

Let Us Enter the Strait Gate and Travel the Narrow Way
(Matthew 7:13-14)

Introduction:

1. This morning we showed from the Scriptures how God's people are to approach Him for direction and leadership.
2. In these verses Jesus called upon people to enter the strait gate and travel the narrow way because they lead to "life."
3. Jesus gave a number of requirements to His disciples that explain what is involved in entering the strait gate and traveling the narrow way.
4. In our lesson we are examining six requirements recorded in Luke and John.

Discussion:

- I. THREE REQUIREMENTS ARE RECORDED IN LUKE
 - A. (Luke 14:26) Jesus requires His disciples to "hate" certain people.
 1. To properly understand this condition we must realize that the Bible:
 - a. sometimes uses the word "hate" in the sense of despising someone (Genesis 27:41)
 - b. also uses the word "hate" in a comparative sense (Genesis 29:30-31).
 2. From Matthew 10:37 we learn that Jesus requires His disciples to love Him more than anyone else, including those closest to us.
 - B. (Luke 14:27) Jesus requires His disciples to bear our crosses and to come after Him.
 1. "Bearing one's cross" refers to any burden that must be endured on behalf of Christ.
 2. According to Luke 9:23, each disciple must bear his cross "*daily*."
 3. The Lord will bless those who make sacrifices on His behalf (Luke 18:29-30).
 - C. (Luke 14:33) Jesus requires His disciples to "forsake" [renounce] all.
 1. Jesus requires His disciples to give up whatever interferes with serving Him.
 2. The rich young ruler failed to comply with this requirement (Luke 18:18-23).
 3. Paul succeeded in complying with this requirement (Philippians 3:7-8).
- II. THREE REQUIREMENTS ARE RECORDED IN JOHN
 - A. (John 8:31-32) Jesus requires His disciples to "continue" [abide] in His Word.
 1. Failure to abide in the Lord's Word is a serious offense (2 John 9a).
 2. We learn from 2 John 9b that a special blessing is available to those who abide in the Lord's Word.
 - B. (John 13:34-35) Jesus requires His disciples to love each other.
 1. Jesus' example is to be imitated.
 2. His love is described in John 15:12-13; I John 3:16.
 - C. (John 15:8) Jesus requires His disciples to bear much fruit.
 1. Bearing fruit is essential (John 15:2).
 2. Bearing fruit includes activities such as doing good works (Colossians 1:10), developing the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and leading others to Christ (Romans 1:13).
 3. Bearing fruit is a lifelong responsibility (Psalm 92:14a).

Conclusion:

1. David concluded Psalm 139 with a request for God to lead him "in the way everlasting."
2. To receive leadership from God, "let us enter the strait gate and travel the narrow way" by complying with the requirements that Jesus gave.