Salvation's Door is Narrow

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[0:00] always leaves me a mess. Parts of it can't even sing, you know. Have you tried playing the piano and sing?

Oh, yeah, no, no. No, thank you. Eyes get blurry and I can't see. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to the 13th chapter of Luke, the Gospel of Luke, chapter 13.
Lord willing, we will attempt to finish this chapter today, verses 22 through the end. Luke 13, beginning of verse 22.
If you're able, please stand as I read these verses. Verse 22. He went on the way, on his way, through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem.
And someone said to him, Lord, will those who are saved be few? And he said to them, strive to enter through the narrow door.
[1:19] For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us.

Then he will answer you, I do not know where you come from. Then you will begin to say, we ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.
But he will say, I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil. In that place, 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.
But you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west and from north and south and recline at table in the kingdom of God.
And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last. At that very hour, some Pharisees came and said to him, get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.
[2:56] And he said to them, go and tell that fox. Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow. And the third day, I finish my course.

Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow, and the day following. For it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.
Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it. How often I would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. And you were not willing. Behold, your house is forsaken.
And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
[4:03] So it reads, let us ask the Lord's assistance. Father, send your spirit upon us today in this time that you might give us ears to hear and eyes to see and particularly hearts to receive your word today.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. We live in exciting times.
All around us we are seeing the phenomenal rise of mega churches with congregations in the tens of thousands. Pockets of revival have sprung up all, sprung up in the United States and other parts of the world and we have heard of millions of people in Russia, China, and Africa coming to the Savior.
One evangelist, for example, claims that his worldwide tour has led nearly one million people to make decisions for Christ since 2007.
This book I'm reading from is from 2010. A denomination reported that nearly 2.5 million decisions for Christ in 2008.
[5:29] One international organization reported over 10 million decisions for Christ in 2009. And another ministry has seen an incredible, 45 million documented salvations, unquote, worldwide in just six years.

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Exciting. yet, with all the excitement about the growth of the contemporary church, it seems that many have overlooked a few statistical inconsistencies.
An October 2003 survey conducted by the Barna Group found that 45% of those who professed to be born-again Christians believed that gambling was morally acceptable.
According to the survey, 49% believed that living with someone of the opposite sex without being married was morally okay. Among individuals who described themselves as Christian, for instance, close to half believe that Satan does not exist.
One-third contend that Jesus sinned while he was on earth. Two-fifths say that they do not have a responsibility to share the Christian faith with others. And one-quarter dismissed the idea that the Bible is accurate in all its principles it teaches.
[6:54] What's going on? Who are all these decisions? Well, this doesn't surprise me because I grew up in a Christianity that focused on decisions.

I made hundreds of decisions to accept Christ because it didn't take. I saw those around me come forward and pray the prayer, sign the card, maybe even get baptized and then shortly after never see them shadow the church again.
how do these amazing statistics compare with what Jesus says?
How do they compare? Jesus is asked the simple question, are there only a few that will be saved? And whoever asked this must have been listening to him for the last several chapters of Luke because his message has become harder, more urgent, more, our contemporary culture would say, negative.
negative. So, so people will say at saying, oh, these statistics, and by the way, many of these statistics have been shown over the years to be really false.
[8:33] I remember when I was in a certain denomination, I won't name it, for a number of years, we were to give a yearly report and we were to put on one line decisions for Christ.

I didn't do it. I didn't do it. I don't believe in that. I don't believe those are accurate numbers. I don't believe those are salvation. People raise their head. Like I said, my own experience, I believe that whole methodology is flawed.
It's not biblical. I believe that it is misleading people. It is a false assurance that if you come forward and pray the prayer, you're saved. Didn't work.
I didn't, no. So, so I was criticized, our church was criticized because we didn't put the number in the box. We were suddenly a, an unhealthy congregation.
And yet I would put my, our congregation up against any at that time as being extremely healthy. Just didn't have the bells and whistle numbers.
[9:40] I counted baptisms. I thought those were, those were legitimate. Anyway, I always, I wish they included a box numbers, you know, decisions, and then, and then the next year how many of those decisions don't go anymore?

