

## **Jesus is the Narrow Door to the Ark of Salvation Opposite to the Spirit of this World.**

By Rick Friedrich  
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“Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because I tell you, many will try to enter and won't be able once the homeowner gets up and shuts the door.”

Last weekend I attended a Revival tent meeting in Lancaster PA where Dave Miller shared a message that made reference to a gospel illustration of two mountains with a cross bridging the gap between the two places. The cross is necessary for man to be pardoned and reconciled with God. But added to this illustration should be a door--rather The door--and more specifically,

*The Narrow Door along the narrow path to a place,  
a sanctuary that is everywhere and yet part of an entirely different kind of kingdom.*

Just what does it mean to be on either side of that door, and locked on the outside?

Jesus was reported as making many radical statements about himself that caused great confusion among the people. He didn't waste his time explaining what he meant in saying such things as “I am the living bread that came down from heaven” or “unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourself.” (John 6:48-61) These kinds of statements greatly stumbled many people, even his disciples: “Therefore, when many of His disciples heard this, they said, 'This teaching is hard! Who can accept it?' Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples were complaining about this, asked them, 'Does this offend you?'" It was hard in two ways. People were unsure of the exact meaning, as whether it was to be literal or spiritual, and more specifically that he was being very demanding of them. Jesus was being *exclusive* or *very narrow* here. He made another equally difficult statement that appeared to be completely opposite to what everyone would expect from him when he said to the crowds: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, and even his own life—he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:26-27) Just what was Jesus doing by speaking in such cannibalistic and alienating terms? Why was he offending the spiritual leaders and driving away the masses of disciples with such rhetoric? One of the answers he gave elsewhere is explained this way: "Because the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given for you to know, but it has not been given to them. For whoever has, more will be given to him, and he will have more than enough. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. For this reason I speak to them in parables, because looking they do not see, and hearing they do not listen or understand. Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: You will listen and listen, yet never understand; and you will look and look, yet never perceive. For this people's heart has grown callous; their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn back-- and I would cure them." (Matthew 13:11-15) (This may be the most repeated quotation in the bible)

Jesus was only interested in feeding the sincere in heart with more truth and light. Anyone not of the truth, or who does not embrace all truth, naturally stumbled at his words. While those who really loved all truth and believed in him, even if they did not understand what he meant exactly, would still be open to what he was attempting to teach. His words were therefore a *test* as well as showing how impossible it was to claim to follow him without giving up absolutely everything in life.

*And the deep spiritual meaning beyond the nature of his narrow calling was the incredible revelation of his divine nature being vividly illustrated as a means of complete salvation.*

Jesus was not merely pointing to the way of salvation. The people wanted national salvation and limited their expectations for a savior to give them freedom from the oppression of the Romans. Even the original disciples were content to have the words of salvation. But Jesus totally confounded them when he said He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life, He was Salvation.

*His disciples left us with perhaps more than 62 relations of Christ to the believer that take our relationship with God beyond a mere propositional and distant one to be a very direct and intimate dynamic between the infinite and finite through this singular Door.*

Again, Jesus said exactly: “**I am the door.** If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.” (John 10:9) This door we see in our text is not some physical object that can be penetrated when the Father finally shuts it. *It is Jesus the Messiah Himself.* I have asked countless people over the last 25 years how they would describe salvation. If they didn't get it right I would ask, in one word how would you define it? I think maybe only one person ever said Jesus as the answer. Yet “He is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14), He is our Savior, and His name was given by the angel for this reason: “you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21) “But it is from Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who **became** God-given wisdom for us--our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption”. (1 Corinthians 1:30)

*These almost completely unnoticed and unrealized facts greatly offend the natural tendencies of man where we want to work out our religion in our own way and make our own terms with God giving Him limited devotion while we try to hide from Him behind our own fig-leaves more or less.*

