

Okay We're going to begin in the gas on the gospel of Matthew today It was a toss up to where I was going to go Matthew sat on my little turn there and as I said last week Many journeys take place along this road of life And I think it could be fairly safe to say

that every one of us I'm gonna speak out of this mic

There's a backup Okay, yeah Oh, feedback. Is that too close?

No, that should be alright. Okay, so I think it's fairly safe to say that

everybody, for one of us find it exciting when we get involved in planning and experiencing some sort of trip that's coming up. We all do this.

I don't care where you should go. Last summer I just saved this. Last summer, Saturday night, I took a trip up to Sudbury and our intention of that trip was to stop into a provincial park that our friends on this side know very well. Grundy Lake it's called and I got really excited about that and it's just up the road not too far I'd say what three -hour drive right in the heart of Ontario and I got excited about it because I've never been there before and Sandy and I like this hoof that through the woods and you know we go hiking and just getting eaten up by a bear is kind of exciting you know so so I made mention of this sort of in the last section on Pentecost that I brought and I also made a message or mention of that all these physical journeys we get involved in are all temporary because we always seem to be returning back in the same place in which we started so they're temporary but you know let's consider right now, at the very outset of this message, that on these physical journeys we settled upon, you know something we usually know where it is that we're going, how long it's going to take us to get there, and almost within the hour, when we're going to return. It's uncanny, isn't it, when you think about it? It's temporary. So, what I want to talk about about today, this is kind of an exciting message. There's parts that aren't exciting, but I think it's overall exciting. What I'm gonna talk about today is the overall idea of you and I, it's all about us, right? Not all about us, but we're talking from that perspective. It's about God and what he's doing really. So I take that back in a correction. But what it is, you and I are personally desiring to enter through this broad gate.

Correction. Not the broad gate. The narrow gate. Just testing to see if you're listening. And that is just up ahead of us. So I saved the title, this message, the narrow gate of entry. That's the title.

The narrow gate of entry. So here in Chapter 7 of Matthew's Gospels, we read something very important and serious. These are words of Jesus Christ. And the journey is underway right now. Not tomorrow, not next week. What will be happening then too? But it's today. The heart's beating right now and it could stop in the next moment. It's not going to, but it could.

Be real about it, okay?

So, Jesus gives us and gives them, at his time, there in his day, the necessary attributes of what's going to take two,

verse 13, Matthew 7, "Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate,  
And broad is the way that leads to destruction.

And there are many who go in by it. Why?

Because narrow is the gate, and difficult is the way which leads to life.

And guess what? There are few who find it about the gate,  
right? Right here. All this here, none left out, are all enroute to a specific  
destination that leads to eternal life that only the few find.

That's the scary part, that's the scary part about what I'm talking about today. Few  
it is who find it. Not the majority.

This is the most serious case of entry we will ever enter through.

Think on that for a moment.

Think about traveling today. Think about if you're gonna go to Japan, or you're  
gonna go to France, you're gonna go to Spain, you're gonna Down under,  
you're Australian. Think about that. We have to have something in order in order to  
get through that physical gate. Even if you get outside of our own physical gate,  
it's called Pearson, right? Yeah.

It's a passport of entry.

this before? No passport? No entry? Right.

Capiche? Yeah. Having the proper credentials is

a serious deal if we want to get through and past our physical borders.

Speaking here in a physical sense. Now a very similar scenario is to be considered  
when we are able to enter through this narrow gate that I have already brought up  
into the coming kingdom of God. Do you think it's any different?

I think it's more demanding, because I can go up and buy a passport and get it in  
probably about 10 days.

I Can't buy this passport I'm talking about.

Now, there could be any number of places that I could choose to move beyond where  
I am right now into this subject, but let's consider this. You guys are all  
difficult students. So I'm talking to the choir here, and it's a very well -versed  
choir. By the way, your singing here was just Amazing that's why I say very well  
verse choir. I enjoyed those three hints. Well done So there could be a number of  
places We're gonna stay in Matthew here for a bit Let's consider this parable  
chapter now they Call Matthew 13 the parable chapter. We're gonna get there,  
too But let's go to 22 this time Matthew 22 And I'm going to read the first 14  
verses. Let's turn there because back in his time back at Christ's time Christ was  
renowned for speaking to the crowds in these  
parables right

He was a master at the ability to speak in parables and here's something else on  
my notes, but he never spoke, he says something, I don't know where it is, he says  
it somewhere, I just thought of this. They never spoke anything, the father didn't  
tell him to speak. Can you imagine that? Not speaking any of his own words, could  
that be true? I didn't look at scripture, but I just thought of it. It was all  
coming from a download from the father.