Right? That would be more accurate. So, so what do we do? So, some might say, well, you know, don't, don't, the Bible even has big numbers.
Remember Pentecost, right? 3,000 were saved on the day of Pentecost. That's a huge number. It is until you consider how many Jews were in Jerusalem at the time.
3 million, they estimate. So, 3,000 out of 3 million. How's that statistic? Now, 3,000 is wonderful. It's great.
But I did the math. I thought, oh, is that only 1%? Is 3,000 1% of 3 million? Dan? Where'd Dan go? John? No? No. It's, it's 0.001.
[10:48] So, that means 99.99, right? Rejected. That's not a good batting average. Anyway, our point is, we hear a lot of that.

We, we, we are jaded by a culture that has become fascinated with numbers and mega churches and all the bells and whistles and all of that that isn't in here.
and I, and I wonder what's happening to the church. I've testified before as a, as a long-time youth pastor about the, the unintentional work of youth ministry that eventually puts kids out of the church. Unintentional. They train kids to leave because they don't train kids to incorporate and so when they get older, they don't want to sit next to the old fogies and sing those old songs and they don't.
Talk about numbers, you could look at how many youth have left or no longer go. 70 to 90% of those raised in church.

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[12:18] something in right. Okay. So, Jesus says, strive to enter by the narrow door. And he says, for many, many, many will seek and not be able.

people. So, the first thing I want you to notice here, Luke has been telling us that Jesus is on a journey. He reminds us once again in verse 22, he went on his way through towns and villages teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem.
So, this is the journey. He started telling us that back in chapter 9. Back in chapter 9, verse 22, he said, the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.
And then in chapter 9, verse 51, he said, when the days grew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And ever since the end of chapter 9 and Luke, Luke is presenting Jesus as on that journey to Jerusalem.
Now, it's going to take months. He's not going direct. He's going to make his way around all the different villages and towns as he winds his way down. But he has set his face toward Jerusalem.
[13:34] We see it again here in 1322. We see it in verse 32 and 33. He talks about how he's going to Jerusalem to perish. We see it again in chapter 17.

Still talking about this. Chapter 17, verse 11, on the way to Jerusalem. He's passing along between Samaria and Galilee. Chapter 18, verse 31.
Now, he's getting a lot closer, so Luke is mentioning it more. 18, 31. Taking the 12, he said to them, Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.
For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging, they will kill him and on the third day he will rise. So he tells them again and again.
They're on their way. Chapter 19, they finally get there. Chapter 19, verse 11, as they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable because he was near Jerusalem.
[14:41] And by the end of chapter 19, he's entering Jerusalem with what we call the triumphal entry. Luke, Luke, Luke, Luke, this gospel we're in is presenting this journey.

We're in the middle of it here in chapter 13. But it's a journey all the way. His face is set toward Jerusalem. He is intent on his mission. He's going to teach and he's going to heal people, but his mission is to get to Jerusalem and to die for us that we might live.
Way back when the angel told Joseph to call his name, what? Jesus. Why Jesus? For he shall save his people from their sin.
Jesus, meaning God saves, exactly right. For he shall save his people from their sin. That was God's plan. That's why he sent the son. He loves the world.
He sent the son so that we might believe that we need a savior. Problem is, most people don't want anything with that.
[15:55] So there's the journey. So now he's going to talk about a door of salvation. On the way, Jesus answers a question. Verse 23, someone said, Lord, will those who are saved be few?

Will it just be a few? So Jesus answers this in two ways. First, in a direct way, answering the direct question in verses 22 to 30. He's going to talk about how many will be too late.
Most will be too late. And then in the second part, he's not answering that question directly. He's responding to the Pharisees who are trying to threaten him to get away from Jerusalem because Herod wants to kill him.
So don't come to Jerusalem because Herod wants to kill you. We find out that Herod moves around. He's mostly up in Galilee, but he has a summer home down in Jerusalem and another home over, another palace over on the coast.
He moves around. He's a busy guy. But we know when Jesus stands trial, Herod was there. Herod was there. He's in Jerusalem because he's a fake Jew who wants to celebrate the Passover.
[17:09] But he's, as John the Baptist pointed out, not a Jew. Not even a good fake one. Anyway, so in that one, he's responding to that, but he still gets to the point of the mission.

