

Two Ways

#0816

Study given by W.D. Frazee—December 5, 1980

Our text this evening is Matthew, the 7th chapter, verses 13 and 14, part of Christ's sermon on the mount:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate..." Matthew 7:13.

That word translated strait there is also translated narrow. You notice it's not spelled strait in the sense of going straight ahead. It's spelled strait, meaning narrow.

"Enter ye in at the..." Matthew 7:13.

What gate?

"the strait gate..."

The narrow gate. Why?

"...for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait..." Matthew 7:13-14.

...or narrow.

"...is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" Matthew 7:13-14.

Now, one would think that everyone would choose the way of life, but Jesus says very few do that. Isn't that strange? Isn't that a strange thing? But we see evidence of it all around us.

I was interested in a questionnaire that was conducted up in Chicago. People went out on the streets of Chicago and they interviewed various people to find out what the general public knew about the relationship of high-fat diet and lack of exercise and smoking, to heart attacks and, of course, the relation of smoking to lung cancer.

The interesting thing was that the overwhelming majority of the people that were interviewed recognized that medical science was teaching that the statistics showed that there was a relationship between lack of exercise, high-fat diet, smoking, to these diseases.

But the interesting thing to me was, as I heard it, that most of the people they interviewed that said that they knew that, were going right ahead smoking and high-fat diet and very few of them were getting enough exercise. Isn't that a strange thing?

Of course, the answer to that one is, you know, Well, a fella has to die of something sometime. Just as well enjoy life while we're going along.

And so, we come back to our text. Jesus says:

“Enter ye in at the [narrow] gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the [road], that leadeth to...” Matthew 7:13.

...sickness, death...

“...destruction and many there be which go in thereat: Because [narrow] is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” Matthew 7:13-14.

Oh, I want all of you to find that narrow gate and enter into the narrow way. It's a way of life, and believe me, my dear friends, it's not only the *end* of the way that is life. It's life all along the way.

Turn to the 16th Psalm, and read the 11th verse. What's the third word? Show. Have you ever been traveling and had to stop and inquire of the road? Thank God, Jesus is in the business of guiding people who want to be guided.

Will you read that 11th verse with me:

“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” Psalm 16:11.

So, God is in the business of showing us the path of life. I repeat, life is not merely the destination, it's the way.

Now, let's take a look at this way or road. The 119th Psalm, the 1st verse—the first verse of the longest chapter in the Bible—the longest chapter in the longest book in the Bible—the 119th Psalm.

What's the first word of this text? What does blessed mean? Happy—happy.

“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in...” Psalm 119:1.

What?

“...the law of the Lord” Psalm 119:1.

What is the way, then? The law. And isn't it an interesting thing that nearly everybody in this world thinks that the way to have fun—the way to have a good time—is to break the law.

Do you begin to see why it is that Jesus has to say—too bad, but it's so—that the narrow way has few people in it and the broad way that leads to death and destruction has many people in it, but:

“Blessed...” Psalm 119:1.

Happy.

“...are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord” Psalm 119:1.

Let's take a look at this way in the 119th Psalm—this law that is a pathway of happiness—the 142nd verse. What are the last five words here?

“...thy law is the truth” Psalm 119:142.

Now, if the way to life—the way of life—the narrow way—is God's law, and the law is the truth, then we're ready for the 30th verse of this same psalm—the first seven words. Is that your choice?

“I have chosen the way of truth...” Psalm 119:30.

When we come to a fork and one way goes left and one goes right, what do we have to do? We have to choose, don't we. No way to travel both roads. And thank God, you and I can say with David:

“I have chosen the way of truth...” Psalm 119:30.

That's the happy way. That's the way of life—that's the way of life. Wouldn't you think everybody would rather know the truth than a lie? Would rather know truth than error? Would rather enjoy truth than fiction? Wouldn't you think everybody would? What a strange thing that anyone would turn from truth to falsehood. But Jesus says nearly everybody is doing it.

Now, there's another thing in this chapter that I want to notice—the 97th verse:

“O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day”
Psalm 119:97.

The response of the heart to trust God is to feel how about His law? To love it—to love it. Do you love God's law? I'll tell you this, dear friends, if you love His truth, love His law, love His way, then you're a fortunate person and you're one of the few people in this world that are finding the real meaning of life.