But Jesus is much closer to us than we realize. He is at the door of every person's heart. He is the gate to integrity and sincerity, and there is no manipulating the door-keeper with partial obedience or the slightest half-truths. In fact you cannot enter through Him with any other person as we read above. You cannot even bring your life with you. Nothing impure enter's God's kingdom. Nothing but God's will is in the realm of heaven. Only those having the spirit of heaven may partake of that fellowship. Indeed, “If we say, 'We have fellowship with Him,' yet we walk in darkness, we are lying and are not doing the truth.” (1 John 1:6)

While the cross bridge is useful to begin to show people their need of a savior, people must understand what door they need to enter through. What kind of a door that is. After I began seeking the Lord over 25 years ago I bought an evangelism shirt that had the image of a ticket on it that said price paid, and something like a ticket to heaven with verse references on it. A common misconception people have is that there is some kind of physical transaction taking place where those who get to go to heaven are merely those who have the right wedding clothes or have said the right words at one time. During one of my energy conventions I witnessed once a Christian man attempt to pressure a Jewish agnostic to just say a few prayers and he then would be safe and ready for heaven (no matter what he would do after that), even if he was not sure God existed or Jesus was a messiah. In this case words are considered a magical ticket formula. While this is the most extreme example, it is nevertheless not much different than the prevailing view professing Christians have of the way to heaven. Others add theological correctness to the mix. You must believe the right creed to be the elect. Others add certain works that seem essential to Christian virtue. You must be properly baptized, and habitually do good works. While few people state such things so obviously, it is nevertheless implied by everything said and how people live. Still other say nothing matters, what you believe and what you do in life makes no difference in whether go to heaven or elsewhere. All of these ways contradict reality. They make Jesus the Christ a liar. “The one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony God has given about His Son.” (1 John 5:10) This verse was very gripping to me when I was first seriously evaluating the testimony of the Bible. Being hostile to the truth, but imagining I was completely sincere, I looked at the Bible as something that *contained* truth. But when this proposition was considered I found myself in a very uncomfortable place. For, on the one hand, I didn't want to believe certain things in the Bible that contradicted my way of life and desires, but, on the other

hand, I was not willing to call the testimony of Jesus a lie! No longer could I sit on the fence in this matter as I looked at the testimony with open eyes as it hit me squarely in the face.

*Either Jesus the Christ was who he said he was, or he was no one significant at all.*

In the later case he would be one of the greatest deceivers of all time. And if this testimony about him was true then my whole life was wrong. The very way I looked at myself and judged myself was wrong. For like everyone else around me, I considered myself my own savior and judge. I worked out my own problems my own way. I planned my future and estimated my past. I chose everything in life, and it was all for personal gain in the pursuit of happiness. What was wrong with doing that when everyone agrees that that is normal? Yet I read what Jesus said in these verses quoted above.

*Was I willing to leave the millions or billions of people of the world and go with a few people through a narrow door into an ark?*

