



JESUS THE NARROW DOOR

Part 59 of Luke's Gospel: Investigating the Man Who Is God

Pastor Mark Driscoll | Luke 13:22-35 | January 23, 2011

Luke 13:22–35

²² He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³ And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” And he said to them, ²⁴ “Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵ 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.’ ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’ ²⁷ But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’ ²⁸ 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. ²⁹ And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” ³² 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. ³³ 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.’ ³⁴ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! ³⁵ 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!’”

INTRODUCTION

Imagine that a story has been told to you, a story that has been passed on in your family from one generation to the next for so many years that no one is exactly certain how old the story is, but it concerns a distant grandfather of yours. And the story is told that your grandfather lived in the very presence of God, that your grandfather experienced the grace, goodness, and generosity of God in his glorious kingdom, that your distant grandfather was exceedingly foolish. And rather than remaining humble, he became proud. And rather than obedience, he chose a tragic path of disobedience. And rather than life, he chose death. And rather than honoring God, he wanted to himself be honored as a god. And so your distant grandfather declared war on God, led an insurrection against God, disregarded, disowned, disobeyed God. And he fled from the presence of God.

He ultimately came to the edge of God’s kingdom and there he found a small, narrow door. And he passed through that door and that door slammed shut behind him. And he went from a world of light to a world of darkness, from a world of life to a world of death. And that every generation of your family has been born on that side of that door and that the story has been passed on to you that somewhere there is a long, dark tunnel. And in that tunnel there is a small, narrow door that is cracked open so that light may proceed from it, and that that door is the entry point back to the King and his kingdom.

No one is certain where it is until you, on a day of providence, are going for a walk, out hiking perhaps in the woods, and you see this long, narrow tunnel. And you wonder, “Could that be the tunnel that is the legend, the story, perhaps the true story that has been passed on to my family?” And with a bit of hope, you enter into that tunnel. And in fact, you find a small, narrow door that is cracked open with light peering from it into the dark cave, this long tunnel.

But, in addition, there are thousands of other doors, each one representing another religion, philosophy, ideology, each guaranteeing some great gift of eternal life on the other side, each inviting you to put your hand on the knob, to open the door, and by faith to venture into whatever world is to be had on the other side of that threshold. And there you are with a decision to make. Which door will you choose? Which fate will you endure? Which world will you enter into?

SALVATION IS ONE NARROW DOOR

That is essentially the story that Jesus tells in Luke 13. We read, first of all, that salvation is one narrow door, the words of Jesus in Luke 13:22–24. We are told that, “He,” Jesus, “went on his way through the 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. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will

not be able.’’

Jesus says that there is in fact a door. A door exists to divide, to separate, to demarcate those who are in, those who are out, those who are family, those who are foe, those who are welcome, those who are unwelcome. Just as your home has a door, so the kingdom home of God has a door. And Jesus says that God dwells on one side and we on the other. Holiness on one side, unholiness on the other. Life on one side, death on the other. And that there is a door of division, separation, demarcation between us and God. It is a narrow door. It is a small door. Jesus says it is a door that few find and fewer still pass through by faith.

They come to him and they ask this question: “Jesus, will many be saved?” And Jesus asks the question, “What about you?” Some of you have spent far too much time speculating about all of the religions and philosophies and ideologies. “How many will be saved? What about those who have never heard?” Perhaps some of those questions are, in fact, appropriate, but you have neglected the first and most important question of all. What about you? Will you be saved? Will you die to taste life or death, heaven or hell, blessing or judgment? Jesus says that it ultimately comes down to whether or not you are on this side or that side of the narrow door.

The atheists are wrong. There is a God and there is a world beyond this world, and there is a life after this life. The atheists have lied.

In addition, the pluralists have lied. There are not many doors that lead to eternal life. Not all religions go to the same place. All religions but one lead to hell. Jesus himself declares in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, the life. No one,” that includes you, “comes to the Father but through me.”

