

Luke 13:23-30 Are There Few That Be Saved?

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION OF LIFE: 13:23 Most likely not one of the disciples.

It was the prevalent opinion among the Jews that few would enter heaven. But, also, they would be first. They surmised that two of all Israel entered into the land of Canaan, so they, not the gentiles, a proportionally small number would enter into heaven. It was an issue of personal pride and stature. They did know the Lord, but felt sure as a “special” people, they would be saved.

The important question is, "What shall I do, and what will become of me?" Lord, What must I do to be saved. Find the answer!!

THE ATONEMENT WAS FOR ALL, BUT NOT ALL WILL BELIEVE: 13:24 -
“Strive” - αγωνιζεσθε, agonize-exert every power of body and soul-let your salvation be the grand business of your whole life. It was a warning not to trifle with so important an issue as salvation. Strive is the second person plural. Strive like someone who is running for the finish line, as an athlete. Push yourselves to the limit. Show yourselves diligent as if you were training for the big race.

THERE IS A TIME LIMIT THAT GOD HAS SET: 13:25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Door of Distinction: You must be born again

Door of Denial: The door of mercy and grace had been open for years, but they would not enter. They hoped to climb up some other way, and to get to heaven by their own merits. Therefore, when the Master of the house is risen up he will justly shut that door. When Noah was safe in the ark, God shut the door, and excluded all who had refused to take salvation as a serious issue.

Many are ruined by a false hope of heaven, and conclude their spiritual condition is good enough because they never doubted it. They say Lord, Lord; they desire to enter in by that door which they had formerly thought unimportant. What were the grounds for their religious confidence?

MANY WILL MAKE EXCUSES, BUT NOT PREVAIL: 13:26 - Judas ate bread with Christ, dipped his bread in the same dish as Jesus. Many, under the cloak of their professions, receive the Lord's supper, and in it partake of the children's bread, as if they were children, but will not enter the kingdom of God (self-righteous religion).

Secondly, They had been Christ's hearers, had received instruction from him, and were well acquainted with his doctrine and law (religious knowledge).

Thirdly, He taught in their streets (religious heritage).

GOD KNOWS THE WICKEDNESS OF THEIR HEART: 13:27 - You do not belong to my family. The Lord knows them that are his. You are not of me. You are not from above.

JUDGMENT IS THE ONLY REALITY THEY WILL KNOW: 13:28 - There will be the greatest degree of grief and suffering. Part of this suffering is the knowledge that others are going to be joyous and you will not. You shall see the patriarchs and prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.

The sight of the saint's glory will be a great aggravation of their misery. They shall see the kingdom of God and the prophets, whom they hated and despised, and themselves, though they thought they were sure of it, thrust out.

GOD'S JUDGMENT IS ALL ENCOMPASSING: 13:29

WE ENTER HEAVEN THROUGH THE POWER AND WISDOM OF GOD - 13:30
And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

First, in this world: the scribes and Pharisees stood first in God's kingdom as to their outward position and privileges; but by rejecting Christ, they made themselves last, while the publicans and sinners and the gentile nations, whom they despised, by receiving him, became first; and so it has often been since. Secondly, in the world to come, where many that have stood high in reputation and outward privileges will be thrust down to hell, and many that have here been despised and persecuted will be exalted to glory everlasting.

Many of the Gentiles who were latest called, shall be most highly rewarded; and many of the Jews who were first called, shall have no reward at all.

CF. Matthew 20:1-16; Romans 9:30-33