He was more than we can imagine. Anyway, the narrow gate, we all have our focus on

that entrance into this coming kingdom Where we all know Something incredible is going to happen. There's going to be a wedding. There's going to be a wedding taking place there And this is what Matthew 22 is talking about.

So Jesus spoke about this in a parable found here in this particular chapter here in the Bible. And I quote verse one, "And again Jesus answered and spoke to him again. He was having a time there. He was speaking in parables. Quite a bit. And we recorded in this book of Matthew quite a lot. And the king of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, verse two.

And he sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding and they were not willing to come. Can you imagine that? They weren't willing to come. Invitation by the king and they weren't gonna come. Again he said, "How do you serve it?" Saying, "Tell those who are invited. Look it, see I have prepared my dinner and my ox and my facet cattle are killed and all the things are ready. Come to the wedding." But they made light of it and went their own ways,

one to his own farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants and treated them spitefully and killed them. And when the king heard about it, He was furious and he set out his armies and destroyed those murders and burned up their city in Berset and he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited are not worthy. Therefore go into the highways and as many as you can find, invite to the wedding." Verse 10, "So the servants went of the highways and gathered them together all whom they found both bad and good and the wedding hall was filled with guests but when the king came to see the guests he saw a man who did not have on a wedding garment and he said to him he called him a friend even didn't he he said friend how did you come in here without a wedding garment.

The man was speechless. And the king said to his servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness. And there will be weakly, and as Janine would say, "Gnashing of teeth." "Gnashing of teeth." In verse 14,

for many are called, "The few are children." That is what I was talking about earlier. there's a scary part about this whole thing that's the scary part the few will be chosen so this is quite an interesting parable brother to consider the king's son's wedding had been planned and arranged and from the guest list the invitation percent have but declined they all declined the invitation to attend this most serious wedding. Now, to the same people,

a second invitation was sent out telling of more details than the first invitation.

And the second invitation, again, fell on deaf ears.

Fell on deaf ears, the people showing little interest to attend the King's wedding feast for a son,

being wrapped up in their own things and their own happenings. They got wrapped up in their life. They couldn't get out of it. Now with the second invitation,

those who received the invitations responded, But they responded in disrespect to the king's method, and you know something, it went so bad to the point where they even killed some of them. I can't imagine that. I'd be up in a crowbar hotel if I did that. The king's kindness and generosity had been despised,

and so the king responded back in his own fury.

If we were kings, we would have done that too.

All of these things happened. Then what took place? As we read there, in the parable, a third invitation was sent, and only this time to do others who were more or less everyday types of people. It's like you and I, everyday types. In this way, the wedding was finally, after all that time and invitations, appointed with the guests. Now, think about this. The rest of them here. The custom in those days, we read this in commentaries, by the way. The one hosting the wedding feast, in this case, it was the king, provided the overgarments. I'd walk in with this on, but they gave me a garment to put on. So the king, in this day, was providing the overgarments for the wedding guests. Now, the wedding garments were probably simple robes that all the guests wore. And the idea behind it was to achieve equality, to cover up the individual ranks of the people so that the people could all mingle back and forth much more easily and you don't think about that for a minute that's very important because we all need to mingle back and forth as equals that's what we should be doing makes us think of another scripture it's back in the book of Revelation don't turn there I need to quote it for you Revelation 9 verse 18 now This kind of describes the symbology of the cloning, okay? It says there, "And the bride of Christ, "it was granted to be clothed in fine linen, "clean and bright, for the linen "is the righteousness of the saints." Now, although that was the bride being talked about, Christ is being referenced here a lot was a bride of Christ being referenced to here the wedding garments identifies the righteousness more or less of the people okay so it's a symbology there those who are doing what we're living according to God's ways that's really what it is when the King entered the wedding hall he noticed the one guest he stood out from the rest because he was not doing one he was not wearing the garment that the king asked them all to wear he says in verse 12 he says friend how did you come in here without a wedding garment now It might have been better phrased like this. Why are you not wearing a wedding garment? Even though one had been prepared for you, it might have been a better way of putting it.

The man was plainly not dressed for the occasion.

It's like me showing up down on my sauna with my winter coat on. Not dressed for the occasion. It's a different analogy, but the same idea. It wouldn't happen, right? So his lack of a wedding garment, which is really of extreme disrespect at this particular thing that was taking place.

And it showed disrespect to the king and as well to the son.

Think about that analogy too.

Now again, according to the wording, end of verse 12, this man was speechless, had nothing to say about it, probably indicating that he never had an excuse, right?