And he talks about in verse 34 how often I wanted to gather you, but you were unwilling. So two answers to the question will only a few be saved.
One, yes, only a few because many will be too late and won't be able. And then secondly, in verse 34, it'll only be a few because many, particularly in the nation of Israel, are absolutely unwilling. They don't want it. No different than today. So let's look at this. first answer will only a few be saved.

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His direct answer here in verse 24 is about a narrow gate. He says many will seek too late and will not be able to be saved. They'll seek too late.
[18:15] They'll realize it too late after the door is shut. So verse 24 is Jesus' answer, right? Strive to enter through the narrow door.

door. The narrow door. Strive to now, strive to enter through the narrow door.
That sounds a little bit like earning your salvation, doesn't it? I mean, somebody could get that impression just reading that. The word strive is interesting because it's the word agonizo.
Can you hear an English word in that? Agonizo? Agony. It's used for wrestling. For fight, when Paul says, fight the good fight of faith.
Agonizo. Jesus in the garden is agonizing in prayer. Agonizo. So it's translated strive here.
[19:12] It might not be the best translation of the word because of the impression strive might give. But it means to struggle, to fight, to apply diligence, to wrestle.

In other words, entering through the narrow door of salvation is not easy. It's not an easy stroll. It's not just strolling up to the altar and praying a prayer.
That's all you got to do. I've heard evangelists do that. That's all you got to do. Raise your hand, pray a prayer. It's easy. Not according to Jesus. Jesus says it takes agonizing. It takes wrestling. It takes fighting. Fighting to get in that door. In other words, be persistent. See the urgency of it. Don't treat salvation as a casual, you know, God add blessing to my life.
I don't have to make any changes. God just saves me. Give me fire insurance. I'm good. Right? Jesus is saying, no, no, no, no, no. No. This is about eternal life.
[20:15] Make sure. Do everything you can do to make sure you get through the door. I remember years later after I was raised in the tradition of what is called decisionism, making a decision for Christ.

I came across an article, no, a book by J.I. Packer. I love J.I. Packer. Who was very gentle about the issue, did not criticize the decisionist approach, he simply said, perhaps a better way is to not just counsel people to accept Christ and therefore now you have assurance of salvation.
No, no, no. Tell people, yes, pray for Christ to come into your heart and keep praying until you know he has come into your heart. Keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking until you know he's answered.
That's what you do. It's not wrong to raise your hand, not wrong to try to make a decision, not wrong to seek Christ. Just keep doing it until you know he's answered. I thought that was wonderful way to look at it because that's biblically true.
Keep seeping, keep asking, keep knocking. What is it about this narrow door? Why does Jesus picture salvation as entering through a narrow door?
[21:42] Well, it's narrow in that it's not wide, not broad. God. In Matthew 7, Jesus talks about the narrow way, the narrow door and the narrow way that leads to life, right?

And then there's the broad gate and the broad way that leads to destruction, right? I forgot to bring my poster. I had a big poster that we had when our kids were little and it's the picture of the narrow and the broad way.
And it's this wonderful picture of it and it has, you know, the narrow way, which is the cross and then the broad way, which is all these other enticements and things. You know, we would look at those kind of things.
we read bunion and those kind of things with kids. Narrow, the word narrow, this is the noun, enter through the narrow gate, but the verb aspect of that noun is groaning.
So a narrow gate is a groaning gate. Hmm. When do you groan? So, I am medically, and I thought of a narrow door, a groaning door.
[22:59] I grew up in California. We didn't have basements. So when you went under the house, it was a little door and you crawled under.