Nearly everybody in this world, as Jesus says, is on that downward road. That's why there's so much war in the world and violence and crime and unrest and unhappiness, complaining, fault-finding, sickness, disease of all kinds—simply because people have not chosen the way of truth, the way of love, the way of God's law. That's it in plain language.

Oh, what a privilege to share with others the good news of how to be happy—how to be happy—how to be happy.

Let's turn over to the book of Proverbs. That's the next one to our right over here. And let's get the inspired testimony of the wisest man that ever lived—the 29th chapter, the 18th verse:

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law...” Proverbs 29:18.

What's the next word?

“...happy is he” Proverbs 29:18.

Do you believe that? Do you really? Do you believe it on Saturday night as well as on Friday night? The way to be happy is to do what? To do what? Keep the law. That's the way to be happy. Do you know, that's the reason God *made* His law is to tell us how to be happy.

The law is heaven's recipe for all who wish to know the way of life—how to have life, as I've said, not merely in the dimension of length but in the dimension of breadth and height and depth—all dimensions—life more abundantly. It's found in God's law.

Now, let's take another text on this matter of life—John, the 17th chapter, the 3rd verse. Putting texts together, you know, is like putting the various ingredients of a delicious salad together. We put apples and oranges and bananas and some things like that together, what do we have? Fruit salad. And this is a delicious fruit salad—a delight and a joy to those whose appetites have been educated.

The 17th of John, now, and the 3rd verse—all together, will you read with me:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” John 17:3.

What is life? To know God. That's why He gave us His law—to reveal His character, which is truth and love.

Now, you remember that last Friday night, I studied with you this question—would it be a wise thing, if we're planning to spend eternity with God, to find out what kind of being He is anyway. Wouldn't it be a good thing to know whether we can trust Him? Wouldn't you hate to be sentenced to live even a hundred years, let alone eternity, with somebody you couldn't trust?

And that is the purpose of this little life in this world, my friends—it's to have the opportunity to get acquainted with God, to try Him out, try out His way of life, and see whether we'd like a second helping—a second helping.

Oh, I'm so thankful I've had a chance to have a first helping. What do you say? And I'm glad there's plenty more in the kitchen. I want more and more and more. What do you say? God is a good God. His way is a wonderful way.

You remember we agreed last Friday night that to trust God we must know, first of all, that He loves us. It would be difficult to trust Him if we weren't sure that He loved us. In fact, it would be impossible to fully trust Him. But the Bible reveals Him as One who loves us better than we love ourselves. In fact, He loves us so much:

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” John 3:16.

Here's the life again. When man through sin had lost the way and entered the road of death, God in Christ came to show us how to get back on the road. He died to take our sins away.

Sin is the transgression of the law. Sin cuts across God's law. Love aligns with God's law—moves right along in harmony—and thank God for this wonderful, wonderful gift.

So, God is first of all revealed to us as a God of love. He's interested in us, seeking to please us, and the heart that knows Him, rests in that love, secure, knowing that God is looking after him and that nothing can touch him except by the permission of divine love. Isn't that an antidote for fear—a preventive of unrest and worry. Praise God for the Father's love. What do you say? Amen.

But you remember we agreed, also, that to trust Him fully, we need to understand not only that He's a God of love but that He's a God of truth, a God of wisdom, who always knows the answer and gives the right answer because, no matter how much He loves us, if He doesn't know enough to take care of us—I've seen parents that love their children but they certainly made them sick the way they took care of them. Have you ever seen anybody like that?

I'm glad that our heavenly Father not only loves us but is wise. He not only wants us to be happy but knows how to *make* us happy. And when you and I come to the place where we're fully convinced that He loves us better than we love ourselves, and that He's wiser than we can ever be, then we can trust Him fully. We trust His love, knowing that He's anxious to help us. We trust His wisdom, understanding that He knows *how* to bring us to the desired destiny.

So, those who walk that narrow way with Jesus are those who have been convinced of His love and His truth—His law being the expression of both.

But now, let me bring you to this very important thing. The only way to know love is to experience it—the only way to know truth is to experience it. We can learn many things out of books. We can learn the distance from here to the sun but I've never been to the sun and back. Have you? No. But I know the distance.