It was just an idea that he lacked to have on the right wedding garment. It was because he did not see that in verse 13. It says they're binding, handed foot. Didn't show any

hesitation. Bind them handed foot, take them away and cast them into outer darkness, and there is going to be a lot of this weaving and gnashing of teeth.

A lot of unhappy campers there. Now, the man without the wedding garment desired to honor the king by attending the feast, but he did not want to follow the custom of the king.

He wanted to do things his way. He heard that statement before.

His lack of proper address revealed his inner rebellion.

Against the king, against the instructions, so then he became a rebel.

Now this last phrase we know so well. I quoted it and probably you say oh he quotes that phrase a lot. I'll quote it again. We can't quote this one enough.

We need to stay with it.

And it's classified, and I had to double -click this on my Mac if I knew what it meant, it's called a cryptic phrase. Ever heard of it? Cryptic phrase.

A mysterious phrase, a mystifying phrase, a perplexing phrase, or even a puzzling phrase. That's what the word "cryptic" stands for, according to Wikipedia.

I get lazy in looking stuff up, but a lot of times I do that, and it's pretty good most of the time. So there you have it from Wikipedia. What is it? Matthew 22 verse 14, Matthew 20 verse 16 says this, and you probably know it. I'll have you off the turn there. Many of you are called fewer children. That's a cryptic phrase.

You know, God's calling clearly corresponds with the king's invitation and everybody needs an invitation. And it went out to the original guest list.

Who were they?

Israel and Judah, whose people were killed in war whose city was burned.

You can see that there in Matthew 22, I think it's round verse 7, and then making the wedding invitation after that to mankind generally. Can you wrap your mind around that taking place? Originally probably these were people of nobility.

Didn't happen. So God goes up and calls the general population or the king here. to wear the wedding garment in today's age is going to be a far smaller group than we all think.

Remember that many are called few are chosen.

That's a big statement. That's a cryptic phrase to keep in your mind and this life in Christ is calling we've been given this is no small thing and I'll tell you right now this is not milk this is serious stuff we get two chances to this right there's three or maybe there's four no I can see a hand going up one This is it and my my heart quits right now The deal's up. I can't work out my salvation any longer. That's what it is. It's a situation So it's no small thing So I like talking like this because you know I talked to first the guy look at in the mirror Talk to myself I'm just sharing it with you and I probably or you probably could not hear this message enough because Reg and I talked on the phone last night and the Reg said this you know Stephen if we make it into the kingdom it's gonna be by the skin of our teeth I don't have any skin on mine by the way don't the serious feel.

That's how I see it. I want us all to be there. We all want to know through that. What, the narrow gate? No kidding. That's why we're here, right?

So,  
there's no small thing. And if we have been at this for a while, we have come to realize that it is our everything.  
Right? So everything  
For sure It's not our everything And I'll see it this way It's the most important part of our being In other words, it is everything  
Let's go to Matthews 13. I mentioned that already Matthew 13, let's turn there, so often it's very easy to get down or to let down or thinking. We tell ourselves, "Oh, we're members of... I'm a member of the Church of God International, I'm a member of the United Church of God or whatever the chapter happens to be." And we get what? We get relaxed in our conduct, relaxed in our spiritual growth,  
Or we can actually come to the point where we can even regard ourselves to be automatically chosen  
Can happen Can happen that guy you look at in the mirror or that woman you look at in the mirror we can come up with that in our minds I'm automatically chosen because I kept a Sabbath last week big deal Is that a negative no It's not a negative because we are to do that.  
Do we have it made? No, and yes  
Right, yeah, we do have it made because Christ made it for us. He thinks it all possible So we don't have it made in that regard,  
But you know, if we get into this, we have a made scenario thinking, it becomes incredibly dangerous thinking. I remember a ministry I used to listen to years ago, he calls it stinking thinking. Ever heard that phrase? Stinking thinking.  
This is not the truth. Oh, we've got it made, and it becomes dangerous.  
Our emphasis, especially, now as things are heating up, and don't turn your television on,  
everything's getting blown up. - Yeah. - That's what you see in there.  
But we must be working super hard  
to make our election sure. Matthew 13, we're going there,  
right? Is that what we're using? I said to go, yeah, Matthew 13. I've got my Bible open, wow, I'm excited. Let's see here, Matthew 13. Parable of the Sower.  
It begins there in verse three, but you know, I'm gonna go across the page to 18. I'm gonna read this one. This is the Parable of the sower explained. It's 18 to 23 grand here. Let me read that. "Therefore, here the parable of the sower, when anyone hears the word of the Canaan and does not understand it, what happens? All scratch, the wicked one, comes and snatches that away which is sown in his heart. This is the one that was sown by the way. Now the one who is sown upon a rocky place is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy. But because he has no reason himself, he does not endure. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, he gets what? He is quickly offended.  
And  
The one who is sown among the thorns is the one who hears the word, but cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches actually choked the word and it becomes unfruitful. But the one who is sown on good ground,

this is the one who hears the word and understands who indeed brings forth fruit  
And produces has anybody done them, but I'm gonna read here now and produces a  
hundred fold another 60 fold and Another 30 I

Don't know if I've ever done that.

