

Tommy Meador / General

The Gospel of Luke / Luke 13:22–35

Introduction

- Leaving my airpods in the security tray at the hospital. Thankfully, Apple genius enough to allow you to “ping” your devices using GPS. Easy to find a \$150 pair of airpods. However, our government struggled to find a \$100 million F35.
- Jesus has come to seek and save the lost ([Luke 19:10](#)), but do you want to be found?
- Two truths: Jesus came to seek and save the lost, and Jesus is worth YOU seeking. The ONE who came to seek and save the lost offers you salvation which is an absolute free gift and at the same time it’s a salvation worth striving for.
- Chapters 11-13 - Jesus’ hard sayings interrupted by a story of Jesus’ compassion. Now, on the road to Jerusalem, a man asks a simple question. Jesus responds with startling words, but these words are helpful because these words a reminder that the salvation Jesus offers is worth striving for.
- Are you striving for your salvation? I know what you’re thinking... We don’t “work” for our salvation. NOT working for salvation but striving for salvation? There’s a difference. I’ll explain...
- This morning, I want to show you three truths about salvation that will encourage you to strive for salvation.

Salvation is a matter of exclusive faith.

- Jesus on his way to Jerusalem and asked an interesting question: “Will those who are saved be few?” A debated question in Jesus’ day because some rabbis taught that all Israelite would share in a world to come because after all, God’s chosen people. Other rabbis taught that only a few Israelites would share in a world to come.
- Maybe this man had heard some of Jesus’ hard teachings. Now, he wanted clarity from Jesus. What did the famous rabbi think about the salvation of the Jews?
- Jesus doesn’t directly answer the question. Instead, “strive to enter by the narrow door.” Jesus makes this personal for the man asking, “Are you saved?”
- This is the only time in the NT that this particular Greek word for “strive” is used. Used to describe effort engaging in athletic contest or combat. Where we get our word *agonizing*.
- Agonize for salvation? Salvation is NOT something we work for - a gift of God’s grace. BUT, salvation must be something you want - so you humble yourself before God as a poor beggar (Blessed are the poor in spirit), and you surrender to the King. That’s the ONLY way... It’s a narrow door. (See [Matthew 7:13](#)) The only way to receive this free gift is to humble yourself before God and receive the gift of salvation on HIS terms - faith in Jesus Christ.
- To agonize for your salvation is to be consumed by it... “I want it. I’m willing to humble myself and embrace it so I can have what God promises.”
- Your salvation is a matter of **exclusive** faith. Salvation is inclusive in the sense that it’s available to anyone. Remember, Luke’s Gospel is universal. He’s writing to Gentiles. Salvation is available to all - it’s

inclusive - but exclusive in the sense is that the only way to receive salvation is through faith in Jesus.

- **Salvation is not a given.** Pluralistic culture - All roads lead to heaven, many ways to God, you do you, it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe, etc. Or, in a Jewish culture - salvation a given because "we're God's people." Salvation isn't given to you because you were born in a particular family, go to a particular church, or because you sincerely believe in whatever you believe in.
- **Salvation is not on your terms.** You don't set the conditions for salvation. You don't get to define the way. You don't get to make a way. God does. If He is the author of your salvation, He sets the terms. He makes the way. He chooses how He wants to save and who He wants to save.
- Objections: "You Christians are so narrow-minded in your beliefs." No, We're not narrow-minded, but we are convinced the door is narrow.
- You may not like that the door is narrow. Doesn't matter. You may wish the way was broad. Doesn't matter. What you want, what you think, etc. doesn't matter. What matters is the truth that Jesus says, "The door is narrow. Strive to enter the door."

Salvation is a matter of urgent attention.

- Not many will enter... Why? 2 reasons: 1. Rejection of God's Messiah (The Way) - What Jesus has already been warning the religious leaders of. 2. The opportunity to enter the narrow door will pass. There will come a moment when it's too late to enter. ([Luke 12:35](#) - Jesus already told us He's coming back... Once He returns, it will be too late to enter the door. OR, once you die it will be too late.) [Hebrews 9:27](#) - Everyone will stand before the judge - BUT... will you stand before the judge clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, covered by His blood because of your faith? This is urgent!

