

**Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)**

**Luke 13: 22-30**

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue reading Luke chapter 13, verses 22 to 30.

Yesterday we read Jesus speaking about the parables of the kingdom of God. He used two examples: one is the mustard seed that grew into a large tree, describing some abnormal external development of the kingdom of God, so that the birds of the air came and lodged in its branches. He also used a second parable, the leaven that was put into the dough, and the whole lump was leavened, describing the internal corruption of the kingdom of God.

In Jesus' ministry on earth, He never cared about the crowds; He even stayed away from the crowds. When the crowds pressed around Him, He often withdrew to the back. What He cared about were those who truly wanted to follow Him. Therefore, Luke, immediately after this parable of the kingdom of heaven, recorded that to enter the kingdom of God one must enter the narrow gate.

**Verse 22: "And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem."**

Jesus was going on His way toward Jerusalem. He knew that what was waiting for Him in Jerusalem was suffering, and ultimately He must go to the cross for the sins of all people. Yet He did not hesitate and continued on the way to Jerusalem. At this time, His message was surely becoming more and more solemn, especially toward the disciples who followed Him. He used the testimony of His own life to tell His disciples that following the Lord is a way of the cross. He Himself had walked it this way, and His disciples, His followers, would also have to walk it in

the future. In this process, Jesus still did not forget to teach people in every city and village; of all that the Father had given Him, He would lose none.

**Verse 23: “Then one said to Him, ‘Lord, are there few who are saved?’ And He said to them,”**

Because Jesus did not care about the crowds and sometimes even rebuked them, when Jesus was finally about to enter Jerusalem and walk the way of the cross, the number of those who followed Him seemed to become fewer and fewer. One person saw this situation and came to ask Jesus, saying, “Lord, are there few who are saved?”

Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons all the way, supplying those in need, so that people were saved through close contact with Jesus. But when people wanted to follow Jesus, Jesus solemnly told them that this is a way of the cross. This person was very wise; he saw this situation and therefore took the initiative to ask Jesus whether the number of saved people was small.

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

Are there few who are saved? Jesus did not answer directly. Jesus told him an absolute truth: you must strive to enter the narrow gate. If you want to be saved, this gate is narrow. Why is it narrow? Because one must pass through the gate of repentance. At the beginning of chapter 13, Jesus solemnly told the crowds that unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Every saved person must pass through the narrow gate of repentance; one must truly recognize one’s own corruption, one’s own unworthiness, one’s own inability to save oneself, and be willing to come before Jesus with a change of mind and be willing to repent.

“Jesus said to the crowd, ‘You must strive to enter the narrow gate.’” Because it is a narrow gate, one must strive to enter it. You must have a true assessment of

your present condition and recognize that you are completely unable to save yourself, and be willing to repent and enter this narrow gate.

Then He said, "I tell you, many will seek to enter and will not be able." The time to enter the narrow gate is today; and the opening of the narrow gate has a time limit. In the period of grace, as long as you are willing, you can enter. But one day this narrow gate of grace will be closed.

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

When this person came to ask Jesus about salvation, Jesus' answer was actually very solemn. Jesus truly told him that this gate is narrow; one must strive to enter it, and it has a time limit. Today, while the gate is still open, you must truly recognize your own condition, be willing to repent, and then you can enter the narrow gate.

After entering the narrow gate, the way one must walk is a way of the cross. Christians all enter the gate first and then walk the way; the gate is narrow, and the way is the way of the cross. If today you covet all kinds of enjoyments in the world and are unwilling to enter the narrow gate or walk the way of the cross, one day the Master of the house will rise up and close this gate; at that time, you will knock at the door from outside, and the Master will say, "I do not know you, where you are from."

The word "know" used by the Lord here, in the Greek, is oida, which speaks of a subjective knowledge with the Lord. In other words, there must be some subjective relationship between the Lord and you; you must establish a good relationship with the Lord so that the Lord can truly know you. If you are unwilling to repent, you have not even entered the narrow gate; on that day the Master will answer, "I do not know you, I do not know where you are from."

**Verse 26: “Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’”**

When Jesus fulfilled His ministry on earth, He frequently taught people. Many people heard His teaching on the streets, and even many invited Him to their homes to sit at table with Him. But these relationships were all outward; these relationships were all objective. Truly establishing a relationship with the Lord is not about having eaten and drunk with Him or having heard the Lord’s teaching. What is more important is whether you have truly repented and wholeheartedly accepted Him as the Savior of your life. After entering the narrow gate, you must still walk the way of the cross. If you have not established such a relationship, having eaten and drunk with Him or having heard Him preach will not help you.

**Verse 27: “But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’”**

Our relationship with the Lord is established on our true repentance, after which a relationship of life with Him is produced. Every day, through reading the Bible and praying, we have intimate fellowship with the Lord. The Lord knows every one of His sheep and calls them by name. If you have not established such a relationship with the Lord, one day He will say, “I do not know you.”

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

In other words, the relationship with the Lord is subjective and must be established personally. You cannot say that we are descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and have a blood relationship; they and all the prophets will be in the kingdom of God, but you will have no part; you will be thrust out, and there you will weep and gnash your teeth.

**Verse 29: “They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.”**

Not only the Israelites, but also some who have truly repented and been saved will be in the kingdom of God. And God will gather many Gentiles who belong to Him from the east, west, north, and south, and these people will also sit down in the kingdom of God.

**Verse 30: “And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”**

Therefore, no one can be proud or self-satisfied, thinking that he has already obtained it; everyone must humble himself before the Lord, accept the supply of His life, and allow life to grow. When people came to ask Jesus how many would be saved, Jesus’ answer was very direct: you must enter the narrow gate; you must walk the way of the cross. Jesus did not water it down at all; the standard is strict.

Today when we all preach the gospel, we often emphasize God’s love too much and emphasize God’s grace too much; yet we do not truly understand grace, thinking that grace means God giving us benefits, especially benefits that can be obtained in the world. Therefore, many so-called prosperity theologies have arisen, hoping to prosper in this age.

Jesus, however, clearly told us that this is a narrow gate; you must truly repent; after entering the gate, it is a way of the cross; you are willing to let God work on you and even allow some sufferings to come so that you can bear the fruit of the Spirit. If what you care about is only prosperity and success in the world, yet you have never truly repented, one day the Master will say to you, “I do not know you.”

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for giving us grace so that we can know You in this life and accept You as the Savior of our life. And through spending some time before You every day and having intimate fellowship with You, we are willing to commit ourselves into Your hands and accept every leading You have on us. Lord, help us to always keep a humble heart, spend some time every day reading Your word, establish an intimate relationship with You, and know every leading You have on us. Bless my life today so that it may count before You. I pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.