



# Mid-Week

Bible Study and Prayer  
Wednesdays 6:45pm – 8pm



led by: Pastor Josh Franklin, Good Hope Baptist Church ([www.goodhopechurch.org](http://www.goodhopechurch.org) and [www.joshfranklin.org](http://www.joshfranklin.org))

## The Intolerance of Jesus (Staying on the Narrow Road)

*And Jesus said unto His disciples, "Go into all the world, teaching all men to live any way they want, and urging each to find his or her own path to God. Let not anyone of you make someone feel inferior or victimized because of their beliefs. Above all, be tolerant. Verily, verily, I say unto you that what you believe and how you live do not matter, so long as you are sincere."*

*Leaving that place, Jesus led His disciples to Jerusalem where they broke bread at Club Upper Room. There He addressed them again, saying, "I am one of the ways, one of the truths, and just one possible life. If you are basically a good person, you're okay in my book... Now go forth to live according to whatever feels good to you." And there was much rejoicing.*

- Ryan Dobson<sup>a</sup>

*One of the biggest mistakes humans make is to believe that there is only one way. Actually, there are many diverse paths to what you call God.*

- Oprah Winfrey<sup>b</sup>

Imagine for a moment that you and your spouse are on a weekend getaway out of state. It's a warm summer day, and you've rented a nice convertible. The wind is blowing in your hair. The radio station is playing your favorite music. You and your spouse have laughed and had great conversation, but something is wrong. The signs announce that you are about to enter the wrong state! You have been driving several hours on the wrong road! You turn to your spouse, whose response is, "Oh, I knew we were on the wrong road several hours ago, but we were having such a great time, I didn't want to upset you." If you know that someone you love is on the wrong road, no matter how grand the drive, is it "loving" to be silent?

In our world, countless millions are on the road that leads to eternal separation from God. We know that road leads to destruction, but they seem so happy and content. We don't want to disturb them, but one day they will turn to us and say, "Did you know that I was on the wrong road?" What will you say?

*Matthew 7:13-14 - <sup>13</sup> "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. <sup>14</sup> Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

*Luke 13:23-24 - <sup>23</sup> Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, <sup>24</sup> "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.*

*Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

<sup>a</sup> Ryan Dobson, *Be Intolerant* (Sisters, Or.: Multnomah Publishers, 2003), 13.

<sup>b</sup> LaTonya Taylor, "The Church of O," *Christianity Today*, April 1, 2002, 38.

*John 10:7 - Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.  
John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.  
Acts 4:12 - Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

The term agōnizomai ("strive") indicates that entering the door to God's kingdom takes conscious, purposeful, and intense effort. That is the term from which we get agonize, and is the same word Paul uses to describe an athlete who agonizes ("competes") to win a race ([1 Cor. 9:25](#)) and the Christian who "fights the good fight of faith" (literally, "struggles the good struggle," [1 Tim. 6:12](#)).

Apōleia (destruction) does not refer to extinction or annihilation, but to total ruin and loss (cf. [Matt. 3:12](#); [18:8](#); [25:41](#), [46](#); [2 Thess. 1:9](#); [Jude 6-7](#)). It is not the complete loss of being, but the complete loss of well-being. It is the destination of all religions except the way of Jesus Christ, and it is the destiny of all those who follow any way but His. It is the destination and destiny of perdition, hell, and everlasting torment. "The way of the wicked will perish" ([Ps. 1:6](#)).

**5 FRIGHTFUL FACTS ABOUT SALVATION FROM THIS PASSAGE [BILL BENNETT and JOHN BISAGNO]**

- 1) NOT EVERYONE IS GOING TO BE SAVED.
- 2) MORE PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE LOST THAN ARE GOING TO BE SAVED.
- 3) MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE EXPECTING TO BE SAVED, ARE GOING TO BE ETERNALLY LOST.
- 4) NO ONE WILL BE SAVED AFTER DEATH.
- 5) THE TIME TO BE SAVED IS IN GOD'S TIMING, NOT YOURS.  
Fools say: I'm going to live it up in my sin, and then I'll give my heart to Jesus later in life. They are overlooking three crucial considerations:
  - 1) He could die.
  - 2) Jesus Christ may come.
  - 3) Something could happen in his heart, and he could have no desire to come to the Lord.

There have always been but two systems of religion in the world. One is God's system of divine accomplishment, and the other is man's system of human achievement. One is the religion of God's grace, the other the religion of men's works. One is the religion of faith, the other the religion of the flesh. One is the religion of the sincere heart and the internal, the other the religion of hypocrisy and the external. Within man's system are thousands of religious forms and names, but they are all built on the achievements of man and the inspiration of Satan. Christianity; on the other hand, is the religion of divine accomplishment, and it stands alone.