If you notice the parallels between the homeowner shutting the door to the unrighteous in the Luke 13:25 verse with the Lord shutting the door in the ark in Genesis 7:16 you may have this conception more vividly illustrated. “As the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be. For in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah boarded the ark. They didn't know until the flood came and swept them all away.” (Matthew 24:37-39) Noah was absolutely safe in that ark after the Lord closed the door, even though the entire world was destroyed. There is also a comparison that can be made with Noah and Christ in following: “and if He didn't spare the ancient world, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others, when He brought a flood on the world of the ungodly... then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, especially those who follow the polluting desires of the flesh and despise authority.” (2 Peter 2:5, 9-10) “By faith Noah, after he was warned about what was not yet seen and motivated by godly fear, built an ark to deliver his family. By faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7) In these verses we see that Noah and Jesus were preachers of righteousness who lived by faith and condemned the ungodly world around them. While the Lord has already come several times in judgment, even as He did in the flood, He still is to come one final time at the end. In both cases a door gets closed by God Himself which leaves the ungodly outside. In the first case we read that “When the Lord saw that man's wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every scheme his mind thought of was nothing but evil all the time... Then the Lord said, 'I will wipe off from the face of the earth mankind...’” (Genesis 6:5, 7) “Everything on earth will die” outside of the Ark. “But I will establish My covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives... Enter the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before Me in this generation.” (Genesis 6:17-18, 7:1) Noah alone was righteous. This is impossible for most people to consider how everyone could be wrong and God would not change His standards or be considered to have something wrong with Himself (as popular opinion today appears). Noah did something looking completely irrational according to his faith. He dared to spend a great deal of his time building a huge useless object that pointed to establishing a new kingdom entirely opposed to that which everyone belonged to. This was admittedly going to replace the existing prosperous kingdom. It may not have even been raining in those years, nor near any water. To build such a large ark for only a few people must have seemed as strange as telling people to eat your flesh and drink your blood or you will die. Noah preached the truth. He was only ten generations from Adam and preached how the earth was made, and how we should live, and what will happen to us if we do not live godly. God called him to Himself to be saved in the ark He told him to build. He, and all who were saved, went through that only door in all the earth that could save anyone. “Then the Lord shut him in.” (Genesis 7:16) No one could get in after that point. Once the rains started coming down and the floods were raising up, there was no getting in no matter how hard anyone could try if they did. The time to consider one's ways was over. “Let the unrighteous go on in unrighteousness; let the filthy go on being

made filthy; let the righteous go on in righteousness; and let the holy go on being holy. Look! I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me to repay each person according to what he has done.” (Revelations 22:11-12) In the same way we return to our text: “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because I tell you, many will try to enter and won’t be able 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.’ Then you will say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets!’ But He will say, ‘I tell you, I don’t know you or where you’re from. Get away from Me, all you workers of unrighteousness!’” (Luke 13:24-27) We have the exact same circumstances, motives, conditions, and results. The owner of the house is the One who owns the world and also invites all to escape the slavery of the world and its destruction. He is the One who has a banquet that all are invited to attend, but which they excuse themselves from. Many of these consider these excuses really justifiable and suppose that their affiliation with this Owner in name and their listening to His teaching was good enough to secure their future safety. God closes the door to the ark, which represents Christ. And in the end God will shut the door of Christ to all who did not wish to be ready and enter in when the time was at hand.

All this prepares us to consider the *manner* in which to enter through Jesus the Door or salvation. In one sense there is an entry into God's kingdom through Jesus while the Door is open, and there comes a time when the door closes and no one will travel to either kingdom again. Those on the inside will all be perfectly one in the spirit of heaven, and nothing sinful will be experienced again to cause the slightest discord. On the outside we find the same universal spirit, but in utter misery, hatred, unbelief, etc. The unholy believers may try and convince the Lord with their sinful theology and lack of reasonings to let them in, and the rich man may knock on the door for a drop of water, but the door is closed forever and the Lord is justified as always.

Notice specifically that the door is called a narrow door. People will try and enter it but nothing can fit in through it. Nothing in all of creation can go through because all things in that kingdom must remain. This is a new kingdom “not of this world.” “Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God will come, He answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with something observable; no one will say, 'Look here!' or 'There!' For you see, the kingdom of God is among you.” (Luke 17:20-21) Just as the rich man who was ready to follow Jesus turned away sad because he loved his riches and Jesus required him to give up all to follow Him, in the same way no one comes through this door now or later without hating all things in this world and even their very lives. This is not meaning we must sell everything and end our lives in order to enter through the door, but it means that we let go of everything just as if we do, and are constantly ready to let go of everything when called for.

