

Luke Series #7

"The Way To Life" - Luke 13:22-30

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Jeff & Arden Share About Russia
- B. Luke 13
 - 1. I want to share about Russia today too
 - 2. But want to do so in the context of our study in Luke
 - 3. Turn to Luke 13:22

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 22

22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

- 1. Jesus' goal is Jerusalem
 - a. knows He is going there to suffer and die
 - b. this is the culmination of His mission
 - c. but as He goes, He teaches the people in every city, town, village, and hamlet the good news of the Kingdom of God
- 2. You see, His death for our sins and resurrection to give us new life are real
 - a. but if He hadn't taught what they meant —
 - b. we would never have known
- 3. True today
 - a. Jesus' death & resurrection really happened
 - b. but unless we tell people about them, they won't know
- 4. Rom 10:11-17

11 "The Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

5. You and I too have a God-ordained vocation
 - a. might be as an engineer
 - b. mechanic, teacher, homemaker, student
6. Whatever your vocation, as you go - share the good news of Jesus
7. Mat 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations”
 - a. literally, “As you go”
 - b. in the context of your daily life
 - c. faithfully living out your vocation - whatever it is
 - d. lead others to the Lord and then lead them in the life of being a disciple
8. Evangelism and discipleship are not the job of the professional clergy
9. They are vital parts of the *normal* Christian life

B. Vs. 23a

23a Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?”

1. A debate among scribes about the number of the saved
 - a. some said many
 - b. all Jews would be
 - c. as you can guess, the more popular idea
 - d. others said, only a few
 - c. Pharisees; had to adhere to the traditions of the elders
2. Jesus has been talking about the Kingdom of God
3. So a guy raises this question of how many will get in; a few or many?
4. Good question: I’m anxious to see what Jesus said - aren’t you?

C. Vs. 23b-24

23b And He said to them,

24 “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

1. In typical fashion, Jesus refuses to answer his question
 - a. the man asked *how many*
 - b. Jesus replied with *who*
 - c. what’s important is not the number
 - d. what’s important is, are *you* going to be one of the them whether its few or many
2. Are YOU going to be one of the saved?
 - a. will you be one of the number that enters heaven?
 - b. let’s leave the academic questions of how many are saved, whether were are elect and predestined, and all the rest of that till we’ve first asked the more important question =
 - c. Am I saved?

3. Notice Jesus' words — they are surprising
4. "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able."
 - a. those of us raised on grace find this difficult
 - b. saved by grace, apart from works
 - c. this idea of striving makes us uneasy
 - d. is Jesus deviating from salvation by grace?
 - e. even worse; we get our word "agonize" from the Greek word for strive here
 - "Strive" - not some half-hearted effort
 - a word used to describe athletes who were putting everything they had into winning the prize
 - picture the finals of an overhead press in an Olympic weightlifting contest
 - two guys, going for the gold
 - they each give all they have to lift that weight
 - see their faces grimace; every muscle taut, every ounce of concentration
 - that is the idea here!
5. So, how do we reconcile striving with grace?
6. First of all we need to see what the striving is for
 - a. "Strive to enter through the narrow gate"
 - b. the context is the Kingdom of God
 - c. the gate is the entrance into the Kingdom
7. What is the gate?
 - a. In John 10:9 Jesus said "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved."
 - b. the gate is narrow because it is as wide as one person
 - c. and that person is Jesus Himself
 - it is only by faith in Him, in His death and resurrection that we can be saved
 - Mat 7:13-14 "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. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."
 - many fault Christianity because it is a narrow faith
 - it doesn't entertain many ways to God
 - Christians believe that there is one way to heaven
 - we believe that, not because we're elitist
 - but because Jesus said so
 - John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

8. He is the gate to the Kingdom because He is the King
 - a. the Kingdom of God is not a place, not a domain
 - b. it is a dominion
 - c. the Kingdom of God speaks of being under the rule and reign of Jesus as Sovereign & King
 - d. this is why we strive to enter
 - of ourselves, we don't want to submit to Christ
 - the essence of sin is the exaltation of self
 - WE want to sit on the throne of our lives
 - but entering the Kingdom of God means vacating the throne and letting Jesus sit there
 - everything in us fights that
 - and that is why Jesus said in Luke 9 that if we would follow Him, we had to die to self
 - we take the first step of death to self when we first come to God in repentance and faith in Jesus
 - but we renew it every day by dying to those issues of self the HS keeps revealing to us as we walk with the Lord
 - e. here is where we strive = We strive to surrender!
9. But Jesus says something else rather disturbing in this verse
10. "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able."
11. How could it be that people would seek to enter heaven but couldn't?

