

CHOICES TO MAKE

Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; Jeremiah 21:8; Matthew 7:13-14

Introduction: Everyday everybody makes choices, even the children make choices. Sometimes our choices are the right ones and things are well but sometimes we make the wrong choices and things are bad. All through the Bible there are times when God confronted people with choices. Being right with God and Salvation are choices, but not just a momentary, snap decision kind of choice. Salvation is a once for all decision that involves one's entire, total life. Jesus presents two gates, two roads and two crowds of people and even today people are at a crossroads and must choose which gate, which road and which crowd, as individuals and as a nation.

I. THE CHOICE OF THE TWO GATES

1. Using the word "enter" means immediate action, urgent, but enter the right one.
2. The only other choice Jesus gives is to make the wrong choice, either this gate or that gate, the right gate or the wrong gate, there is no alternative, it is one or the other which Jesus presents.
3. Think about it: all religions except Christianity are based on human achievement, works, etc., but it is not so with Jesus' Gospel. It is based upon HIS achievements, not anybody else's.
4. Both gates make the claim to open to heaven. Think about it for a moment - don't all religions offer some kind of utopia, some sort of "heaven?" Satan disguises the broad gate (easy) to seem as if it opens the way to heaven and it is easier to go through, for one's heritage, family, denomination, church membership, etc. makes it easier to pass through this broad gate into a "promised" heaven.
5. To "strive" is to agonize, struggle, battle and it certainly does not involve easy belief, etc.
 - It is not believing certain things, filling out a card, repeating a certain prayer, etc. Sadly, many are on that wrong road, because they went through the wrong gate.
6. The Kingdom of God is for those who SEEK IT WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS and it is not the gate that leads to easy living with no restrictions.
7. "Narrow" indicates, means that there is no room for baggage, extras or accessories. NOTHING but it is plenty wide enough for the worst sinner.
8. **2 Corinthians 5:17** - Salvation is NOT adding Jesus to everything else in one's life and not changing anything.

II. THE CHOICE OF THE TWO WAYS/ROADS

1. Jesus mentions two kinds of roads (ways), a broad way and a narrow way.
 - The broad way is crowded and has no curbs, no boundaries, no stop signs, no bumps, etc. the majority of people are on this broad road.
2. Jesus wants individuals, not groups, not crowds, with no snap decisions to follow Him, He even tries to discourage some people from following Him.
3. Jesus does not want "casual" followers, those who will for a while, then go follow someone else, etc., Jesus wants only those who are willing to live or die for Him.
4. **Luke 14:25-27** - Jesus makes the way as narrow and as hard as He can to turn away those who would never be sincere and devoted to Him.
5. Jesus never presented a soft, easy salvation and always pointed out that following Him is costly and it could even cost a person his/her very life.

III. TWO DESTINATIONS DEPENDING UPON WHICH CHOICE IS MADE

1. Jesus point out that whichever choice a person makes between the two gates and the two roads (ways) is a choice that determines one's eternal destination.
2. The broad gate and the broad way (road) starts easy but the traveler will end up in Hell for eternity.
3. The narrow gate and the narrow road (way) starts out hard and stays hard but the traveler ends up in Heaven for all eternity.

IV. THERE ARE TWO CROWDS TO CHOOSE TO BE A PART OF

1. Sadly, most "religious" people are in the crowd that will end up in Hell. A thing to remember is that the "majority" is not always right.
2. There are few who are willing to pay the price that Jesus demands to be one of His disciples and this "crowd" is much smaller but it will end up in Heaven.
3. The broad gate and broad road/way is the automatic, natural choice from the normal, human point of view. This way seems to indicate that all one has to do to get to Heaven is simply add Jesus to what one already has.
 - One doesn't have to give up anything or deny him/herself anything. One thing for sure, those who chose this way will have plenty of company - it is a very large crowd.

CONCLUSION:

- The story is told of a man who cut his arm and went to the emergency room which was empty. There were two doors on one side of the room marked "male, female." He went through the door marked "male" into another room. There he found two more doors marked "above the waist, below the waist." He went through the door marked "above the waist" only to enter another room with two more doors marked "internal, external." He went through the door marked "external" and found himself in another room with two doors marked "major, minor" so he went through the door marked "minor and found himself back outside on the parking lot. He went back home and his wife asked if he got any help at the hospital to which he replied, "not really, but they sure are organized."

- Sadly our churches have become a lot like that - so organized but not giving any spiritual help.
- Making the right choice about Jesus requires a lot of serious thought for He requires total submission and devotion.
- What choice have you made about being a follower/disciple of Jesus?
- Which crowd are you associated with? The big crowd going to hell or the small crowd going to heaven?