I was taking more 200, but that's not in here I'm just kidding to say that,  
but this is kind of a thing we have to consider, isn't it? We've got to be  
producing fruit. Yeah. Now, the parable of the sower warns and advises us on the  
course of our lives once we hear the word of the kingdom.

verse 19, right?

Some never get behind the mere hearing of it. Why? Because Old Scratch he's  
successful in doing his dirty work at keeping these ones completely in the dark.

These people, though technically called,

Let's just say they're probably going to come up with a second resurrection When  
they will be able to respond to God without all scratches interference

Planet God tells us that Now in verse 20 and 21 Jesus describes those who received  
the word with joy but they lack something they lack this depth they lack this depth  
that you guys have they don't have it right their spiritual roots are are so  
shallow that they're easily withered by this adversity that they come across they  
experience a few early trials and quickly these people over like a non-supported  
wall in a light wind.

That happens.

Happens to you probably a lot more than we can consider.

Sadness keeping, for example, becomes nothing more than a stumbling block.

Leaves of thinking that, oh, God's way is too difficult for me.

I can't afford to take \$200 a glass a week or \$300 a glass a week or whatever  
the case may be. That's what they say to themselves. Been there, done that, years  
ago. I had to repent of that.

I'll dare say, a lot of us had to repent of that. Am I being critical of you?

No. I'm not. I'm just saying that's human life.

Another group appears in verse 22. Those in whom they carry to this world and the  
deceitfulness of riches actually come around.

Here's what it takes place.

It puts a choke cold.

That's a bit of theatrics. -Fatrice though, isn't it? -Yeah. It puts a choke cold  
on things. So some resident in the former days, you know this, they did find  
success in the world and their wealth and position became more important to them  
than doing what God was asking them to do. It's real.

Well, I wouldn't do that. That's me talking this off the mirror.

So, their wealth and success and this position of life became more important to them  
than doing what God was asking them. And they, what did they do?

They turned down their calling.

You guys haven't done that. How long have you been in the church? Some have been  
in this church for eons, 30, 20, 40 years.

And you know something? It hasn't even got difficult yet. Think about it.

I tore Matthew 24 out of my Bible. I didn't want to read it. It's bad.

We haven't got there yet.

Check my Bible, it's still there by the way.

Matthew 24.

Yes.

Yes, I've got it still.

They turn down your calling. Such a person gets distracted by the world and chooses to prioritize God, not first, but a long way down the list.

I don't know what number it would be, maybe five or six or seven. Everything else comes first.

Spiritual growth stagnates. This one does not spend time with God any longer.

God's way down the list now, right? But he gets swallowed up in his own way.

And spiritual growth stops. And this one becomes what? No fruits happening.

No production of fruit. In other words, he quit producing the character of God.

This character that God wants to see develop, the transformation into the image of Christ comes to a standstill.

Matthew 13 verse 23 describes a group that we all must be in to be chosen, but he who received the seed on the good ground, he who hears the word and understands it,

and who He bears this fricking process, some hundred,

some sixty, some thirty. I joked about that earlier, but that's no joke.

We don't joke about this stuff. This is living serious. Let me say a dead serious.

Well, this is living serious.

The one whom God praises are those who are going to bear this important fruit.

How do they do this? By overcoming their old sinful nature and growing in the traits of the Savior written there for us in Galatians

In Galatians everywhere on verse 19 it starts off and there's y'all the dirt It stops at the dirt gives y'all that what is it 17 or 19 bad things that you want

to get rid of a lot of them And then there's what how many seven or nine or something good ones? Get rid of Put out put in put up put in that's how that

works out. I'm gonna go like you've been there so many times Galatians fine

Well, let's do this Let's go to John 15 this time another verse here a Passover

verse This bearing of fruit John 15 This bearing of fruit is a requirement of being chosen Just as Jesus explained notice verse one and two and I quote I am the true

vine, and my father is the vine dresser. Every branch that there's not bear fruit,

guess what they do with it? He takes it away. In other words, he moves it,

cuts it off, prunes it off, and every branch that bears fruit, he pricks.

Why? That it may bear more fruit. Then he ends the passage by saying,

"By this my father is glorified, that you," write your name in there,

"bear much fruit, and if you do that, so you will be my disciples." Verse 8.