- The narrow door will close. Time will run out. You do not have all the time in the world to figure out how you will respond to the Gospel. You may not have the rest of the day!
- On that day, you will wish you have entered. Jesus: Many will stand at the door knocking and begging to be let in: “Lord, we knew you... We were around you. We ate meals with you.” The Pharisees could have said that. Many Pharisees were acquainted with Jesus. [Luke 14](#): another story of Jesus in the home of the Pharisees. The Pharisees/religious leaders had plenty of opportunity to embrace Jesus as Messiah, but they didn’t. They may have associated with Him, even on a personal level, but they ultimately rejected. It would be too late.
- Similar to [Matt. 7:21-23](#).
- Instead of being let in, many will be thrown into the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. A description of eternal torment. (Only time Luke uses this description. This is serious!
- To the Jews this is a heart-wrenching description: “You will see your forefathers, but you will not be with them. Instead, people from the east and west will be. The last will be first and the first will be last.”
- Who will be with Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, and the prophets? Gentiles who believe! The “last” to hear the Gospel... They will respond in faith. But the “first” to hear, the Jews, will reject. The door will close, and it will be too late.
- And, unless you respond, the door may close for you. Two questions:
- **Do you merely hang around the door?** Some of you have hung around the door for a long time. You like some of the benefits of Christianity but you don’t have a saving relationship with Jesus. You like the friendships the church offers. You like that there’s something good here for your children, convinced they need to be raised in the church. You like the theological discussions. You like learning. You hang around,

but you have not entered. You have not turned from your sins. You are not walking with Jesus.

- **Or, have you entered the door?** Have you turned from your sins and placed your faith in Jesus alone for your salvation?
- Ill. - Christmas lights - people hang around, but they do not come in. I wave, but I don't know them. I'd love for them to come in and tell me how great I am.

Salvation is a matter of a Spirit-led decision.

- After Jesus' conversation with the questioning man, Jesus approached by the Pharisees. "Herod wants to kill you." NOT Herod the great but Herod the Great's son, Antipas.
- Maybe the Pharisees were in allying with Antipas and setting a trap for Jesus.
- Herod Antipas already killed John the Baptist, and now Jesus? Jesus' bravery. He's on the way to Jerusalem to accomplish His Father's mission. "Go tell that fox..." Jesus has work to do, and He's not going to let Herod Antipas stand in the way of the work that the Father has for Him. In Greek language "Fox" is a homophone with Saul... Saul couldn't stop God's plan to anoint David as king, and Herod, the fox, couldn't stop God's plan to stop the Father from fulfilling His purpose in Jesus, the descendant of David.
- "Not possible for a prophet to perish outside of Jerusalem." Zechariah and Jeremiah died in Jerusalem. Tradition says Isaiah died in Jerusalem. These great prophets killed in Jerusalem for their message. It would be no different for Jesus. He knows His purpose - to die on a cross just outside the walls of Jerusalem. If Herod wanted Jesus dead, Herod would have to come to Jerusalem and kill Him.

- This ONE who will die in Jerusalem, not at the hands of Herod, but by the determined plan of God, is brokenhearted over Jerusalem. They just won't get it.
- Jesus' compassion on display. He thinks about this sacred city, a place He had visited many times as He went to festivals each year. The place of the temple of God. A place where people should have embraced Jesus as Messiah. Jesus like a mothering hen - he wants to gather the people under His protection. Yet, they were not willing.
- They would not embrace Jerusalem, and eventually Jerusalem would be destroyed in 70 A.D. (your house is abandoned - vs. 35) -
- Section ends with quote from [Ps. 118:26](#). In Jesus' day, they did not recognize Him as Messiah, but there would be a day, upon His return, that they would, then it would be too late. The door would be closed.
- The Messiah present among His people, determined to go to Jerusalem to die the death we all deserve and then rise victoriously. He has come to save, but, for the Jews, "They were not willing..."
- **Are you willing?** Your salvation is a matter of a Spirit-led decision. Today, the Spirit of God convicting you, opening your eyes to truth. Are you willing to place your faith in the King?
- For you today:
 - **It's time to empty yourself of prideful self-centeredness once and for all.** You hang around the door, but you don't strive. You don't see your need to humble yourself before God. Why? Pride... Pride is keeping you from walking through the door. Empty yourself of pride.
 - **It's time to admit you don't know as much as you think you do.** Maybe you don't walk through the door because you think you know better. You know it all, and in your mind you think you know that Jesus can't be the only way. Admit today that you aren't God. You don't know it all, but there is a God who does know it all, and He

knows what He wants for you - a relationship with Him through His Son.

- **It's time to admit you're not as good as you think you are.** You're not that good at all. You are a sinner who deserves hell. Admit your sin and need for a Savior.
- **It's time to pursue the One who gives you life.** (Abundant and eternal.) Salvation is costly for you ([Luke 9:23](#), [Luke 12:49-59](#)), and it is costly for Jesus. But what it costs you doesn't even compare to what you gain - a relationship with Jesus.
- This morning He is inviting you to enter the narrow door. Repent and turn to Him. Enter the door by faith.
- Follower of Jesus - You're in! When is the last time you thanked God for your salvation? Worshipped Him? Live like it! Living like it means you grow to be like Jesus and you point people to the door. You're willing to have hard conversations with friends and family members who are lost. You know the way! Bring people to the way.