The people that tell us how they've measured it—they've never been there and back, but I'm satisfied with that. I have no problem in my mind. I do not have to experience *that* in order to know it. Do you see what I mean?

But the love of God and the truth of God are not in that category. All the books in the world—even the inspired scriptures—can never bring you and me to the place where we know the love of God and know the truth of God. Those experiences must be ours experientially. We must know them experimentally.

Turn over to 1 John, the 4th chapter, and you'll see what I mean. To know God is eternal life, but what does it mean to know Him—1 John, the 4th chapter, verses 7 and 8. Oh, I think this is a wonderful scripture:

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God”
1 John 4:7.

Who is the one that knows God? The one that loveth. It is not enough to *be* loved—to *receive* love. That love received from God must be reflected, must be passed on, must be imparted to others. It's only as we become reflectors, or to change the figure of speech, as we become channels, that we actually know the love of God. Now, isn't that what this text says? Read it with me again, all together:

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God”
1 John 4:7.

Who knows God? Everyone that loveth. What does everyone that loveth know? Knows God. The only way to know God, then, is not only to receive His love, but to impart it—to become the channels.

Now, notice how the same truth is spoken in the eighth verse in the negative expression:

“He that loveth not...” 1 John 4:8.

What?

“...knoweth not God; for God is love” 1 John 4:8.

The one that loves knows God. The one that doesn't love doesn't know God. And this helps us to understand why it is that so many are walking in the broad way. They simply have never experienced the unselfish wonderful love of God.

The Devil has told them that God is somebody you'd better watch out for. When you're not looking, he'll grab you and make a slave out of you. He'll do nothing of the kind, friends. That's the Devil's business. Jesus is seeking to deliver us from the slavery of selfishness, and isn't selfishness a slavery, friends? Ah, it is. I'm sorry for the many, many times in my life I've let selfishness rule. I want no more of it there, my friends. I want to love as God loves—I want to love as God loves.

Now, the same is the fact concerning truth, my friends. We do not know truth merely by reading it. This explains why it is that millions of people can read the Bible and never come to the knowledge of the truth. As Paul writes:

“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” 2 Timothy 3:7.

Do you know why? Turn to John, the 7th chapter, and we’ll find the answer to that one—John 7:17. Who is it knows the doctrine or the teaching of divine truth?

“If any man will *do* His will, *he* shall know...” John 7:17.

Just as we know love by loving, we know truth by experiencing it. Now, let me read a few comments here. In the book, *Counsels to Teachers*, page 97:

“If we ever know the truth, it will be because we practice it”
Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students, page 97.

“If we ever know the truth, it will be because we practice it”
Ibid.

Suppose I read in a book that the way to enjoy food the most is to eat slowly and masticate thoroughly. Suppose I’m in a class in physiology or diet and the question is asked about that, and I give the right answer just like I learned it out of the book. Do I know it? No, I don’t know it. Unless and until I what? Experience it. And how do I experience it? Practice it—practice it.

And interestingly enough, I may not like it, to start with. I may be one of these nervous hurried people that all my life I’ve just been bolting my food like a dog does, you know, forgetting that I’m not a dog. The way for me to enjoy my food is to take it and taste each mouthful. That’s why God put some taste buds in my tongue, not in my stomach, and that’s why He put the teeth in my mouth to encourage me to grind it up—to get the flavor, you understand.

It’s true, along with the flavor I’m getting some digestion, but the point that reaches my conscious level is the enjoyment, you understand. So, the way to be happy is to keep the law, but I repeat, the only way I know that is to what? Experience it. And the only way I can experience it is to what? Practice it. And to do it again and again and again until it becomes a what? A habit.

That’s what a habit is—it’s something I’ve done over and over again until it’s a fixed way of life. That’s walking in the way. And I’ve used that little experience of mastication to illustrate what we might have used any one of a thousand other things to do.

Now, isn’t it too bad for people to take something beautiful and sweet and precious and happy like that and use it as a yoke of bondage, either for themselves or other people. Isn’t that too bad? Wouldn’t it be too bad for me to take that recipe for happiness and to sit across the table from somebody that’s bolting his food and if I’m of a certain disposition tell him so right to his face, you understand—say, Look here, sir, you’ve got to learn different from that. He might not like that.