Now what happens when one of the called fails to bear fruit?

In verse 6 Jesus expand here. He expands on this what he said in verse 2 And I'll quote there verse 6 if anyone does not add

If anyone does not add in me what does it say? I got add. What is it? Bye? Thank

you I wrote that's got us as a type of if anybody does not abide in me. He is cast out

As a branch And it's withered and they gather them and throw them in the fire and guess what happens there They regrow again. No, no They get burned up end of quote The unfruitful the unfruitful branches ultimately end up where in the hot sauna right in the lake of fire We all feel to produce fruit at what?

At the expense of eternal peril.

Is that not strong enough?

We all produce, we all fail to produce, rather, fruit at our eternal peril.

That means favorite to live again,

you know what? I don't like that. I don't want to miss out on that Now the important question is now that we've been called We're producing a fruit that glorifies God transforming into the image

of the rage of red bandalua? No. Of Jesus the Messiah. I think that's what,

I think that's what Christ stands for. But are you right to say that? Is it

Messiah? Jesus Christ, not Christ was not his last name. That stands for Messiah.

Jesus is a Messiah. Now Romans 12 too. I'm going to read it for you.

It says there, and you guys, and If you hear this, if you can't quote it, it'll ring in your brain hundreds of times, and you know it's in there,

you know it's stored in the hard drive. It's not on top of your shoulders. If

anyone, Romans, what is it? What did they say it was?

Twelve two, yes. And do not be conformed to the world, this world.

But be what? Be formed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable will of God. If we do this, brethren,

if we do this, I'm yet excited to think about it.

We will be among the chosen, the elected, the glorified with Christ. A very interesting concept in Christianity that has come down over time and is still taking place today is at the Church of God and that's what the Bible calls up the New Testament. I mentioned that last time. It's called Church of God eight times in the New Testament. I don't know where it is. It says that there. Eight different times.

The Church of God in this age is being

Sifted where? Sifted at the gates and the result of those who will enter in are what the Bible refers to as what? First Fruits.

First Fruits.

This is not my notes. The guy in our seat is fairly biblical.

I talk about first roots one time and I don't think you got it.

I've seen it a little simple to me.

There's simplicity in Christ, right? But I'm serious, I was kind of surprised at that.

So, Church of God in this age is going to be sifted at the gates,

and the result of those who will enter in is what I just said are going to be referred to as the first three. Now, Jesus Christ, as we know, is the only one so far who has entered in as the first of the first three.

Where we find ourselves at this point in time, we realize that through the plan of

God, our understanding of the annual holy days,  
that only the few are going to enter in. Now not many have been called,  
are gonna enter in. "The many won't enter in, only the few will." The task at hand  
is to follow Christ's instruction. I came down through the Apostle Paul. How did  
Paul put it? He says, "With the putting off and the putting on, in order to enter  
through this narrow gate that we're discussing, we have to put off the old man and  
put on the new Christ in order to get through and not get sifted, not enter in.  
Did Jesus clearly tell us that the many would not be able to enter in,  
which really is a result of being sorted out of these two gates?

Yes. Two times you read it Matthew 2016 and where else Matthew 22 verse 14  
The first one was a vineyard workers. The second one was the ones invited to what  
we read about in the wedding feast

Ordinary people things to me workers ordinary people  
Christ's Christ states

At the end of these sections of scripture He states that in that brethren is an  
attention grabber. It always has been for me We've been to Matthew 7 13.

I'm gonna quote it again enter through the narrow gate for wide as a gate and  
broad is a way that leads to destruction and many are those who enter in through  
it. Now this indicates a narrow way and

if you saw it because the way that is broader -wide leads somewhere where we do not  
want to go.

We don't want to be traveling there. Remember the destination. We aren't getting  
excited about traveling to a wide gate It's a narrow gate. We're getting excited  
about so what makes the gate wide?

Maybe we should ask what makes up this Broadway, which leads so many to this Why  
do

Where can a person start to answer that question? You guys can bring up a sermon  
on that, just that one. But we don't need to take every scripture in ball.

We just need a couple, so we just need the idea. We need this right? So you could  
start it like this. How about a false sense of freedom?

Could that be one of the characteristics of this Broadway? That leads to this white  
gate

What about

Lack of restriction. Oh Most people want as much freedom as much lack of restriction  
So they can live their lives any way they want to. Ever watched a 2025 or yeah,  
2025 movie? They're garbage.

Raw sex,

shooting, shooting another human being. The everyday occurrence on TV.

It's insane. Insane. That's what old scratch is transmitting down. This is Broadway.