And you know what you did when you crawled under? You groaned. I mean, that's the door of salvation. It's really hard and uncomfortable and very humbling.
Who wants to do it? Oh, it's all dirty. And it's all, you know, there's spiders under there. But I told my dad, no, I want to help. He said, okay, you get to go under there.
I'll tell you. Anyway, that's the picture. Narrow. Why is it narrow? Why is the door narrow? Why isn't the door broad?

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Few will go through it. And there's only one door and it's real little. There's only one door. Jesus said, I am the way and the truth and the life.
[24:04] No one comes to the Father, but through me. I'm it. I'm it. There's no other name under heaven by which men must be saved.

None. There's not many ways. There's one way. According to Jesus, there's just one way. It's a narrow gate. And that is offensive to all kinds of people.
Understood. Get it. That was offensive to me growing up. I get it. That's why it's humbling to get and crawl under that.
Except that door. So why will so many not be able? Many will seek to enter and not be able. Why? Well, verse 25, Jesus paints a picture because there's a closed door. When once the master of the household has risen and shut the door and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door saying, Lord, open to us.
[25:08] Then he will answer to you, I do not know where you are from. Why are they unable? Because they come too late. They come when the door's shut. The master has come and shut the door.

When he returns, when Jesus returns, it will be too late. Now is the day, right? Now is the day. Now is the time.
Don't put it off. Why put it off? Why put it off? So look at their response to that.
But verse 26, then you will begin to say, we ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets. Hey, Jesus, we know you.
What do you mean you don't know us? We know you. We ate and drank with you. We had fellowship around the table. We talked and we listened and of course, don't you remember?
[26:10] We ate. And then you taught in our streets. Now, you came to our town and taught in our streets, so you made all the effort. We were just there, but we heard. We did listen.

We didn't boo. We're real familiar with you. We associated with you. What's the problem? What does the master say?
Verse 27, again, he says the same thing. I will tell you, I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil.
I don't know you. I don't have a relationship with you. The word know there means a relationship, an intimate relationship. So, simply familiarity with Jesus is not not in the door.
That's not striving to enter. We listened to a few of your sermons, so, you know, we like you. We pushed like on the thing.
[27:15] It was good. We liked it. Well, that doesn't do it. We associated, but we didn't follow. We're not dedicated to anything, but we, you know, we think we're good followers.

Like all the millions who raised their hand, came forward, made a decision, had an association, had some familiarity with Christianity, but what Christianity believes?
No. Satan? Come on, give me a break. Abortion? That's not wrong. Come on, that's a woman's choice. Statistic after statistic, clear that the person who made a decision hasn't read this, hasn't listened to the words of Jesus, hasn't followed the words of Jesus, dismisses the words of Jesus.
So I do not know you. Interesting that he says, I do not know where you are from. You know, that's interesting. In Matthew, it's, you know, he said, I don't, they will say, you know, we did all this stuff, we preached and we cast out demons, we prophesied, all that stuff, we did all that in your name, Jesus, and Jesus will say, I never knew you.
That's all. Here in Luke, he has, I do not know from where you are, literally. It's like, what's that?
[28:56] What's he getting out there? Well, picture, he's the master of the house, he's closed the door, someone's outside knocking, you know, hey, open it up and I don't know where you're from, I don't know you.

You're a stranger to me. The door is shut. I don't know where you're from. I don't know where your source, what you believe.
I don't know your ideology. I don't know your commitments. I don't know, I don't know you. You might be familiar with me, I have no familiarity with you.
That'd be hard to hear, don't you think? And he says, depart from me, you workers of evil, literally workers of unrighteousness, which means they have a disregard for what's right.
So it's kind of more of a passive thing. They're not outright evil, but they're workers of, yeah, we're kind of so-so, don't really care, don't have passion for anything. But we'd like to get in.

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[30:03] So association with Jesus doesn't mean you're okay.