And the universalists are wrong and they lie. Not everyone will die and go to be in a better place. We say these sort of foolish things at funerals of people who die because we’re uncomfortable and we want hope. But we need not be foolish and say, “Well, it’s a good thing they died. They’ve gone to a better place.” Friends, most have not, will not, go to a better place. The door is narrow. If they did not pass through it, they do not inherit eternal life simply by virtue of dying. It’s the decision they make in this life that ultimately determines where they go when this life ends.

No one likes to speak of these things. Preachers don’t preach of these things. Some Christians even renounce these things. And these are the things which Jesus himself has said. And let me ask you this: whom else will you trust? Whom else will you trust? Do you have a teacher, a religious leader, a philosopher who would give you some teaching that is contrary to the teaching of Jesus? Would you find them to be more humble, more credible? Would you choose to follow their instruction or would you trust in his instruction?

You and I are in a position today that we have a very important decision to make. Which door will we pass through? I want you to think of this every time you pass through a threshold, you enter through a door, you place your hand upon a knob. Remember, remember, remember the words of Jesus. Of all the doors you will pass through, leaving this place, entering your own vehicle, returning—if you are still alive—to the home that God has gifted you, every time you pass through a doorway, every time you place your hand upon a knob, remember the words of Jesus. There is one door that is the most important door. It is a narrow door. It is a door of faith. It is a door that separates us from God, life from death, hell from heaven.

THE NARROW DOOR IS EXCLUSIVE AND INCLUSIVE

Some of you will say, “This is my problem with Christianity. It is so exclusive and narrow minded.” Friends, we are as narrow as Jesus. He speaks of the path to salvation, forgiveness of sin, and eternal life as a narrow path that is to be traversed to a narrow door. And this door is open from God to us and it is an invitation for the enemies of God, not just the undeserving, but the ill-deserving to be welcomed into the kingdom of God and the presence of a holy, righteous, and good God.

And before you judge God, let me first point out to you your own hypocrisy. None of you do this for your enemies. Those who have harmed you, abused you, abandoned you, betrayed you, maligned you, tonight you will not leave the front door to your home open. You will not leave a light on inviting them to come. You will not welcome them into your home that you might bless them and love them and lavish goodness upon them and sit down at your table and feast with them. We’re all hypocrites. God is better than us all. God owes us nothing and he’s opened a door.

To be sure, it’s a narrow door. And in this regard—I will not lie to you—Christianity is an exclusive religion. There is no salvation apart from Jesus. There is no forgiveness of sin apart from Jesus. There is no eternal life apart from Jesus. The path to salvation, the door of salvation, it is, in fact, narrow. In that regard, it is exclusive. There is no hope for sinners other than Jesus Christ.

But Christianity is also the most inclusive. All are welcome to pass through the narrow door. You see, in some religions you need to be of a particular race, ethnicity, or people group. However, all nations are welcome to pass through the narrow door. In some religions you need to learn Hebrew or Arabic. However, all languages are welcome to pass through the narrow door. In some religions you must be of a particular nationality, tribe, ethnicity, or culture. However, all tribes, tongues, languages, nations, and people are welcome to pass through the narrow door.

For some religions, you must be very smart and very studious. However, even those who are simple are likewise welcome to pass through the narrow door. In some religions, it is preferable that you be affluent and wealthy so that you can buy your seat for the holy days in synagogue. Or in religions, if I might use that word exceedingly loosely, like Scientology, there are religions that are built for the rich and famous, where they have to pay large amounts of money to go through layers of teaching, training, and cleansing.

However, the rich and the poor, and the black and the white, and the young and the old, the simple and the wise are welcome to pass through the narrow door. And those who are the most reprehensible among us. See, many religions would teach that you need to be a good person who lives a good life, that you could stand before God, that your deeds of goodness would outweigh your deeds of badness. Christianity says, “No! The most wicked, vile, and reprehensible among us, if they come to repentance of sin, sincere faith in Jesus, even in their dying breath, they too can pass by faith through the

narrow door." Friends, there is one door. That door is narrow. It is exclusive. You must pass through it. But it is inclusive. All are welcome to pass through the one narrow door.

THE NARROW DOOR IS CLOSING

Jesus continues, saying that the narrow door is closing. Luke 13:25–27, "'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!"'