It leads to nowhere good believing. And there are many who enter it in through  
that. Now this indicates a more narrow way. This more narrow way is to be sought  
out because the way this is brought away leads to a destination? I know you don't  
want to go to. If I looked on that broad path, I wouldn't see you guys. You

wouldn't be there, right? No, guaranteed you wouldn't be. So what about this lack of

restriction? Most people want much freedom. I said that already. What takes place is that millions upon millions seek this broader way, which is the way of this world. Why? Because it rejects God and His way of life. People assume that they can benefit from doing or to do what they want to do rather than what God says is best for them. You see that? Very clear. Yet Proverbs says this, I'll quote it. Proverbs 14 verse 12 says, you probably know what it is. For those memory scriptures, there is a way that seems right to a man, but his end is a way of death.

Now, apart from God's way, we cannot have freedom of choice and freedom from death at the same time. We can't. They don't go hand in hand.

In God's church, we understand that God's character is expressed in his definition of right and wrong. Therefore, sin really amounts to a personal rejection of the Godhead.

Think about the character of Christ, about the character of the Father. What is taking place is that God is building his own character in every one of us.

And his spirit is what? Nothing less than the transforming power of how he's doing that. Do we understand that?

If We are to become like our father. We must be transformed aimlessly and we learn to choose and

That this is a choice That he would want us to make Choosing him choosing Christ  
That is their will our  
will My will,

your will, this is our power to choose, and God is changing our wills that we will choose as He does for how long. Just a short period of time,

right? Absolutely no. For eternity,  
the conversion we're all in,

it's a process. It's not a quick fix as people in God's church recede in God's laws, not as restrictions in our lives, but rather as blessings in our lives.

Well, why? Because we're still physical. We're not yet in this complete stage.

We must make the effort. And this is difficult at times to submit our will over to and obey his will, even though the carnal flesh tells us not to.

It's hard to do. It's not easy. We're all carnal. We're all still mixed up in this situation. It's a battle going on, a battle for the mind, darkness in life, back and forth.

However, As we grow in this conversion process and we gain more practice in yielding to God's will,

God's spirit works in us and changes our will, transforming us to become more and more like Him in Christ. It's a process, it's an amazing process. For example, a lot of people can relate to this when I talk about this. Think about your children growing up and they often had these days of activity and you open up the room into the door into the room and it was like a hurricane hit us and we tell them okay it's supper time put away all this stuff come down within about 15 minutes if we're getting ready but I want your room cleaned up first and they were not too super happy to do that and probably they're with grumbling going on at the

time but you know what they obeyed and soon to someone else's. That's how it works. When we obey, we are doing what somebody else and doing what somebody else chooses, that chooses for us. It's not necessarily what we want to do. We do it anyway. I spent 40 years doing that. 40 over 40 years doing that. It's called working for somebody else. Now, it's not your children's will to clean up their room, is it?

But it was our will for them to do it. So they did And they were being taught to obey now I've got a 42 year old Saniyapa 42 year old and they have their own homes and they keep them Homes of theirs clean as a pin They chose to keep their homes clean orally because their will has been changed, right? It's not what they want and no one has to tell them how to do it, right?

That might remind you of something. Proverbs 22 -6, you're going to know this one too when I quote it, "Praying of a child in the way he should go, And when he's older, he will not depart from that. This is what life does to us. It shot this us up. We were all kids, now we're growing up. And we're a little more wise than we were when we were 15 or 20 or 30.

Our choices change us. This is why trials take place.

And these trials, you know what, brethren? They can be blessings. And the broad way and the narrow way do not look the same to converting Christians as they do to the world. The world rejects an narrow way because it limits what they want to do.

But it does not look restrictive to us. It looks inviting to us.

It is what we choose, brethren, that really counts. The more we choose the ways of God, the closer we become to our Savior and to our Father.

Now the time to be doing that, as we already know, is right now.

Now what makes the gate narrow?

Human nature makes it wide. What makes the gate narrow. And we know this.

And again, this is kind of a negative but it's reality. Not everyone can enter through the narrow gate. Let's go to Romans 6 this time. Not everyone can go through this narrow gate. There are qualifications.

A passport is needed, so to speak. Let's see something on this in Romans.

22 but now having been set free from sin and having become slaves to God you have your fruit to holiness and the end everlasting life for the wages of sin is death

but the gift of God is what? eternal life In Jesus Christ our Lord,

we have to be in Christ, but called on once we have the Holy Spirit and are led by it throughout our lives, as we know, will be resurrected to immortality and will enter the kingdom of God through that broad and wide gate, no, the narrow gate.

Nothing that is profaned by sin will be on the other side of that narrow gate.

In that kingdom, they won't exist on the holy mountain of God.

