

The Gates of Choice

Matthew 7:13, 14

We find in the very beginning of time God has given man the ability to choose.

[Genesis 2:16, 17](#)

And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." NIV

Adam was given a choice!

[Genesis 6: 11-17](#)

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof for it and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.

Noah was given a choice!

[Deuteronomy 30:11-20](#)

Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. NIV

The Nation of Israel was given a choice!

“There is a gate to choose and a road to follow”

In a book called “The Story of God” written by Michael Lodahl he tells us “God is free and apparently treasures freedom sufficiently that He desires its growth in us. The human being, made in God’s image, surely is created to reflect the very freedom He enjoys. And He does in fact profoundly limit Himself simply by extending to every human being the real possibilities of choosing.”

Let’s look at the definition of “Choice”

There are 3 key words in this definition –

1st is Chance –

Do you know what the outcome will be by you’re the choice you made?

2nd is Right –

God allows us the right or authority to make out own choices.

3rd is Power –

Is the ability to know or obtain knowledge.

The power of love is allowing one the freedom of choice!

Today and every moment of your life you will have to make choices – some will be good, others will not, but there is one is crucial!

This morning we will look at Matthew 7: 13, 14 - the words of wisdom!

Jesus said “listen up, this is important”

“The gate you go through on the way to eternal destruction is wide, and the road you take there is easy to travel on. There are many people who take that way.

But the gate that leads to life is really narrow, and the way there is full of difficulties. Few people find that way.

But you should go through that gate to find life.”

Greek & Roman writers fairly often employed the image of two paths in life.

The Didache (The Teaching of the 12 Apostles) states in Chapter 1:1
"There are two paths, one of life and one of death, and the difference is great between the two paths." To enter the narrow gate of the Kingdom one must knock – that is, request that God make you a citizen of His Kingdom. The difficulty of Jesus' way is that it includes persecution – look at

[Matt 5:10-12](#)

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. NIV

Most people in Jesus day were religious, respecting God, keeping His commandments were an important part of their culture. I know many of you remember the "blue law" – it was the day when people went to church, spent the day as a family – why? All businesses, stores and entertainment were closed. It was the people's choice. Is it that way today? Those who were religious and heard the teaching of Jesus would be the "many" who thought they were on the right road. Yet Jesus often declared that most people were lost! Things haven't changed much – most people today believe they are on the "right" road – they are going to heaven because they are a "good person" and God is Love and wouldn't send them to hell – they fail to realize that God doesn't send anyone to hell...

The Gates of Choice

[Matthew 7:13-14](#)

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. NIV

I. Wide Gates & Broad Roads

In our scripture, Jesus says there is a “Wide Gate & Broad Road” – it is a gate that offers a broad road – it’s the easy way, no commitment, no sacrifice, no suffering, it’s a have it your way religion, it’s the choice of many, sadly, Jesus said the outcome of this road is destruction.

A. The choice of many

Our government whose motto is “We the People” can do nothing without the vote of the people; it was the choice of the people to ban the “Pledge of Allegiance”

Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.

If Scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.

Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene.
The law is specific, the law is precise.
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.

For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all.
In silence alone we must meditate,
God's name is prohibited by the state.

We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks.
They've outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.

We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the 'unwed daddy,' our Senior King.
It's "inappropriate" to teach right from wrong,
We're taught that such "judgments" do not belong.

We can get our condoms and birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles.
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,
No word of God must reach this crowd.

Its scary here I must confess,
When chaos reigns the school's a mess.

The choice of the people today is allow the “union” of same-sex couples – how dare some call it a “marriage” It is God who instituted the covenant of marriage between a man & and a women – a liberal politician retuned my letter which I sent to support the traditional God ordained institution of marriage he wrote “the government does not get involved in divorce so it should not be involved in the joining of same-sex marriages”

The choice of the people today is to allow gay men and women to be clergy, to stand in the pulpit and proclaim “I am gay and God loves me” – it’s now wonder the world thinks all Christians are nuts!

