!?! What kind of striving effort is he talking about?

Let's revisit the roadmap to certainty we have referred to repeatedly in this series.

HEARING → BELIEVING → LIVING → KNOWING

## **REPENTANCE IS THE CONTEXT**

LUKE 13 opened with Jesus' take on 2 current events. The first event was when Pilate the wicked Roman Governor of Judea acted out of reprisal for some of the insurrectionist revolutionary efforts. Pilate commanded soldiers and they entered the Temple precincts and killed

people who came to worship, and some of their blood mingled with the blood of their sacrifices...

Rather than to speculate as to why God allowed this to happen to these worshippers, Jesus surprised them all by saying this:

*Luke 13:2–3 (CSB) ... “Do you think that these Galileans were more sinful than all the other Galileans because they suffered these things?  
3 No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as well.*

The second set of headlines news people were discussing was a tragedy of when a certain tower collapsed and killed 18 people. Again here is how Jesus cut through the speculation as to why God allowed that to happen.

*Luke 13:5 (CSB) No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as well.”*

So when we read next about the Narrow door, the context shows how it is narrow. Only those who repent fit through.

### **What does “REPENT” mean?**

It means to have a change of thinking that leads to a change of life. It means to have regret over your former way of living and doing a 180 degree U-Turn. YOU turn from your old wrong way of thinking to God’s way of thinking about life and life choices.

You have to drop the sin. Drop the baggage. Drop Your way of doing life without God. Agree with how God defines sin, and quit excusing your own sin. Let God define your lifestyle and start walking in the lifestyle he wants.

**FILIX** (Acts 24:25) “became afraid about the judgment to come”

**Repentance is more than a CONVICTION (fear, regret)**

**Repentance is more than a CONFESSION**

- **PHARAOH** said the words “I have sinned” but he did not repent (Exodus 9:27). When God took away the pressure...he did not bear fruit in keeping with repentance. Pharaoh missed his opportunity, his heart was hardened and became harder and harder.

- **JUDAS** confessed his sin (Matthew 27:4) and tried to return his ill gotten money but it was too late for him. He had given himself over to sin, and sin took all, and he committed suicide.

The door is not just a narrow door, where sin baggage needs to be dropped. **Roy Hession, *The Calvary Road*** reminds us that in **It is a LOW door** and he reminds us how sin is spelled. In sin there always stands a tall strong “I”. That “I” must bow low to fit through the door. What do you get when you bend the letter I? You get the letter “C”. “C” is the position of the humble “I”. The humble position before the KING is the only acceptable position. That is the only way into the Kingdom. When the proud “I” becomes a “C”, Christ breathes life into our being. He raises us from the deadness of our sin, and we enter the Kingdom, and we know this because Christ himself through His Spirit takes up residence in us. There is now a C in me. Christ in me, the hope of glory. Through that door, we continue to walk along the “narrow” way, it is the way of the bent “I”, in a posture of repentance, and Christ fills us. This is not only at the entrance that we bow, but along the way, it is the way of life before the King. We bow, we live in a posture of worship. Repentance is ongoing as needed. We humble ourselves.

We enter through the low door. We don’t need to scale a wall. The door is open. We don’t need to climb. We cannot achieve righteousness. We simply repent of living for the strong I. Our meaning is not in “ME”, but in Him.

We continue to drop Self-Indulgence, self-serving, self-seeking, self-pity. We don’t make excuses, we bow, and repent, and Christ fills the I become C.

**Repentance Is A Change That Shows (see 13:6-9).** Jesus tells a parable tree w/o fruit and gives it one last chance before judgment. That one last chance is while the door is still open.

### **III. The door will be SHUT**

*Luke 13:25-30 (CSB) once the homeowner gets up and shuts the door. Then you will stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up for us!' He will answer you, 'I don't know you or where you're from.' <sup>26</sup> Then you will say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' <sup>27</sup> But he will say, 'I tell you, I don't know you or where you're from. Get away from me, all you evildoers!' <sup>28</sup> There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in that place, when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves thrown out. <sup>29</sup> They will come from east and west, from north and south, to share the banquet in the kingdom of God. <sup>30</sup> Note this: Some who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last."*

### **Story: The Open Door**

The story is told of a Louise who turned her back on her widowed mother and ran away to live her own life. The mother was devastated. She prayed for her return, but months went by. She asked her pastor to pray. He prayed with her, then suggested that she have some pictures taken of herself to post with a message. He asked "What one thing would you want her to hear from you". The mother broke down and said. All I want is for her to come back. It was decided. Just two words were posted with her mother's picture all over the place. "Come Back." The pastor began posting these everywhere he could think of. One day, this girl saw a familiar face posted on a bulletin board, and went to take a closer look. Then she saw what was written on the picture, "Come back." She was filled with remorse. She was stopped in her tracks, and these were tracks she was not proud of. She packed her things that night and came home. She arrived home in the middle of the night and was surprised to find the door was not locked. She was also surprised to find that her mother was not sleeping, but waiting and praying with tear filled eyes, a common routine for her. After a warm embrace and shared tears. The girl said, "Mother, why did you leave the door open?"

“Oh, Louise, the door has never been closed since the day you left. I left it open all the time praying for your return. I didn’t want you to find it shut when you came back.”

The door is open  
The door is narrow  
The door will shut

Repent today, while you still can.