It sounds like a people that want Jesus on their own terms, you know. They want Jesus on their own terms. You know, I think that's good enough. I come at Eastern Christmas, you know, I watch online.
I never attend, but I watch online. We might lose some viewers, huh? Jesus lost a lot of followers, too. Where entitlement comes from.
You know, it's, and I'm not criticizing folks that can't be here. I think there's a ton of people that can be and won't. And that's, I think, a very dangerous position to be in.
That's a familiarity without a following. Jesus calls for much, does he not?
[31:10] Strive to enter. So he talks about some consequences, verse 28, in that place. You know, you're outside, you're outside the door, so in that outside place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But somehow they'll be able to see, they're outside, but they'll be able to see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but they're on the outside.
I don't know if Jesus is being literal here. When we get to chapter 16, Jesus is going to tell that story of the rich man and Lazarus, right? Where there's that chasm and the guy in torment can see Abraham and he can see Lazarus and comfort.
I think Jesus is describing a real situation there. I don't know if that's what he's describing here, but the reality is there is a separation. There is those who are in the kingdom of God and those who are outside.
And that's the tragedy. There will be some who will be on the outside. And then he goes on and says, he rubs it in, not rubs it in, but maybe calls them the urgency. Verse 29, hey, there's going to be all these other people though, not you, but all these other people from the east and the west and the north and the south.
[32:25] They're going to all come and gather and they're going to, excuse me, recline in the kingdom. But you're still outside. He may be talking about all the Gentiles coming in.

That's the book of Acts. He may be talking about how Jesus said at one point to the Pharisees, you know what, the prostitutes are going to get in before you.
Ooh, ooh. You know, the last shall be first. You know, the prostitutes and the tax collectors and, you know, your disciples, fishermen.
They're the last. But in Jesus's world, they become the first. Because they're the first to say, I need it, I need it, I need it. That's me, that's me, that's me.
I got no problem, Jesus. Will you call me a sinner? I have no, I'm not trying to pretend I got it together. I know I don't have it together, so let me come, and it's the people that want to pretend they're okay.
[33:31] Too much pride to admit that they're not there. So, enter, strive to enter through the narrow gate. What are we getting at there? What is true faith?

Faith. So, we're saved by faith, right? We're saved by grace alone, all God, through faith alone. That's our part, believing, in Christ alone.
We sang a lot about that today. So, the faith alone. What is our part? God's part, yeah, God's all over that. Our part, faith, in Christ.
What's that? What's true faith? Now, the New Testament talks about all kinds of different believing. Demons believe. They're not saved. Right?
Jesus talks to Jews in John chapter 8 who were believing in him and at the end of his discussion with them, he's saying, you're of the devil.
[34:32] So, what kind of believing was that? See, so what's real faith? What's the faith that saves? Remember, James says, right?

You show me your faith and I'll show you my works, right? You show me your faith without works, that's dead. I'll show you my faith by my works.
In other words, my faith works. My faith has proof. So, here's Peter's version of that. What's true faith? Why do only a few enter through the door of salvation?
What does it mean to strive to enter the narrow gate? Listen to Peter. 2 Peter 1. Have you looked at this little letter very often? 2 Peter? 2 Peter 1.
Verse 5. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement or to show your faith with virtue and virtue with knowledge and knowledge with self-control and self-control with steadfastness,

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steadfastness with godliness.
[35:39] Your godliness, show that with brotherly affection and brotherly affection with love. See, in other words, your faith should show in all these different qualities.

4. If these qualities are yours and increasing, they keep you from being ineffectual or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
For whoever lacks, watch this, for whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.
Talking to Christians. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. Oh, I'm elected. I don't have to do anything.
Better go back to the book. Be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. Make sure you're saved. See?
[36:37] 4. If you practice these qualities, you will never fall. I like that. For in this way, watch this, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

How do I get into the kingdom? How do I make sure that I'm in the kingdom? Peter is saying, be all the more diligent. Make every effort. Make sure that your faith is working.
I think one of the things that happens in Christianity is people believe. I believe all this. I believe all this. But then they don't activate their faith.
Their faith is passive. And what happens when your faith is passive? I fall into temptation. I fall. I don't stay neutral.
I regress. I become blind and nearsighted. And then I wonder, why do not I understand what's going on?
[37:40] Well, I've been praying. Activate your faith. True saving faith is demonstrated by fruit. It's a faith that works. Let us not think that we're safe simply because we believe, quote unquote, that Jesus died for my sins and raised for my life.

