

## NARROW GATE - WIDE ROAD

**“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” (Matt 7:13-14)**

Unfortunately, It seems that many who claim Christ as Lord, are walking the “wide road.”. ABC NEWS reports that 83% of Americans identify themselves as Christians. . . yet:

- Only 43 % attend church regularly.
- Only 26% read the Bible on a regular basis.
- Regarding divorce, George Barna states: “If you look through the official CDC statistics, you will find little difference between self proclaimed Christians and the rest of the rest of the general population”.
- Charisma Magazine states that 70% of women having abortions call themselves Christians
- Christianity Today claims that 50% of “Christian” men watch pornography.
- Approximately 50% of all babies born in America are born out of wedlock

While more depressing statistics are available, these should be sufficient to show that something is wrong! Jesus requires His follows not just to enter the “narrow gate”, but also to walk the “narrow road”. While the “wide road” may seem easy, it actually leads to destruction.

Corinth was the armpit of the ancient world. It was so evil that “to Corinthianize” became a common way of describing a sinful life. That sinful city featured a temple to Aphrodite with a thousand prostitutes who considered fornication a religious duty. Believers in Corinth, however, were to be different. They were **“come out from them and be separate” (2 Cor. 6:17).**

Paul realized that to avoid all association with those who are “immoral, greedy, swindlers, and idolaters” you would have to leave the world (1 Cor. 5:10). The church was therefore to be “in the world” but not “of the world”. Believers in Christ were to be a colony of heaven (Phil. 3:20). They were to live in the world without getting tangled up in the world. Paul explained to Timothy, for example, that a soldier was to please his commanding officer and not to get tangled up in civilian affairs (2 Tim. 2:3). “Civilian affairs”, were always to be subservient to his primary role as a soldier. The application is obvious. Christians are soldiers of King Jesus and “civilian affairs” must never be our first priority.

Please consider: Aquila and Priscilla lived at Corinth and were tent makers (Acts 18:1 - 3). Erastus lived at Corinth and was the city’s director of public works (Rom. 16:23). Crispus lived in Corinth and was the synagogue ruler (Acts 18:8). All of these precious souls were rescued from the dominion of darkness and brought into the Kingdom of Christ ( Col. 1:13). They still lived in Corinth, but their primary allegiance was now to King Jesus. Since they were seeking first His Kingdom, they now saw the things of earth in a totally different light (2 Cor. 5:16). Now they considered themselves to be aliens and strangers passing through this temporary world to a celestial city and an eternal reward (1 Peter 2:11). Remember! MANY enter in at the “wide gate” and walk the “broad road”. FEW by contrast, enter the “small gate” and also walk the “narrow road”.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that the “narrow road” is distasteful and unpleasant. Quite to the contrary! It is filled with “joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8). It is the way of transgressors that is hard (Prov. 13:15). FYI, Steve Sternberg reported in USA TODAY that one out of every two young Americans will get a sexually transmitted disease by age 25. Unfortunately, some of these diseases are incurable, such as HPV (Human Immuno Deficiency Virus) which causes AIDS. Maybe the “narrow road” isn’t such a bad idea after all!