

4 - "Take The Road Less Traveled"

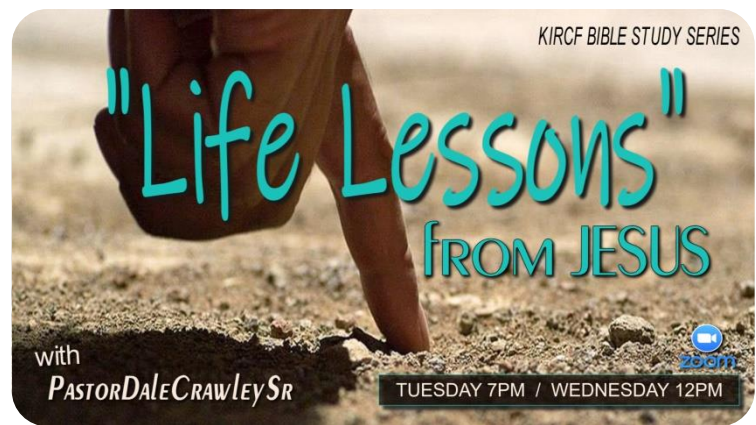
“¹³ Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.” --- Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV)

Everyone is on a spiritual journey as they travel through this life. Every day we make choices that affects the direction in which we are headed. Many people think that the paths we can travel are many. In one sense that may be true; there are all kinds of religions. But in another sense there are really only two paths or two ways. In His sermon on the mount, Jesus spoke of these two ways Matthew 7:13-14 ... each with its own beginning, each with its own outcome. One way is heavily populated (popular), the other way is less popular and traveled by few. It is an outcome of life that is determined by making the right choice, the wise choice!

In Matthew 16:26 Jesus asked, *“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”* Clearly, we have a choice to make: if we choose the world, we lose our soul; but if we choose Jesus, we gain life!

But choosing Jesus ... requires that we live differently than the world. Living narrowly means ... that we think differently, we talk differently, we respond differently and we live differently than the world (*non-believers*). We must not blend in but honor Christ by standing out.

Many scholars only look at this passage as applying to the two roads that lead to heaven and hell and the two destinies that await every member of the human race. **The narrow way**, which is found by few, is rightly seen as a difficult path, which is found by grace through faith in Christ - knowing that He is the only Way



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The Road Not Taken BY ROBERT FROST

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

to the Father and He is the only Gate into eternal life and heavenly bliss. **The broad way**, is therefore identified as the road that the majority of the human race will take, and is conversely seen as the easy path which leads to destruction and the fires of hell.

But although there is certainly a legitimate application to saved and unsaved people taking the narrow and broad ways respectively ... **Christ was not teaching about the two destinations of the whole human race, (i.e. heaven or the lake of fire) ... but the two alternative routes that Christians are required to choose, after they have been justified by grace through faith in Christ.**

Jesus was teaching His followers that there are two ways to travel through their Christian life ... **the spiritual gateway**, which leads to an abundant and victorious life as we travel through this world, where the Lord is glorified in us or ... **the carnal gateway**, where the final result will be loss of reward for a wasted, defeated life where God was dishonored by one of His blood-bought children. Most of the time, doing the right thing means going against the flow and doing what's not popular.

THE DANGER OF POPULARITY

We all crave acceptance by others. Babies are socialized by learning to read the cues from those they want to please and adjusting their behaviors accordingly. However, when we seek most of our validation and self-worth from the opinions of other people, we are on the wrong path.

Popular opinions changes like the breeze, and when we place too much importance on it, we are setting ourselves up for an endless string of disappointments. As long as we pursue popularity as a means to happiness and success, we are flirting with danger.

In this parable Jesus was teaching His followers the meaning of true discipleship. Jesus was warning believers ... **that the path to true discipleship is difficult and requires discipline**, dedication and death to SELF: self-indulgence, self-importance, self-centeredness, self-interest, self-seeking and self-righteousness.

Consider the following scriptures in making your choice to “Take The Road Less Traveled”. Proverbs 14:2; Romans 3:10-11; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Isaiah 35:8; Matthew 16:24-25; Ephesians 2:2-3; Romans 12:2; John 10:10.