*Our lamps are kept with oil as we long for that day, and everything in all creation is but hatred in comparison to that great Prize of our Lord Himself! No heart that does not long for His appearing and move about this earth as the angels in heaven with the spirit and glory of God as their theme, can enter that door or abide in that kingdom.*

What! To suppose we relish in the things of this world and love the company of the ungodly, and what do we think will come? That we somehow will be changed when we die to be able to pass through, and with Holy Jesus into the completely opposite spirit and kingdom? “Nothing profane will enter it: no one who does what is vile or false, but only those written in the Lamb's book of life... Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and commits lies.” (Revelations 21:27, 22:14-15)

All the parables and teachings of Jesus were to reinforce these important facts. Jesus did not come to make their religion better or build upon it. He completely contradicted the prevailing beliefs and

showed how they had fundamentally misunderstood His ways from ancient times. The question was asked, "Lord, are there few being saved?" This called for focusing on how the way of God is narrow. Both the door and the way is narrow. In Matthew 7:14 we read: "How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it." The gate or door is a customs agent that sees your heart perfectly. He will not let you bring anything into the new country. You cannot bring in your family, or your car, or your job, or hobbies, or anything. You must leave it all behind and let go of your identity. You will even get new clothes and a new name and a new heart and have a new meal if you are to pass through. This is difficult because we want the best of both worlds, and are trained to pervert the truth and reason by prejudice.

*The false teaching is that dying to self is a process rather than by perfect faith in God.*

When God humbles us we resist His providence and fight for our rights and things and reputation. We resist His mercy in frustrating our vain ways. We easily blind ourselves to the truth of the narrow way and narrow gate and are overcome by the loud noise of the multitudes rushing *en masse* off the cliff on the broad road as sheep one after another. We find comfort in the multitude and think people like Noah are crazy. Yet we build up the tombs of the prophets to satisfy ourselves and others that we would sympathize with them were we living in their day. We satisfy ourselves with a form of godliness while condemning the true spiritual nature of holiness those prophets taught.

There are three types of people on the broad road to destruction. While there are only two kinds of people in this world, which Jesus will separate as the sheep and the goats, there are actually three kinds of goats who will be condemned. Failure to carefully consider this and other teachings of Jesus and the Bible leads many people to satisfy themselves in thinking that the difference between the sheep and the goats is other than being either righteous or unrighteous. The masses today that believe that the saved and the unsaved are divided by something other than their character can find themselves in the third category of the lost, in the parable of the sower of seed. Briefly introduced here, these hold that something other than character is what separates the sheep from the goats even though the Lord clearly tells us they are separated as the righteous and unrighteous, as well as all the apostles. Do not misunderstand me as saying this is works, or superficial character, or self-righteousness presumptions. *These people suppose its all about a relationship with Jesus in some progressive sense apart from real holiness of heart.* Thousands of books exist from this perspective, but all are sold on the broad road to destruction where they promote the idea of thorns growing up *with* the crop. There are two different teachings of Jesus about thorns growing up in relation to crop. We shall look at only the one where deceived people grow up with the truth and word mixed with the thorns of sin that choke them to remain unholy more or less and thus ultimately unfruitful. Let us first look at the four different types of people in the order Jesus mentioned them.

## **Four Groups of People in this World in Relation to the Word or Truth from Heaven How the Soil relates to our Hearts, Methods, Motives and our very Foundation**

"Again He began to teach by the sea, and a very large crowd gathered around Him. So He got into a boat on the sea and sat down, while the whole crowd was on the shore facing the sea. He taught them many things in parables, and in His teaching He said to them: "Listen! Consider the sower who went out to sow. As he sowed, this occurred: Some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground where it didn't have much soil, and it sprang up right away, since it didn't have deep soil. When the sun came up, it was scorched, and since it didn't have a root, it withered. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it didn't produce a crop. Still others fell on good ground and produced a crop that increased 30, 60, and 100 times what was sown." Then He said, "Anyone who has ears to hear should listen!" When He was alone with the

Twelve, those who were around Him asked Him about the parables. He answered them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to those outside, everything comes in parables so that they may look and look, yet not perceive; they may listen and listen, yet not understand; otherwise, they might turn back—and be forgiven.” Then He said to them: “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any of the parables? The sower sows the word. These are the ones along the path where the word is sown: when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, immediately they receive it with joy. But they have no root in themselves; they are short-lived. When pressure or persecution comes because of the word, they immediately stumble. Others are sown among thorns; these are the ones who hear the word, but the worries of this age, the seduction, of wealth, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But the ones sown on good ground are those who hear the word, welcome it, and produce a crop: 30, 60, and 100 times what was sown.” (Mark 4:1-20)