I'm talking spiritually here. Okay, there's going to be physical people there. Those are the ones left over from Matthew 24, physically left over. It won't be many in comparison to what it was before it started. But the spiritual ones, they're going to be perfect at that point.

Those who die as unrepented practitioners of sin will not be resurrected to

immortality. They will only have a physical resurrection. And for physical bodies, death is inevitable.

It is really true, brother, that the wages of sin is death, just as we read here in Paul's letter to the church at Rome.

Now there is so much that can be said concerning this narrow gate.

The question we need to ask is what do you, what do I, what do we really want?

God's way of life or

Now, as long as we live in a flesh, by the way, first 2nd Corinthians 11, as long as we live in a flesh, we can still be tempted and deceived, right?

And Paul warned the church about this, 2nd Corinthians 11, Paul warned the church about this, who was constantly concerned about deception in the church. And for good reason, because the more difficult on the way, the narrow path is the path of truth.

The difficult way is the path of truth. Once we get into deception, we veer off this narrow path and end up in what we would refer to as the ditches.

Paul again, the church at Corinth here, 2 Corinthians 11,

verses 2 to 4, says here, "For I am jealous with you, for I am jealous for you, with what? With a godly jealousy, for I have betrothed you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear that somehow, as the serpent deceived ye by a craftiness, so your mind may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ for he Who comes preaching and other Jesus whom we have not preached or a different gospel of which you have not accepted You may well put up with it and quote Now do you remember I remember this you remember back in the very first stages of your calling where everything God was showing you in the book, in this book right here, everything He was showing you in this book literally jumped right off the pages of it. Whoa! It was incredible.

It doesn't happen so much now because we've been around it for a while, but at first it just jumped off the pages. Let's go to John 17.

We don't want to put up with wrong stuff, by the way. We don't want to put up with a different gospel. John 17, let's turn there. This was the beginning stages of being set apart, and the process of sanctification started to take place.

Gone to John the truth such to be gotten children apart. You know that You're in this section of John's gospel again words of the Passover service Jesus said to the father for us In prayer he went to the father for us in prayer verse 17 down to 19 John 17 verse 17 to 19 and I quote he says here sanctify them by your truth your word is truth as you sent me into the world I've also sent them into the world and for their sakes I sanctify myself that they may also be sanctified by the truth now God's truth shows us the way. So deviating from the faith once delivered is the same as deviating from the course that he's placed us on.

And we're on this course, and it's a what? It's a more difficult way, brethren. It's not easy.

It's not this broad path that leads to destruction.

Do you and I realize why this has taken place? Because God, He looked down at you, He looked down at me, He looked down at us, He said, "I think this person can do it." That's George Janakis, that's Sonia Aldrich, and all the rest of the name in this room I think they can all do it I'm gonna call them I'm gonna see what happens you can go up with something better let me know brethren it's true that this narrow gate has sifted the many in the past decades just as it did in ancient times.

Present. Also considered that the history of Israel shows for the rebellious attitude. The scripture tells us on top of that statement that there's nothing new under the sun. It still takes place. That's the scary part about this. Let's consider something back. I'm over an hour here now, so I'm going to wind this down.

Let's consider something back that Ezekiel wrote. Back in Ezekiel 20, let's go there.

Ezekiel 20, I'm going to pick it up in two verses, 36 to 38. Now, we could read this entire chapter, but let's just quickly summarize. Ezekiel 20 verses 38 these Israelite people in this time heard were being hauled up in the carpet by God finally idolatry look at Ezekiel 20 verse 8 Sabbath breaking idolatry was was in verse 8 they were they carried all the idols out of Egypt they had all kinds of stuff We got idols today, too. Don't kid yourself. You know what the biggest idol is?

Television stuff. It's an idol. Computer. Your own family could be an idol.

There's a real difficult scripture. You want to know what it is I'll tell you later. If you love yourself and your kids more than God, it's an idol. You can't even love your own self more than God. It's not in my notes, I just thought of that. It's a big deal. This is a this is a difficult way. This is this is a narrow gate we're heading to here and I'm not being negative.

Hey, this is not my book. This is an internal thought. I might own the thing, but this is God speaking to us.

So we've got Sabbath breaking, First of all, idolatry, sabbapain. That's what they were doing big time.

We don't want to reproduce that.

The Sabbath day was a sign between God and His people.

It still is.

It's a fight to say what was taking place back there in the healed day.

It wasn't good. It wasn't good. But God has this perfect plan. God is going to restore Israel. Look at this here in verse 30. What did I say? 38, 36 to 30.

My apologies. It's 33 to 38. I think it's 30. Let me check again.