The tiny gate is a perfect metaphor for the Beatitudes. Alexander Maclaren, the great preacher of a little more than 100 years ago, liked to poetically picture the first two Beatitudes as the sideposts of the small gate. One denoted the first Beatitude and the need for a consciousness of spiritual bankruptcy, and the other stood for the second Beatitude's demand for sorrow over sin. This is indeed a small gate, and few people are willing to shed what is necessary to get through it! No one naturally likes to be poor in spirit or to truly mourn their sins. We must come to God holding nothing in our hands except our inadequacy and our consciousness of sin.

**Ezekiel 33:3-6 (NLT)**

- <sup>3</sup> When the watchman sees the enemy coming, he sounds the alarm to warn the people.
- <sup>4</sup> Then if those who hear the alarm refuse to take action, it is their own fault if they die.
- <sup>5</sup> They heard the alarm but ignored it, so the responsibility is theirs. If they had listened to the warning, they could have saved their lives.
- <sup>6</sup> But if the watchman sees the enemy coming and doesn't sound the alarm to warn the people, he is responsible for their captivity. They will die in their sins, but I will hold the watchman responsible for their deaths.'

## EXTRA MATERIALS:

ADRIAN ROGERS - Just look around. Everybody kind of looks the same. We're all here this morning in our Sunday morning glad rags. But God doesn't look on the outward appearance. God looks on the heart. And in the congregation today, we say that they are young and old, rich and poor, weak and strong, and so forth. There are only two categories of people here today. The saints and the ain't's. That's all. The saved and the lost. Those who are with Jesus, and those who are against Jesus. Those who are loving him, and those who are hating him. Those who are receiving him, and those who are rejecting him. Those who are crowning him and those who are crucifying him. Those who are on the road to Heaven, and those who are on the road to Hell. And you, every one, is in one of those two ways and that's all. Either you're on the holy highway, or you're on the broad way.

...People don't like ministers to say this is the way it is. Now, they want their airplane pilots to be very narrow-minded. Your flying on an airplane and say now you are narrow minded. You let the flaps down and let the landing gear down, and so forth. They want their pharmacists to be very narrow-minded. They want their banker to be very narrow minded when he's handling their money. They want everybody in all of these disciplines to be narrow minded, but somehow in the thing that matters the most—eternal life—they say well, it really doesn't make any difference.

A West Indian who had chosen Islam over Christianity said his reason was that Islam "is a noble, broad path. There is room for a man and his sins on it. The way of Christ is too narrow" It seems that many preachers today do not see that issue as clearly as that unbelieving Muslim.

A letter written to a Melbourne, Australia, daily newspaper expresses clearly the attitude of a person on the broad road to destruction.

***After hearing Dr. Billy Graham on the air, viewing him on television and reading reports and letters concerning him and his mission, I am heartily sick of the type of religion that insists my soul (and everyone else's) needs saving—whatever that means. I have never felt that I was lost. Nor do I feel that I daily wallow in the mire of sin, although repetitive preaching insists that I do.***

***Give me a practical religion that teaches gentleness and tolerance, that acknowledges no barriers of color or creed, that remembers the aged and teaches children of goodness and not sin.***

***If in order to save my soul I must accept such a philosophy as I have recently heard preached, I prefer to remain forever damned.***

Robert Jeffress - Imagine that your child develops a terrible cough and fever. You try the usual medications, but nothing works. Your child becomes increasingly listless as you become increasingly worried. You take your child to the doctor, and your physician says, "Your child has pneumonia, and I want to hospitalize her so that she can be watched and treated with antibiotics." However, you strongly object, saying, "I don't believe my child has pneumonia." Your doctor explains that there is no question about the diagnosis and needed treatment. But you counter, "Why do you think your opinion is better than mine?" The doctor patiently responds that as a professional he routinely deals with cases just like this, and the only way to treat the illness is with a heavy round of antibiotics. He insists that he is right (meaning you are wrong). Is it fair to label your doctor as "hateful" or "arrogant" because he argues that there is only one way for your child to get well?<sup>c</sup>

JOHN MACARTHUR - In perfect harmony with His absolute sovereignty; God has always allowed men to choose Him or not, and He has always pleaded with them to decide for Him or face the consequences of a choice against Him. Since mankind turned their backs on Him in the Fall, God has bent every effort and spared no cost in wooing His creatures back to Himself. He has provided and shown the way, leaving nothing to man but the choice. God made His choice by providing the way of redemption. The choice is now mans.

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<sup>c</sup> Robert Jeffress, *Hell? Yes!* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2004), 29-30.

While Israel was in the wilderness the Lord instructed Moses to tell the people, "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him" ([Deut. 30:19-20](#)).

After Israel came into the Promised Land, Joshua confronted the people again with a choice: of continuing to serve the Egyptian and Canaanite gods they had adopted or of turning to the Lord who had delivered them from Egypt and given them the land promised to Abraham. "Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve," Joshua pleaded ([Josh. 24:13-15](#)).