I believe that creed. I accept that ideology. But I don't live it. Many will be too late and not be able to be saved.
Don't be one of them. There's a second response that Jesus gives in verses 31 to 35. It's a response to the Pharisees who threatened him to get away from here, which is on the way to Jerusalem.
Herod wants to kill you. It's doubtful that Herod wanted to kill him because every other reference to Herod, he wants to see Jesus. He wants to see him. He wants to see some signs.
And remember, Herod was the Tetrarch over Galilee and Perea. So Galilee, you know, Jordan, Perea's on the other side over there. And that's all where Jesus was for about two and a half, three years.
[39:05] So Herod was hearing about him all the time. So it's probably, and Jesus recognizes, it's probably a lie of the Pharisees. They're trying to get him away from Jerusalem. They're trying to get him away, I think.

Who knows? You know, Herod is not exactly a consistent character. He did kill John the Baptist. He didn't want to, but he did because, you know, he made a wager.
You know, the little girl dances for him. He'll give her anything she wants. And then he was haunted. I don't think he wanted to kill Jesus.
I really don't. He killed John and that didn't go well for him. Anyway, I think, I think it's the, the ploy of the, of the Pharisees trying to get him away.
So Jesus responds, but call him a fox. What's that mean? It's a fox. No, in my day, fox meant, ooh, nice. You know, it was a term for a girl that was attractive.
[40:09] Not in this day. What's a fox? A fox was, we think, oh, crafty is a fox, right? Sly is a fox. Nah, it probably was a term of Jesus's derision toward Herod, just kind of like, he's a fox.

He's insignificant. He doesn't, he doesn't matter. Herod's a nobody. And I know he won't kill me. I know who's gonna kill me. And it won't, isn't gonna be Herod.
So he, he gets into talking about his mission, but in the process of that, verse 34, he talks about Jerusalem where he's headed and that that is the very nation, the representative, represented by its leaders that will not just reject him but not want him.
How often I wanted to gather you but you're not wanted. So, are only a few saved? yes, and the reason why, secondly, is because many Israelites are unwilling to be saved by Jesus Christ.

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Jerusalem, Jerusalem, representing the official nation and particularly by its leaders. And as I quoted to you about Pentecost, right, it was just a fraction of the nation that responded to Jesus. [41:44] 3,000 drop in the bucket in that day. So how does he respond? Verse 32, his initial answer, he has no fear.

He has no fear about Herod. No fear will deter Jesus. No threat will deter him from his mission. It reminded me, he's coming, you know, he says instead, verse 32, go and tell that fox, behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow and the third day I finish my course.
It reminds me of Tombstone. Remember the scene where they start chasing the cowboys and, oh, what's the actor's name? Okay, we'll just call him Wyatt.
Wyatt knocks down Ike Clanton, right, and he's outside the train. They tried to kill his brother. And he knocks Ike Clanton down and he bloodies him up and then he says, you tell him I'm coming and hell's coming with me.
Remember that? And hell was Val Kilmer, right, Doc Halliday. I just, I sense that's what Jesus is saying here. Tell that fox I'm coming. Tell him I'm coming and hell's coming with me.
[42:56] I'm coming. Because he says what? Today and tomorrow, I'm doing my regular ministry. On the third day, I'll be done. On the third day, I will finish my course.

I'll finish my race. I will say, it is finished. I'm coming. Say, that's his mission. And then verse 33, to add into it, nevertheless, I must.
I must because the Father sent me. I must do what the Father wants me to do and I want to do it too. I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day after. For it cannot be, it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.
Every prophet must perish in Jerusalem. Why? Because Jerusalem kills the prophets. And I'm a prophet and I'm coming to Jerusalem to be killed by Jerusalem, by Jerusalem's leaders.
Verse 34. This leads him to a lament. Jesus was not happy that Jerusalem rejects him.
[44:09] Jesus is not pleased or did he want people to reject him. Listen to verse 34. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it.