The choice of the people today is to remove all godly principles from this country (except on 9-11) whose very beginning was founded on the Word of God! Abraham Lincoln our 16th President said “no man can rightly govern this great country apart from the word of God”

This November you have the freedom and the right to choose the next President! Do so through the lens of scripture – compare their views against what God says in His word – carefully look at what they stand up for through the lens of scripture!

B. The outcome of many

The outcome of our schools today, no matter how advance we’ve become in producing smarter students, the schools are filled with violence, drug abuse, sexual molestation, suicide, alcoholism, rape and the list can go on & on... John Mercurio is a High School Teacher, I am sure he can tell you 1st hand the degradation and the lack of morality in the public school system! God said “ok you don’t me in your schools, guess who is coming and will be glad to attend?”

The outcome of same-sex unions – watch TV lately? The TV is loaded with shows that promote a homosexual lifestyle– the media wants you to believe that it’s ok, it’s acceptable and if you don’t, then there is something wrong with you!! Must we be reminded of Sodom & Gomorrah found in [Genesis 19:4-5](#)

Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom — both young and old — surrounded the house. They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”

NIV

I heard a defense once “Jesus never spoke of nor condemned homosexuality – didn’t He say we should “Love one another, Do not Judge” so if He didn’t condemn it neither should you.” The answer to that is “Jesus didn’t speak about a lot of things – does it mean they are all OK? The fact is Jesus believed the Old Testament scriptures – they were His Bible, He often used the O/T in His teachings thus confirming their authenticity, so when you read [Leviticus 18:22](#)

Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.

You can be sure Jesus believed it! It was His word!

The outcome of our choice in the Judicial System – there was a women Judge who was busted for taking money from convicted criminals and releasing them back into society! This is not new! – read Ezekiel chapter 8 -11

C. The judgment of many

To understand the full extents of Jesus’ teaching turn to [Luke 13:23-28](#)

23 Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them,

24 "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.

25 Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

26 "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'

27 "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'

28 "There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out.

NIV

- Those who think they will be on the inside will find themselves on the outside.
- Those who wore the clothes of Christianity
- Those who think you can pick & chose what benefits you from the Bible and disregard the other teachings that reveal who you really are – the fear of eternity without Jesus Christ!
- Those who chose to ignore or not believe in God at all

The out come of the many is found in v. 27

Jesus will say those awful words “I don’t know you” – they will weep because there will be no God, no light, no warmth, no love, total darkness. The gnashing of teeth symbolizes the agony of making the wrong choice, open the wrong gate following the broad road.

Jesus wants you to open the small gate and follow the narrow road.

II. Small Gates & Narrow Roads

A. The choice of few

B. The outcome of the few

C. The reward of the few

The few choose to be obedient to God by following the narrow road – this is what sets you apart from the world.

- Jesus said *“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.”* (John 10:9) NIV

The outcome of the few will have joy of knowing Jesus, the prince of peace who has cleansed you of your sin and paid them in full. You will have the ability to and walk in presence of Almighty God.

- Jesus said *“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* (John 14:23) NIV

The reward of the few is found only the life Jesus offers for eternity – a reward that is yet to come!

- Jesus said *“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”* (Rev 22:12-15)

Keep Your Fork

A woman was diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. As she was getting her things in order, she contacted her pastor and asked him to come to her house to discuss some of her final wishes.

She told him which songs she wanted sung at her funeral service, what Scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in. She requested to be buried with her favorite Bible.

As the pastor prepared to leave, the woman suddenly remembered something else. "There's one more thing," she said excitedly.

"What's that?" said the pastor.

"This is important," the woman said. "I want to be buried with a **fork** in my right hand."

The pastor stood looking at the woman, not knowing quite what to say.

The woman explained. "In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.' It was my favorite part of the meal because I knew something better was coming—like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie.

"So, when people see me in that casket with a fork in my hand and they ask, 'What's with the fork?' I want you to tell them: 'Keep your fork. The best is yet to come!' "

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The Gates of Choice – choose Jesus and choose life!