Now, were you and I to examine the life of these people, we would be hard pressed to declare them as evil. We would see these as moral people, good citizens, decent neighbors. And you might ask, "What evil have they done?" The evil they have done is this: lived a life apart from God. Sin is not just your deeds and misdeeds. It is whether or not you live in loving relationship with the God who made you. Any life, all of life, any of life that is lived apart from God is sinful, whether moral or immoral. These people were living apart from God. They were living apart from faith in Jesus. They had gazed upon the narrow door, but they had not passed through it.

And Jesus here is saying that God is open to you. Friend, he has opened a door, a narrow door of opportunity, of invitation, of salvation. But that door will, in fact, close. There is no reincarnation. It's a lie. There is no second chance for salvation after death. It's a lie. There is no purgatory. It, too, is a lie. Hebrews 9:27 says, "It is appointed once for you to die, then judgment." You live, you die, you're judged. That's the truth. That's the truth.

When you die, the door of opportunity slams shut behind you. As long as there is breath in your lungs, there is hope for your soul. Once you die, and we know not when we will die—some of you are young and you presume upon God's grace and you anticipate that you have decades left to sort out your spiritual condition. You do not know. You do not know the day of your death. It could come at a moment. Some of you may not live long. Some of you are presuming upon God's grace. Some of you are already living on borrowed time.

You will die. The question is when. When you die, the door slams shut behind you, and you stand before God to give an account. And you will be judged eternally. Are you ready? These people were not. He says that there are many, perhaps even some of you, that when they die and the door of opportunity slams shut, which means that every minute of every day that door is slowly closing on us as we near our end, they were astonished that they died on this side of that door. That's not what they were anticipating. They were religious people and moral people and decent people and pious people. And they said, "Jesus, we knew about you and we had meals with you and we were familiar with your teaching. How in the world could we die on this side of the door?" Jesus says, "Because you knew about me, but you didn't know me. You were so familiar with me that you overlooked me. You had spent so many years looking at the door, you neglected to pass through it by faith."

Friends, that is the case for some of you, perhaps many of you. Your parents were Christians. Your family is Christian. Your friends are Christian. Perhaps the school you attend is Christian. You attend Mars Hill. You're in a community group. You've read some of the Bible. You raised your hand at a camp as a child. And you would stand before Jesus in the end and say, "I belong to you," and he would say, "No, you don't. It's one narrow door. The line is single file. You knew many who passed through, but you were not among them."

Do you know Jesus? Do you love Jesus? Have you turned to Jesus? Are you trusting in Jesus? Do you worship Jesus as Lord, God, Savior, Christ, and King? Not your friends, not your family, not your school, not your community, not your group, not your relatives, not your history. You. You. Where are you at with Jesus? Have you passed through that narrow door of salvation? Have you received that kind invitation? Some of you would say, "I was baptized as a child." But did you pass through the narrow door? Your parents cannot carry you as an infant through the narrow door. You must yourself, of your own volition and will, you must choose to pass through the narrow door.

THE NARROW DOOR DIVIDES HEAVEN AND HELL

Jesus then tells us why this door is the most important door in all of history, because this narrow door is, in fact, the door that divides heaven and hell. In Luke 13:28–30, he says it this way, "'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 the 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.'"

Jesus says that this door, this narrow door, this narrow door divides heaven and hell. Friends, there is a heaven. Jesus says it will be filled with feasting and laughing and blessing. It's like an enormous party without sin, where, in resurrection bodies, sickness is conquered, disease is destroyed, God is glorified. The nations come together and we live forever under the grace of a good king. The world as we know it is not the world as God finished it. In Genesis 1:31 it says, "When God completed his work, he looked at all that he had made and he declared it to be very good." And the sin and the suffering and the sickness that we endure today is the result of our rebellion. We've passed through that door and we have created this world to be an absolute place of horror for us, but it is our doing, not God's. And Jesus says that there is a kingdom and that he, in fact, is a king. And for those who pass through this narrow door, returning back to their king, there is a heavenly kingdom.