Of course, I might not actually tell him. I might just sit there and get ulcers watching him do it. That wouldn't be the way, either, would it. No. I repeat, this is the way of happiness, the way of joy, the way of life. What is? Everything God has said.

“He that keepeth the law...” Proverbs 29:18.

What?

“...happy is he” Proverbs 29:18.

“...happy is he” Proverbs 29:18.

So, I'm hoping that you'll pick these things up by the handle. Some of you have heard me ask people if they garden, and did they ever use a hoe. How many of you here tonight ever used a hoe? Well, I hope the rest of you will get into it. There's happiness in a hoe. That depends, of course, on what you do with it.

Now, does it make any difference which end of the hoe you pick up? Does it? If you insist on picking up the steel end—the sharp end—will you cut many weeds? But you might cut what? Yourself.

And so it is with everything in God's law, my friends, from those great fundamental principles in the Ten Commandments down to the minutia of diet and exercise and Bible study and prayer and all the other minutia of life—I repeat, friends, if we pick them up by the handle and practice them, expecting joy because we're seeking to please Jesus, we'll find abundant life.

But if we insist on picking up these things by the other end, then we can make them indeed a yoke of bondage for ourselves, and interestingly enough, the person that gets miserable on them—he tries to make other people get just as miserable as he is. He can't bear the idea that *he's* got to do it and why isn't this one and the other one doing it? Why aren't they as miserable as he is, you understand.

No, the motive in getting other people to do these things shouldn't be to make them miserable like we are. It should be to make...

[Break in tape.]

...wonderful sentence:

“If we ever know the truth, it will be because we practice it”
Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students, page 97.

Would it be a good thing to practice truth, then, before we try to preach it?

“We must have a living experience in the things of God before we are able to understand His word. This experimental knowledge is what strengthens the intellect and builds us up into Christ our living Head” *Ibid*.

Oh, I thank God for experimental truth. What do you say? And so it is with love:

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God” 1 John 4:7.

You know, the great motive that the enemy has introduced is selfishness—the great motive that the enemy has introduced is selfishness. Does selfishness get things done? Does it? Tell me, does selfishness get things done? Why, sure. It’s getting most of the things done in this world that are being done.

Which do you think you get more done—love or selfishness? Do you really think so? Then, if you want to get more done, what will you do? But the greatest reason for doing it is not that it gets more done. The greatest reason for doing it is because we have seen the love that God has for us.

Turn to 1 John, the 4th chapter, again, the 16th verse:

“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” 1 John 4:16.

And then, the 19th verse—will you read it with me:

“We love Him, because He first loved us” 1 John 4:19.

As the way to know truth is to listen to what He says and respond by practicing it, so the way to know love is to behold His love and respond, seeking to reveal to others what He has shown to us of His character.

“For God so loved the world, that He...” John 3:16.

What?

“...He gave...” John 3:16.

And the Son:

“...loved me, and gave Himself for me” Galatians 2:20.

So, as we seek to love Jesus and love others, we will want to lay down our lives for Him.

In the wonderful book, *Acts of the Apostles*, page 551, I read:

“Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked” *Acts of the Apostles*, page 550.

Now, over at the sanitarium and hospital, they have various ways of measuring things. They can tell you by examining the blood how much sugar there is and how much of this and how much of that, but in heaven, God's laboratory is running tests and the thing that heaven is interested in is finding out what? Our ability to love—our ability to love as Christ loved and, therefore, to work as He worked. Oh, I want to enter into that. What do you say?

“We love Him, because He first loved us” 1 John 4:19.

Wouldn't you like to pray just now that Jesus will reveal His love to us and reveal His truth to us that we may share His love with others and share His truth with others? Where shall we look to find His love and truth? In His law, in His word, in His life.

In the word, we have it in letters. In His life, we have it in action. As we look to Bethlehem, to Nazareth, to Jerusalem, as we look from the manger to Calvary and the resurrection morning, we behold a love that never faltered and a truth that never wavered. We hear His voice saying:

“...I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life...” John 14:6.

Oh, wonderful way, wonderful truth, wonderful life. I choose to let Him reveal Himself to me. What do you say?

Shall we kneel together. Our precious Lord, we thank Thee with all our heart that Thou hast called us from the broad way with its war and strife into the way of peace, the way of life, the way of love, the way of truth.