Jerusalem has a history. Right? Pursuing the prophets. They weren't necessarily killed in Jerusalem but they kill them. They kill the prophets.
Israel killed the prophets. Was it Jezebel? How many prophets did Jezebel kill? Right?
How about Isaiah, Jeremiah? Were their lives the people did not want it. Here's Jesus though. Listen, the middle of verse 34.
How often I would have gathered your children. It's a little stronger than that. How often I desired, I wanted to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings.
[45:12] It's a picture of protection, right? coming under the wings. Remember Ruth coming under the wings of God, right? Remember that? Remember how Boaz said, I can see, I know you, you came here to seek refuge under the wings of Yahweh.

and that's what God wants to do. That's what Jesus wanted to do. How often I wanted to have gathered you. Interesting, Jesus is saying that.
How long has Jesus lived at this point? Right? 30, 32 years? Gee, how often? He's talking a longer time. He's talking about from eternity past, from the time David established Jerusalem on, I wanted to gather you.
I wanted to gather you, but you would not. I wanted to gather you, David, but you would not. Or David's son. I wanted to gather you, but you would not have it.
You were unwilling. You had no desire for my protection. You did not want my love. You did not want or need.
[46:21] You thought you didn't need saving from me. How many people today would say the same thing? We don't want God's saving.

Jesus came to save me from my sins. I don't want, I don't need that. I don't want it. Not interested. How many have said that?
How many think that? that's fine for you, but I don't, not for me. Think again.
Here is a God, a God that we all deserve condemnation and wrath from. Every one of us deserve judgment. judgment.
And yet here he pursues sinners. Here he makes multiple efforts for his chosen people to gather them back, come back.

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[47:21] He sends prophet after prophet. He sends a sent one after sent one. And they're rejected and rejected. We don't want it. A couple years ago, remember we did that look through the Old Testament, making sense of the Old Testament.

And we looked at that section, that dark section in Israel's history after David where, right, the kings became worse and worse and the prophets would come and they, and remember it got to a point where it was, it was, it was done.
There was no more remedy. It was like, when his wrath burns hot. I forget which of the prophets said that.
His wrath burns hot. It's too late. And that's when they were sent then, remember, into Babylon. And when they come back, did they get the land back?
No. No. No, there was other people in the land. They still haven't got the temple back. Well, they, yeah.
[48:40] So then, Jesus says, finally, in verse 35, here's the, here's the, here's the, pronouncement. Your house is forsaken. Because you're unwilling, your house is forsaken.

Speaking to Jerusalem, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will absolutely not see me. You won't recognize who, the word see there means to recognize him spiritually, to see with insight, to see the significance.
Not just visually see him. Jesus uses a different word. He's the word that means to see with perception, to see, with, see the significance of who I am. You will not see who I really am until you say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
When do they do that? When does Jerusalem do that? When he entered the gate, remember, when he entered the triumphal entry? Who said, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord?
All the people. Remember? And then, and the officials of Jerusalem came to Jesus and said, stop them from saying that. They weren't saying it.
[49:51] Stop them. And Jesus said what? They don't say it. The stones will cry out. Creation recognizes who I am. And you recognize who I am too.

You just don't want it. So what's he saying? You will not see who I really am until you say that. When will they say that? Will they say it before he returns? Are there Jews today who say that? Absolutely. Wonderful. Are they doing it as a nation?
No, they're not doing it as a nation. But Jesus isn't just picking on Israel here.
There's a whole bunch of us Gentiles that do the same thing. He has wanted to gather us all. He wants to gather not just Jerusalem, but he wants to gather all kinds.
[50:54] He loves the world. And yet, how many of the world will say, don't want it? Don't need it? I'm not broken.