Additionally, there is an eternal hell. There is an eternal hell. This is not a point for philosophical speculation. This is a fact. There is a real hell that will be full. Many will not pass through the narrow door. They will die on this side of that door and they will stand before God to be judged for their deeds and misdeeds. Some of you will say, "I don't believe in that." Dear friend, come to Jesus or you will experience it. And if I'm wrong, I have nothing to lose and everything to gain. If you are wrong, you have nothing to gain and everything to lose.

Jesus explains hell in the most painful of terms. Jesus speaks of hell more than anyone else in the Bible. Jesus likens hell to a place of conscious torment that is eternal and unending. Jesus says that it will be a place where people will be weeping profusely and that they will be gnashing, or grinding, their teeth in agony. Friends, have you seen someone in so much pain that their lips are quivering, their jaw is shaking, their eyes are weeping? Forever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever.

And don't believe the cartoons and don't be a fool. Satan does not rule hell. Jesus does. Jesus is Lord of all. It says in Revelation 14 that Satan, demons, and those who do not pass through the narrow door will be, quote, "tormented forever in the presence of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and his holy angels." Jesus rules heaven. Jesus rules hell. Jesus says in John 5 that he is the one who will judge you. Some of you have said to family and friends, "You can't judge me!" The truth is Jesus will. And when you die, there is no opportunity for salvation. The door slams shut behind you and you will stand before Jesus and he will sentence you to a punishment in hell that absolutely fits the degree of wickedness that was present in your life. That means that some of you will suffer more than others, but all who fail to pass through the narrow door will suffer and they will suffer forever.

Many preachers are cowards. They don't tell you this. My job is to love you well and tell you the truth. The Bible says that teachers will be judged more strictly and harshly. That means I need to stand before Jesus and give an account for even these words. I'm not going to lie to you. I'm not going to sell you. I'm not going to soften the blow. I will treat you as adults, and I want you to make your own decision. But I also want my hands to be clean of your blood, and I want you to make the decision, fully aware of the consequences of this opportunity that God sets before you.

Some of you are going to hell. And he says, "There you will see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," not that they are in the place of torment, but somehow you will be able to gaze upon the place of blessing. And you will see the love and the grace and the mercy of God. And you will see the joy and the gratitude of the people of God. And for all of your days, you will regret your own folly and the opportunity that you allowed to pass you by. You will have no one to blame but yourself.

THE LAST WILL BE FIRST AND THE FIRST WILL BE LAST

And Jesus says that some who are last will be first and some who are first will be last. Amazingly, there are many who are last that are becoming first and they are passing through this narrow door. Just a bit over a year ago, an earthquake hit Haiti, and in some thirty-seven seconds the poorest nation in the western hemisphere was literally rocked to its core. And the great city of Port-au-Prince saw upwards of half the buildings fall to the ground.

By the grace of God and the work of Pastor James MacDonald from the Harvest Bible Chapel, we had entrance into the country just days after this tragedy and it was a miracle of God that we got in. And we were privileged to bring some of the film crew there to see the devastation and to investigate in a documentary style what was happening with the churches. Came back and preached that to you and showed that footage to you and other churches did as well and I want to thank you. You gave \$750,000 to help that effort. And Churches Helping Churches, a small organization, was born with a minimal staff and a lot of volunteers and other churches, including Pastor James', took offerings as well and an additional \$2 million was raised. Over \$2.7 million in total.

So on the one-year anniversary of the quake, I had the honor of returning to see what God was doing. The capital building is still collapsed. All they've done is move the rubble and bodies out of the street, but there are no construction projects underway. Everything is as it was. There are upwards of one million people, they will call them displaced, they're homeless. Their homes fell to the ground. They're living under tarps and they're living in tents at the parks. One park has over fifty thousand people living in it in the heart of the city. No electricity, no running water, no bathrooms. There's no functioning government. There's no military and there's a very minimal police force.

