**CONTRASTS**

***#3 – The Narrow Road vs The Wide Road***

**“There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, “Thy will be done,” and those to whom God says, in the end, “Thy will be done.” All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened.”**― [C.S. Lewis](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1069006.C_S_Lewis), [*The Great Divorce*](http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1215780)

Could there ever be a greater contrast than heaven and hell? When I seriously study my Bible and read all God has had to say on the afterlife, it leaves me with only two choices. Here are those choices in the most crystal-clear passage I know of:

*“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.”* (Matt. 7:13-14)

The contrast could not be clearer. Religions of the world offer many options for life after death. But Christ, who proved He is God by His death and resurrection, said we only have two roads to walk, two gates to enter. The *Difficult Way* leads to the *Narrow Gate* and *Life*. The *Broad Way* leads to the *Wide Gate* and *Destruction*. Life on earth is a destination to one or the other. Choose wisely.

In the 1989 blockbuster *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*, both Indiana (played by Harrison Ford, an archeologist who wants to secure the cup for historical posterity), and Marcus Brody (a Nazi agent wanting to secure the Holy Grail to secure eternal life and use it for the evil power of the Third Reich) reach the cave together. The cup that Jesus used for the Last Supper was among many on display. The Grail Knight, who was given charge to protect the sacred chalice, sees the dilemma they both are in. Brody asks the old guardian: “Which one is it?” The Grail Knight replies, “You must choose. But choose wisely, as the true grail will bring you life, and the false grail will take it from you.”

Doctor Elsa, the female villain, chooses it for him, picking a beautiful solid gold cup that convinces Brody it is the sacred chalice. He dips it into the holy water that was to become his personal “fountain of youth.” He gulps it down. Within seconds he turns into a ghastly skeleton and crumbles to the earth and his ashes blow away in the wind. The Grail Knight says, “He chose poorly.” An understatement if ever there was one.

Indiana, far more clever, and a student of such things, said a carpenter like Jesus would not use a beautiful gold cup, but a plain one. He chose a simple one that was aged by time. He dipped it into the water and said, “There’s only one way to find out.” After drinking he turns to look at the Grail Knight, who simply says, “You chose wisely.”

This is not a movie and we are not actors on the stage. As the old saying goes, “Life is not a dress rehearsal,” so you get one lifetime to determine your eternal destiny.

Moses, at the end of his 120 year life, gathered Israel to him to hear his last words as their leader. Here they are: “*See I have set before you today life and good, death and evil… I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life*…” (Deut. 30:15-20).

Two choices. That’s all you have. Choose wisely.

**Choice 1 – The Narrow Way – The Strait Gate.**M. Scott Peck wrote his best-seller *The Road Less Traveled*, saying it was the disciplined life that made the difference. Robert Frost penned his famous poem *The Road Not Taken* that tells of two roads, one well worn, the other still grassy and less traveled, knowing whichever one he takes will likely be his destiny. He concludes:

I shall be telling this with a sigh – Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I — I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

Why is the way narrow?   
Because it is a life of walking by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). Few choose such a walk.  
Because it is a life of repentance from all sin (I Jn. 1:7-10). Few think they need to.  
Because it is a life of confession of Christ as the only Way, only Truth, only Life (Rom.   
 10:9; Jn. 14:6). Few will accept such a narrow standard.  
Because it demands a crucifixion of the old man in baptism (Rom. 6:3-7). Few do that.  
Because it is a lifetime of a disciplined living sacrifice, breaking away from conforming   
 to the world (Rom. 12:1-2). Few will commit to such a life.

An Olympic gymnast learns to walk, jump, and flip with seeming ease on the balance beam. Did you watch Simone Biles at the 2016 Olympics in Rio? Four gold medals. What she can do on that narrow beam defies description! Why can only a few do it? You know the answer. You have to want it! The same holds true for winning God’s gold. But it’s won by His grace, and our faith (Eph. 2:8-10). It’s there for the taking.

**Choice 2 – The Broad Way – The Wide Gate.**The Space Shuttle program often landed at Edwards Air Force Base in California’s Mojave Desert. Why? It is 150 feet wide and 6,000 feet long, making it safe and easy.

Most people want to blend in, go with the flow, be tolerant of everyone’s beliefs and lifestyles. To state with conviction there is only one way to heaven is narrow minded (John 14:6). So the vast majority, not wanting to rock the boat, just drift downstream with the crowd instead of paddling upstream against the current, not realizing they are heading over the waterfalls to destruction.

My sister Dee is an artist and painted a picture for my parents years ago that graphically showed massive crowds strolling along a broad road, leading through a wide gate into darkness and fire. The crossroads showed another road, much more narrow, with a few walking toward a gate that allowed one at a time through it, but into a blaze of sunshine! It still hangs in mom’s house. For years I have stared at that painting, picturing which road I am walking. It is a sobering experience. I always walk away saying, “Choose wisely.” I pray I have. I pray you have too.

Until next time… I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.

I love you. Rick