Oh, I pray that just now Thou wilt reveal Thyself as never before to every one of us. As we behold Thy love and Thy truth, in Thy law, Thy word, Thy life, may we become like that which we behold. May our hard hearts be melted. May our deceitful hearts be turned to love Thy truth. May we be converted, born again, born of the Spirit of God. As we see Thee in Thy beautiful character, may it make us glad that we too may become like that which we love. We ask it for Jesus' sake, amen.

Now, let's spend a few minutes in witness. You who spoke last Friday night, suppose you listen tonight and let others speak tonight, and let there be a number of short, right-to-the-point testimonies thanking God for His love and for His truth. Jesus is a wonderful Savior, isn't he, friends. Let all the congregation say amen.

Brother A: I love the Lord because He first loved me and saved me from a life of sin, and I want to be so filled with His love that I might share it with others, also.

Elder Frazee: Amen. Is it Venezuela you're from?

Brother A: Yes.

Elder Frazee: Now, where is this man from? Come, Felipe. [Speaking Spanish.]

Brother B: At Corpus Christi, Texas.

Elder Frazee: That's a long way, too. Come and give us your testimony.

Brother B: I just wanted to say that as the proverb goes, it is not so important to add years to your life as life to your years, and the sermon that I heard tonight just hit the nail right on the head, brother, and I appreciate very much what I heard, and I want to practice the truth, with the love of Jesus Christ.

Elder Frazee: Amen, amen.

Brother C: I must say this message is something that I surely need in my life. For the past several weeks, I've had several experiences which I've been trying to teach me something and I have been trying to figure out, and I think I realize tonight what it is. I need more of the love of Christ in my life and to practice it more, and I am so thankful for the message tonight.

Elder Frazee: Good, **Frank**. God has plenty more to give you. Just keep asking Him for it, and as fast as He gives it to you, share it with others.

Brother C: Thank you.

Elder Frazee: It grows as we impart.

All right, Brother **[unintelligible]**. Come right up. Glad for your witness.

Brother D: Elder Frazee, you shouldn't feel bad about Felipe. He caught me the same way as he did you. I asked him what part of our southern neighbor he was from, and he told me Corpus Christi.

I'm so glad this evening that Brother Barrett sang one of my favorite songs, and I'd like to ask each one this evening if he isn't glad that when the Lord was asked, Is not ninety and nine sufficient, that He said, No, they're not sufficient. There's one lost sheep out there and I'm going to get him—I'm going to find him. I think every one of us here tonight are happy that the Lord wasn't satisfied with the ninety and nine. He wanted that one more.

And I also want to say how happy my wife and I are that we have been led by the Lord to come back to Wildwood. It's been a few years. We've been in the work in several different places, but we're so happy to be back again with you people here, and we thank you and we thank the Lord for His gracious ways.

Brother E: I'm thankful for the Lord. Without Him, we wouldn't be here. That's what I'm thankful for.

Elder Frazee: He's thankful for you, my boy.

Brother F: I'm thankful tonight for this emphasis on the love of God. With our work so often bringing us in contact with people whose lives are hovering and who are facing death, it leads me to realize what a life and death matter this is for us for the beloved John said:

“We know that we have passed from death unto life,
because we love the brethren...” 1 John 3:14.

And that love of Christ is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing, and I suppose we don't see any three more common problems than some problem in the brain, the heart or the nerves, either in our patients or in our brothers and sisters.

And I just pray that our cup—my cup—will be bigger and fuller and that love may be shown to each one of you.

Elder Frazee: Thank the Lord.

Sister A: I was one of those in the broad way that didn't know God's love, but I'm thankful that He didn't leave me there and that He brought me to Wildwood to experience unselfish love through my sisters and brethren, and I want to praise His name tonight.

Elder Frazee: God bless you. And so, our blessed Lord, send us forth with the benediction of heaven, with the love that shines from Calvary reflected in our faces, to share with others the good things of God, that they, too, may know the happy way, the way of obedience, of love. We ask it for each and all in Jesus' name, amen.

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W.D. Frazee Sermons

PO Box 129, Wildwood, GA 30757

1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755

www.WDFsermons.org

support@WDFsermons.org