While there are two types of people spiritually speaking, which Jesus separates as the sheep and the goats, the righteous and the unrighteous, the holy (saints) and the unholy, the good and the bad (many translation this word evil as if to make the word sound really bad), the completely truthful and those who lie, etc., there are three different levels or groups of the later. This is important as many people judge each other in either of these categories as if they are better off in some way than those they are judging. Indeed Jesus not only said not to judge each other while in these three categories, but more importantly to actually take the entire log out of your eye and therefore be in the fourth category of the good soil that is holy. “Hypocrite! First **take the log out of your eye, and then** you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.” (Matthew 7:5) Most people who quote this fail to quote or really even think about what the last half of that verse actually teaches. They settle in just simply not judging other sinners. They fail to read it for what it really teaches as well as hundreds of like passages that urge us to actually walk in the truth: “Brothers, if someone is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual should restore such a person with a gentle spirit watching out for yourselves so you also won't be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1) But such passages refer to the good soil.

The three different types of seed that fall on the bad soil relate to three different levels or categories of prejudice (that is prejudgment) to truth. And remember that Jesus also claimed to be the Truth as well so we are looking at truth beyond mere matters of factual accuracy but concerning all of reality relating to everyone and as given to us from heaven directly or indirectly. Truth can also be mistaken and still be considered truth to the individual. For example, a person is judged by what they honestly think to be true. If they attempt to kill someone because they think they are there and they are mistaken, they are still judged as if they succeeded. In the same way, if someone believes no one is in harms way and they accidentally take the life of another or harm them, then they are not blamed for it. Or if a person is mistaken about a conviction, and they do something against their conscience, they are still guilty of going against their own convictions. This teaching is found in Paul's letters in Romans (14:22-23) and elsewhere. So while some truth may be mistaken, God still will judge us by our own standards, as well as for departing from His perfect way. “To him that knows the good and does it not, to him it is sin.”

### **The Seed on the Path: Incredulous Skeptic.**

The first category of seed is that which falls upon the path where people walk. A Path is a place where nothing grows because of frequent walking which either is hardened by enough walking on it or else anything trying to grow gets trampled. Any seed on a path is left in the open and birds can see it and eat it up. In the same way, for people who are extremely prejudiced they will just block out any truth they receive upon the subjects they are committed to. Just as fast as it appears it is taken away. Jesus says it is Satan who takes it away in such cases. I think everyone knows these types of people. They are

hardened usually by years of resisting truth. These are skeptics of the kind that are incredulous. They are unreasonably disbelieving. If the fact came to them in the form favoring their belief then they would readily embrace it but if contradicting their belief or desire they will not look at it for a second and will only mock it or silence it. This is what it means to have a seared conscience that is not sensitive to truth. While these can readily embrace all sorts of truth in areas of their lives that do not contradict their understanding of origin, meaning, morality, or destiny, as soon as something comes up that does then you will see this stubbornness.