33. "As it live says the Lord," and I quote, "As it live says the Lord, surely with my mighty hand," I showed you with my mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. I will rule over you.

He was cracking Israel. It wasn't wasted anywhere in time. Verse 34,

"I will bring you out in the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with Period. Pour

it out. I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples. There I will plead my case with you. Face to face. Do we go after events we seek God's face? Yeah, we should be. 36, "Just as I pleaded my case with your fathers in the wilderness in the land of Egypt, so will I plead my case with you," says the Lord.

"I will make you pass under the rod. I will make you passed under the rod. I said that twice for a reason. And I will bring it into the bond of what?

The covenant. We worship a covenant God.

Right?

I will purge the rebels from among you and those who trespass against me.

"I will bring them out of the country we were brought in, where they dwell, "but they shall not enter the land or visual. "Then you will know that I am the Lord." And the quote, "Well, here we see what?

"A sifting taking place." This was important stuff.

Back in you'll stay. Now back in these times, I'm going to tell you this, this is something interesting, back in these times the flocks were all tied down, right? Think about that. The tied portion was given to God.

The tenth one was given to God and they passed single file through this narrow gate. Commentaries will tell you this. Every tenth one was separated out.

I found it interesting when I read that a few years ago.

I heard it taught in the days that this particular scriptural, not saying it is, could be dual. It could be the same way today.

Applying both physical and the spiritual levels saying that only, oh this is scary, only a tenth in their church age would make it through the narrow gate of God into the kingdom. Something for us to consider.

But there's above.

Luke 12 verse 32, Christ's very own words recorded for us.

Do not, I quote, "Do not fear little flock, for if your father's good pleasure to give you," write your name in there, "that kingdom is his good pleasure." I like the sound of that.

That kingdom, brother, can only be accessed through this one game we're talking about today, and there's only going to be a few who find that case.

This is a matter of great concern to each and every one of us.

In every chapter of the Church of God today, and in hundreds of them,

It's God's desire for His call at once to be found on this narrow way, heading toward His narrow gate, with His character, with His truth.

That's the clothing,

part of it. Jude 3 says this, "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to who?" The saints.

2nd Timothy 4 verses 3 and 4 are quoted. The apostle Paul, Warren Timothy, for a time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. But according to their own desires, they had their own desires. I've got my own desires. You've got your own desires. Right?

But according to their own desires, because they had itching ears. They heaped up for themselves teachers and they would turn themselves away from the truth and be

turned aside to fables. I hope that never happens to any of us.

Why?

Those who have itching ears Do not value the truth that they've been given  
Such disregard Is a sure way to find themselves in the market for what knowing the  
truth? No deception That's what they're going to be Evolved in deception that happens  
causing them what to veer off this path This very distinct path that Christ  
illuminates for us in this world,  
right here.

You know something? Pride,  
resentment, and doctrinal error put me at risk.

Put Put your risk put us at risk puts the church of God at risk We gotta be  
careful who we're listening to where we're going God will allow those called out  
ones to continue for a short while leaving these risks unattended

But sooner or later He will bring such a person to what This fork in the road  
They're gonna have to make a choice now The way they choose will depend on their  
spiritual condition at that particular point in time It all depends upon me it all  
depends upon you it all depends on how we choose We got female agency  
Those who are unforgiving of others will take the path of a person who can exploit  
their resentment. Why resent that person? You're not forgiving.

I don't like you, Reg. You drank two of my beers.

It's a cheap one. But talk like that. You can add anything you want to that, it's  
a bad example. I'm going off, not my notes here so, but you know,  
that's what it is. So, those who are proud will take the path of those who feed.

They're proud, right? Yeah. Makes sense. I notice you do not sufficiently value the  
truth they've been given will be exploited by others who satisfy the itching ear  
concept, right? Yes.

And people who leave the church usually do so because they came to that proverbial  
fork in the road and they choose

the wrong way. They choose the wrong way. So we can't be complacent.

Hidden sin literally changes how we see things. It just extrapolates into something  
worse. Get rid of it. I tell myself that all the time. Like I repent about things.

God forgive me for the sins I'm not even aware of.

I don't know what I'm saying sometimes.

Further, get that much left. We are on the way.

We are on the way.

But we must be sure to use the Holy Spirit that God gave us at our baptisms. And  
we must have godly zeal to remain vigilant to stay on the path that will lead us  
through the narrow gate. Into what?

The kingdom of God on the other side of that narrow gate. When we are there and I  
pray that I see every one of you guys, not the way you are right now in the  
glorified form, it's going to be just incredible where Well, we're gonna hear those  
words Well, good well done rather good and a faithful servant Welcome to the joy of  
the Lord

Back to you, Rhett