D. Vs. 25-27

1. No punctuation in Greek. End, beginning?
2. Best to take last part of v. 24 with v. 25 and what follows

24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate. [PERIOD]

For many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able

25 when once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,'

26 then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.'

27 But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'

3. One day the gate will be closed, the door will drawn shut, and the entrance to heaven will be sealed

4. And when it is, it will be too late for those who kept putting off faith in Christ
5. There are many people who would like to go to heaven
 - a. and they have even heard how; faith in Christ
 - b. but they keep putting it off
 - I'm not convinced Jesus is the only way
 - I do believe Jesus is the way, but I'm not ready to give my life to Him
 - all kinds of reasons
 - but the point is, they are procrastinating, holding off
6. Jesus gives everyone a sober warning here
 - a. one day, the door is closing
 - b. and when it does, the opportunity is over
 - c. that door can close with the Lord's coming again, or with our going to Him in death
 - d. you and I have no control over either of those events
7. These people protest their exclusion from heaven on the grounds that they were familiar with Jesus
 - a. "Hey, Jesus — don't You remember us? We hung around You. You visited our town and we even ate dinner with You."
 - b. "We listened to Your teaching. It was great!"
8. But Jesus still will not let them in
9. It is not enough to go to church and even eat and drink the elements of communion with the people of God
10. It is not enough to go to bible study and hear the word of God
11. Sitting in church and doing church things does not make you a Christian and more than sitting in a movie theater makes you Mel Gibson or Michelle Pfeifer
12. The question is, "Do you trust Jesus and have you surrendered your life to Him?"
13. The time to do that is now
 - a. it is this life
 - b. there are no second chances past the grave
 - c. what you decide about Jesus here and now settles your eternity
 - d. will you go through the gate, or be left standing outside?
14. These words would have stunned the Jews
 - a. they believed that because they were Jews, they had an iron-clad, automatic guarantee of heaven
 - b. there was not even a hint of doubt about that in their minds
 - c. and now Jesus shatters that illusion

E. Vs. 28-30

28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.

29 They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”

1. I'm sure the fist of nearly every Jew balled up in fury at these words
2. Jesus tells them that they - the privileged people who had been first in God's plan, would be barred from the Kingdom while the Gentiles who they considered dead last with no hope of heaven, would fill the Kingdom and would sit down at a feast with the big boys of the Jewish faith - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, and the rest of the prophets
3. These were obviously not words meant to soothe the minds of the crowd
4. But they were absolutely true and were meant to shake the religious from the apathy and complacency that had settled over their lives
5. Do they?
 - a. for they are as much for us as for them
 - b. we are more privileged than the Jews ever were
 - c. for we not only have the word of God written on paper -
 - d. we have the living word of God in the person of Jesus Christ
 - e. and we have seen the truths of the gospel applied to our whole way of life
 - that's right; modern Western society rests on a foundation of biblical truth
 - the freedoms and prosperity we enjoy today is the direct result of courageous men and women who were willing to sacrifice to put God's Word into practice
 - D. James Kennedy What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?
6. These words of Jesus are a wake up call for all of us to examine ourselves and see where we stand

III. CONCLUSION

- A. How Does This Relate To Russia?
 1. In this:
 2. There is only one way to eternal life = Faith in Jesus Christ
 3. Now is the time to make that decision for Him
 4. We don't have the guarantee of tomorrow
 5. That is true for us here in the US

6. It is even more true for the people of Russia
7. The political situation there is always shaky at best
8. We don't know how much longer the door of opportunity will be open for us to work there
9. It is open now - we must go through it

B. God's Leading

1. God has made it very clear that He is leading us in planting a church in Blagoveshchensk
2. Fell in love with the City
3. Made some very good contacts
4. Marvelous opportunities to share what God has to say about marriage, parenting, work, freedom from bondage to drugs and booze
5. Working here at home too
 - a. one of the biggest needs - someone to go over and stay for at least a year, nurturing what gets started
 - b. when started thinking about it, seemed like an impossible situation
 - c. God has blown out minds
 - have two couples who want to go
 - working with both to prepare them
6. There are about 20 people from our fellowship who want to go in Sept.
 - a. Calvary Vancouver has another 6
 - b. I hope and pray all will be able to go
 - c. but this isn't just the mission of those who go
 - d. it is your mission too!
 - e. our whole fellowship is going in one way or another
 - f. you might not go in body, but you can go in spirit by praying for us - [flyers]
 - g. can help send those who are going physically