### **The Seed on Rocky Soil: Best of both Worlds, Attractive Temporary Joy, No Foundation.**

When seed grows in shallow soil it doesn't go very deep beyond the surface so it can come up faster than in deeper soil. It can even have roots above the ground to make it higher at the beginning than other crop. It looks promising at first but in time it goes away and is forgotten. Without a foundation it can't have supporting roots. It will fall over and wither because there is no ability to hold the water. Roots above the ground dry out and hold nothing. In the same way people can get excited as they consider all the benefits that the truth gives them. With joy they embrace them and enthusiastically share them with others. In their zeal they can look like the real deal and that they really heartily embrace what they are promoting. *But because they are merely using the truth as a tool and have not died to selfishness and given themselves fully to God, they are only excited about how these new truths can benefit them while they continue to live for themselves.* We see people like this come and go in many matters that are not just fundamental. It is superficial. Some people can continue on for years doing this while maintaining a profession. But most of the time such just come and go. When it pertains to the faith we see people respond and embrace the gospel as a social benefit or something like that and with joy they jump right in. They sprout up fast because they are zealous like Simon the sorcerer to use this new promising truth for their advantage. They want the best of both worlds and take what they can from both. But when there is a conflict between both kingdoms they are not willing to deny themselves that much for the new faith. They have no foundation, a selfish motivation, and biased methodology and their heart is not that of heaven but is of this world. This experience is a matter of *confirmation bias*, as they just select that which is benefiting their cause. There is no place for complete sacrifice and the loss of all things for the greatest good and the glory of God. When sin tempts, there is no resistance. These are those who have tried it once and then may become those along the path later on. Yet these still are statistically considered converts because they are thought to have responded to the call by those in group three, who deceive themselves by any means to justify their thorns and lack of true crop. Their departure from the faith or truth is not noted the same way as their joining it and so they are considered just not as active presently, 'only God knows their hearts' it is reasoned.

### **The Seed Among Thorns: Everything but the Heart of the Matter, No Real Holiness.**

When seed grows up entwined with thorns and weeds, rather than just beside them as another plant, they do not get sufficient light or room to grow. Like two trees growing up too close beside each other they end up becoming useless in the place they cross over each other. If a crop grows up together with thorns it will produce nothing, and if anything, it will be more trouble than it is worth to deal with the thorn. In matters of faith, thorns are not merely bad fruit growing but no real fruit at all. This is the most difficult category to understand rightly and yet it seems the most experienced. Real fruit is that which is accepted of God and not of man. One can do outward actions but if not sincere at heart then God does not accept them. "You do not want a sacrifice, or I would give it; You are not pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. God, You will not despise a broken and humbled heart." (Psalms 51:16-17) When the soil is bad in this way it is voluntarily left as part of one's foundation and methodology. At the core of a person is their method of sorting through the facts of existence. The first category ignores any truth that contradicts their belief. The second readily grabs onto new truths and runs with it embracing that which makes them excited. The third goes deeper still

to embrace all the truth that seems consistent with the right worldview and God's kingdom, but blocks out the essential element and all that it relates to. All three commit confirmation bias, but this thorn category for the most part can limit that prejudice to disbelieve *the experience* of true holiness of heart (I highlight the experience as some people theoretically believe in it but don't live it). This is what we see Jesus constantly deal with in the Pharisees and masses of disciples that would have the outward form of religion but deny the power of in an actually holy life.

*The thorns experience becomes the theology of coping with sin in this life until we die when it is hoped that we will then have a complete change of heart and spirit.*

Everything other than holiness can be improved and perfected. Much secondary fruit is manifest. The scribes could know the word, and think they have eternal life from it, without ever entering into the *purpose* of the word. The martyr could give up all and even body to the flames, but not have love. It is easier to give up your body than your sin. The missionary could make many converts of the second and third categories and be considered very fruitful by others without healing himself of fundamental vices. The pastor could instruct thousands of people to edification without really touching upon and experiencing the obvious meaning of Roman's chapters 6 and 8. He will still be praised while still in bondage and holding the people in bondage in Romans 7 legal experience, that which is still being choked by the thorns. The worship leader could have daily tears and make wonderful appeals to the majesty of God and be so thankful that such a continual sinner could somehow be forgiven. All these and many more can be fundamentally deceived by a false theology and philosophy that selects everything right and true but that which is all that really matters. The Son of God addresses these very people at the end, who appeal to Him about all that they have done for Him. It is only one thing that mattered: were they holy and righteous or were they still in their sins. "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:46). Backing up a bit we continue on with an earlier scripture that Jesus gives to correct a wrong theology back then which still exists everywhere today: "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep' clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves. You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So you'll recognize them by their fruit. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, drive out demons in Your name, and do many miracles in Your name?' Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you! Depart from Me, you lawbreakers!'" (Matthew 7:15-23) The seed that grew among the thorns is this group of people who have come to accept a mixture of good and bad fruit together, who spend their lives making resolutions to do better and work on this and that sin with self-righteous means and who really do not live by a real faith in God. There is a faith, but it is false. It may be popular, and actually a big industry, but it is on the broad road where the market is prosperous. Wolves devour sheep and send them off the cliff in a steady stream where they follow each other in the heard mentality. There is much money to be made, and so much praise from men. Tickle our ears with insights to living, just do not preach full renunciation of sin and expect us to walk in the light just as God is in the light. We do not want to hear those verses unless you explain them away as extremism or making that our unattainable ideal. Let us focus on all the other fruit and forget about the fruit of holiness. Holiness is for the next life, we want to have fun here and now and worry about that later. When we are done with our pleasures we will find some oil to put in our lamps and prepare our souls for death when we are in our nineties and can't feel pleasures. The thorn is part of life. In fact such believe God made them that way, and that it is actually a good thing that humbles you. These will only embrace whatever or just so much light that allows them to still worry, or have a heart still embracing wealth or the things or people of this world. They select what truths they want rather than embrace all truth deep in their heart. Dualism considers partial darkness to be natural and good, to avoid extremes