On Mount Carmel the prophet Elijah asked the people of Israel, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him" ([1 Kings 18:21](#)). The Lord commanded Jeremiah to set the choice again before His people: "Thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death'" ([Jer. 21:8](#)).

In [John 6:66-69](#), Jesus called for a choice: "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. Jesus said therefore to the twelve, 'You do not want to go away also, do you?' Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. And we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.'"

That is the call that God has been making to men since they turned away from Him, and it is the supreme appeal of His Word...

### ***Why Must There Only Be ONE Way?***

To answer this question we have to look at the history of human kind. Adam and Eve were created by God in His own image, in true holiness and righteousness. But they deliberately disobeyed God, and immediately died spiritually, which ultimately brought about physical death (Gen. 2:17). Thus man's sin separated him from a holy God. However, God, because of "His great love wherewith He loved us," (Eph. 2:4) sent His One and only begotten (*monogenes*, the only one of His kind) to die for two basic reasons:

1. The sinfulness of man, and
2. The holiness of God.

Romans 3:23 states, "*All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*" By Jesus substituting Himself on the cross, God Himself demonstrated His righteousness so that He (God) would be righteous and holy and declare as righteous all who believed in Jesus (Romans 3:24). The glorious result being, "*We are freely just (declared righteous) by His grace (free gift) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*"

Thus we may confidently conclude that Jesus is the One and Only Way to God because God the Father appointed Him to be and no one else. In fact, Jesus is the only One who ever qualified to be our Savior, since He, the God man was the only person ever to live without sin. As the writer of Hebrews says, "*Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens*" (Hebrews 7:25-26).

The best known verse in all the Bible is John 3:16, which succinctly states the truth of all I have attempted to say above. "*God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.*" Then John re-enforces this truth by stating further, "*God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Anyone who believes in Him is not judged, but anyone who does not believe is already judged, because he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God*" (John 3:17-18).

Why would anyone seek another way than the way God has provided? Jesus answers this question in John 3:18-19, *“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”*

Man’s rejection of Christ is not an intellectual problem but a moral one. In a word, man does not want to humble his heart and bring himself under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The late Chuck Colson aptly stated, *“It’s obvious why Eastern religion is such an attractive form of salvation for a post-Christian culture. It soothes the ego by pronouncing the individual divine, and it gives a gratifying sense of ‘spirituality’ without making any demands in terms of doctrine of ethical living.”*<sup>d</sup>

The religions of this world differ in teachings and rituals, but all of them have one thing in common: they teach salvation by good works, human merit or personal accomplishments. Only does the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross offer the good news of salvation by grace through faith through the accomplishments of the One and Only Who paid in full the price of sin as our Mediator, Savior, Lord and coming King. The wise will heed the warning of Solomon, *“There is a way that seems right to man, but in the end it leads to death”* (Prov. 14:12; Prov. 16:25).

On May 26, 2002, a towboat on the Arkansas River in Oklahoma accidentally pushed a barge into a concrete bridge support. The bridge was where Interstate 40 crossed the river. At the impact, a third of the bridge collapsed. The problem was that people on the interstate couldn’t see that the bridge was out. Fishermen in boats below watched in horror as car after car shot off the edge of the bridge at seventy miles an hour, plunging sixty-two feet to the river. Three eighteen-wheelers went over, along with seven passenger cars, including one carrying James and Misty Johnson and their three-year-old daughter, Shea. The fishermen immediately began pulling survivors out of the water. But meanwhile cars kept dropping into the river. When they pulled a truck driver out of the water, he shouted, *“Somebody stop the cars!”*

So fisherman Alton Wilhoit grabbed a flare gun from his boat and ran up to the interstate, where another semi was headed for the bridge. Wilhoit fired the flare – it struck the truck right on the windshield. The driver slammed on the brakes. The wheels locked up and the trailer came to a stop with the truck’s front wheels hanging over the ledge. The driver threw it into reverse and pulled away, effectively blocking the road and warning other drivers. Fourteen people died that day, including precious Shea and her parents. But how many more would’ve died if Alton Wilhoit hadn’t done what it took to warn the people who were blindly headed toward their death?<sup>e</sup>

This tragedy could have been much worse if someone did not have the courage to warn others that the bridge is out. Those who have been convinced that Jesus is the only way to heaven can be Alton Wilhoits for the world that is accelerating through life on a road that promises much, but will soon lead to eternity without God. Do the people in your church realize the danger ahead? Do your friends know what’s ahead as they stay on the road that seems right to man? Someone has to tell people that the bridge is out! No matter the backlash from critics who claim we are “intolerant” and “arrogant”, we must have courage and conviction to proclaim the exclusive truth that Jesus is the only way to heaven, and there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved!

***Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? (Gal 4:16)***

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<sup>d</sup> Chuck Colson, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 125.

<sup>e</sup> Ryan Dobson, *Be Intolerant* (Sisters, Or.: Multnomah Publishers, 2003), 91-93.