



The Narrow Door

NOTE: These are basic Bible studies intended to help our teachers personally grasp the “big picture” of our VBS theme. Feel free to use anything here in connecting with your students. If you have any follow-up questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to Jason.

“Strive to enter through the narrow **door**. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” (Luke 13:24)

Jesus is the King of all kings. Growing up to be a part of his kingdom is the most important goal any of us can have. We have lots of opportunities to learn and grow and do fun things, but this is what matters more than anything: “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matt 6:33).

It was common in the ancient world for great cities to have “doors” or gates. If you wanted to see the King or come into his kingdom, you had to pass through his gate. Listen carefully to what Jesus taught in his great Sermon on the Mount:

“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. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.” (Matt 7:13-14)

Jesus came so we could “have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Trusting and obeying him is the way that “leads to life,” but to follow him, we have to enter through “the narrow gate.” What did Jesus mean by that? Maybe the easiest way to understand it is to think about all the things we have to leave behind. Can you imagine trying to carry two backpacks, three suitcases, four grocery bags, a dog, and a large drink through a really small door? It wouldn’t work! No, if you want to walk through that tiny door, you have to lay lots of stuff down and leave it behind. So what sort of stuff do we have to leave behind to follow Jesus? He told us about a few of them in the same sermon: anger (Matt 5:21-26), lust (5:27-30), revenge (5:38-42), hatred (5:43-48), pride (6:1-4), hypocrisy (6:5-18), and greed (6:19-21). Maybe the simplest summary? Selfishness (Matt 16:24).

The “trust and obey” connection:

- Following Jesus and doing the right thing isn’t always the easy or most popular way, but it leads to life the way it was meant to be.
- God isn’t going to change just because I want to hold onto the wrong things (1 Pet 5:6-7).
- When I “cast off the works of darkness,” I’m ready and able to “put on the armor of light” (Rom 13:12) that my King wants me to wear. Evil and selfishness won’t fit in that armor.