and embrace virtue being the means between extremes, or to not be overly righteous or overly wicked. As such it can only make a surface war against the world in all of its battles and the world laughs and mocks as these hypocrites actually embrace the spirit of the world by accepting the essence of the soil with thorns in it. This soil is both loved and hated by those in this camp. It is a bondage they long to get out of as we see in the struggle in Romans 7, but it is still enjoyed and cultivated. Certain sins are socially acceptable, and others are judged to be done by only the lost people. And then there is a deeper level where they can accept all forms of sins as common for the saved.

All these three categories are given stumbling blocks to blind them and test them and argue against the truth with, because ultimately they are not sincere or willing to embrace all truth no matter what the cost or consequence. Only the good soil can fully search out and embrace such reality. Though hearing they do not understand, or seeing their hearts are hard and their eyes are dull and ears deaf. They are biased in selfishness, selecting their own reality. Is there a weed or thorn in your soil, theology, or life?

### **The Seed in Good Soil: Leaving behind the World through the Door into a Heavenly Kingdom**

The good soil is planted by God the right way. It is properly cultured and the seed has a proper depth and foundation. It therefore can stand and not wither in varying weather conditions. It has the right access to the sun, receiving the rays from heaven with open arms. As the foundation was supported by the King of heaven, the plant can in confidence withstand any attack (inside the ark of God so-to-speak). It is not left to it's own ability to outgrow, or grow in another direction away from thorns. The soil of our heart is where we are before God. If we receive the wedding invitation and come to Him for life, He will remove the burden off our backs and allow us to leave everything behind to follow Him. We can go through this door with a broken and contrite heart as the key and only condition for entering. We can take the soil on the other side of the door that is made clean and ready by the hands of heaven. The seed will prosper as we abide in the Vine. The soil is soft and open and honest and virtuous. These people see past sin, trials, the world and they live and dwell in heaven with the fellowship and spirit of heaven. With one audience, one purpose, one love, one hope, one victory, one calling, and one mission. Not flirting with the world but holy and blameless. Not deliberating the cost of embracing all truth but already swallowed up. Dead to prejudice, sin and what is valued by man. If God did not spare His own Son then they know that saving them from sin is a simpler matter for Him. This is what it means to enter through the narrow Door. Call it narrow-mindedness but God has made it so.

“What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He did not even spare His own Son but offered Him up for us all; how will He not also with Him grant us everything? Who can bring an accusation against God’s elect? God is the One who justifies. Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the One who died, but even more, has been raised; He also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us. Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can affliction or anguish or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: Because of You we are being put to death all day long; we are counted as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than victorious through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that not even death or life, angels or rulers, things present or things to come, hostile powers, height or depth, or any other created thing will have the power to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!”  
(Romans 8:31-39)