I only need a little bit of help. I just need a little help. God helps those that help themselves. That's my gospel. It doesn't get me saved, but I like that truth.
God helps those who help themselves. Don't you? Don't you like that? No. You don't like that? No. Oh, because you believe God helps those who can't help themselves.
Oh, well, that is what Jesus says. It's Americans who say God helps those who help themselves. Okay, got it. Thank you.
So, what's the significance of blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord? Let's go back to Scripture, back to Psalm 118 where that line comes from. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
[51:58] That is the statement that all the crowd when Jesus comes into Jerusalem will shout and lay down palm branches and they will shout, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

They will sing that Scripture. They will sing that Psalm. Well, what's the context of that Psalm 118? Let's read it. Psalm 118, verse 19.
Open to me the gates of righteousness. There's a gate, an opening of a door. Righteousness that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord.
The righteous shall enter through it. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone, here we go, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous on our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we pray, O Lord.

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[52:57] O Lord, we pray, give us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. There's the context. Note the words of this psalm.

They have, they're echoing the words Jesus spoke about entering through the door. They echo the psalm of salvation. They talk about salvation, entering through the door into God's presence.
He talks about my God, my salvation. Well, how does that, how is salvation accomplished? How does God do it? By a rejected stone that becomes the cornerstone.
It was God's plan from long ago. It wasn't, it wasn't plan B when Jesus arrived and was rejected and he's killed. It was always God's plan that he would send his son to be rejected by the builders of Jerusalem.
The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This very stone that was rejected becomes the foundation of salvation. It's he who comes in the name of the Lord.
[54:08] This was always God's plan. What Jesus came to finish, I'm on my way on the third day, I will finish.

He will finish, he will fulfill, he will accomplish God's plan by dying at Jerusalem and then to be raised on the third day. victor over death, over sin, over Satan, over our guilt and shame.
God has provided a way of salvation, safety from judgment, condemnation, shame, being one on the outside. God has provided everything.
He has provided a sacrifice, a substitute for us, one who dies in our place and pays our penalty, one who lived a perfect life and then as we give him our sins, he gives us his righteousness so we can be called saints, holy ones, so that we can enter his presence with rejoicing and singing without wondering, can I get in?
We have free access by the name of Jesus. Absolute, daily, everyday access. He has provided a way of salvation yet many, most don't want it.
[55:36] They have no desire for God's love. They actually believe or they convince themselves to believe they don't need it. I don't need all that.

I just want a little help now and then. And you know what? Our God is so gracious, he often helps people a little bit. But that just adds to their condemnation for rejecting him outright.
I mean, God has given us life. How could we reject, we live in this, Dan mentioned it, we live in this beautiful setting here. How do you not see a creator behind all this?
This beauty, the design. Oh, it happened for no reason. What caused it? I have no idea. Maybe aliens.
Stephen Hawking. Who brought the aliens? Oh, I don't know. What absurdity. There's no reasoning.
[56:46] It's foolish. That's why God said those who, it's a fool who says there is no God. Because there's no reason to it. And then to reject his son, who has been broadcast all over the world at this point, not in every single language yet, but the name of Jesus is known all over the world.

How many have come? How many have come? How many have come? More in those nations where there's persecution, that's for sure. Maybe that's what God's bringing to us, huh?
Okay. The door is open now. Come to him now. Seek him today. I'm not going to ask for a raise of hands.
I'm not going to ask you to come forward. But I do give an altar call. Come to Jesus. If you need help praying, come and talk to me, that's fine.
But, come to Jesus. Seek him. Ask him. Appeal to him. If you sense your heart's not there, ask him to change your heart.
[58:13] I mean, whatever your situation, ask him. Lord, there's something there but I can't see. Ask him. You have not because you ask not.

Ask. God, let's pray. I did not follow my notes at all today. Father, we thank you for your word.
I pray, oh God, I feel like there was a lot of just me babbling but maybe that's just the enemy. Lord, I pray that your word, your word will reside in our hearts and that we would hear it and respond to it. This I pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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