And the church is exploding. Churches are filled with people who are running through the narrow door. I'll show you a photo of the event that we had. We had a service, a church service. The radio station, it was on radio and television, reported fifty thousand people came on the one-year anniversary of the quake. Where we were preaching from, there were actually five roads that came together and people lined two of them, so this is half the crowd. Actually less. There was a whole other street and then they spilled over into another area surrounding. These people came without water, without food. There was no shade or shelter and there were only a few portable bathrooms for fifty thousand people. They stood in ninety-some-degree weather for five or six hours. The president was going to do some sort of memorial event that night and so he allowed us to use his staging and his sound system for a mere \$3,000. It was wonderful. Franklin Graham had held a crusade a bit prior but his literature showed up late, so Franklin Graham was gracious and gave us all kinds of follow-up material for new Christians. People were very generous, very gracious. There are a lot of great organizations, including Christian ones, doing some wonderful things.

And it's amazing that these people who are last—the average person has a third-grade education. The average person we met is living under a tarp in a park and has been for a year. Seemingly every family has someone who's missing a limb because when the buildings fell upon people, the hospital also was destroyed, there's not medical care to tend to them, and so they just amputated their limbs. People everywhere without arms and legs. I want to thank you. We're able to build buildings at a seminary and rebuild fifty church buildings and fly in \$1.7 million in medical aid and help train thousands of pastors and also support those who are local, Creole- and French-speaking Haitian nationals who love Jesus, and host this event.

I'll share one story with you of a man on the right who's a pastor. He was my translator for my brief sermon. We let the Haitians do the vast majority of the teaching and singing. Last thing we need is Americans getting in the way of what God is doing. We just wanted to thank them. The man on the right is a pastor. His home fell to the ground. He's living amidst the rubble a year later. His church fell to the ground as well. His people are displaced, homeless, living in the park in tents and under tarps, and so he decided to plant a church in the park. His church is now running three thousand homeless people, in the park because Haitians are just running through the narrow door. They are coming to Jesus in revival numbers.

There was a non-Christian organization that asked to hire that pastor saying, "You're a man of integrity and we would like to employ you to help our

organization.” He said, “I must work for free. You don’t love Jesus, but I love what you’re doing, but I can’t compromise my integrity so I cannot take a salary,” said the homeless pastor with a church of homeless people in the park. The tarp or tent they were meeting under was destroyed in a great storm and so our leadership there under Thomas Kim approached him and said, “We’d like to replace that temporary shelter.” He said, “No, our people need to learn to give generously. They’re homeless, but we can figure out how we’re going to meet.” And they did.

On the left is his worship leader, a twelve-year-old boy who sings like a Spirit-filled Michael Jackson. If we get the audio and the video set up, I’d love to have you hear him. He led worship for us for fifty thousand people who were absolutely stunned and I was among them. Blown away. Unbelievable control, voice, passion, and spiritual authority in a twelve-year-old boy. He speaks Creole, I speak English. It was hard to figure out. I think he may be an orphan. He’s definitely living at the park homeless and displaced. He leads worship at a megachurch of three thousand people. Of course we’re going to support him. I’m in touch with the pastor. We’re going to do good by this young man.

The way he was found is at night in the parks they have nothing to do, so people just come together and they sing to Jesus. They’ve learned that life on the other side of that narrow door is really the life that counts the most. And so the whole city is quiet and there’s no electricity in most areas. Yet, if you go for a walk, what you will hear are the voices of Christians worshiping Jesus, homeless, poor, amputated, in the parks. And there was a missionary couple that has been there for thirty-five years and they were passing through the park and they heard the voice of this young boy leading worship.

And so they found him and they invited him to our event and we just put him on the stage in front of fifty thousand people and he was mesmerizing, by the grace of God. Mesmerizing. And as I looked out, I was overcome with emotion. I saw people who had literally one leg with crutches of two different sizes hobbling to worship in ninety-degree heat. I saw children with one leg and one arm balancing on crutches so they could raise their one hand in worship to Jesus, singing for six hours.

The last will be what? The last will be what? First. This narrow door is open. It is exclusive: there’s one door. It is inclusive: all are welcome. And people with one leg and a third-grade education sleeping in a tent are running through that door.

Additionally, Jesus says that the first will be what? Last. Mars Hill, what are you? First. If you’ve called other nations, you know that you have to enter a country code before you dial a number. If you’re calling back to the States, you have enter our country code. What’s our country code? Number one. We are first. We are the first nation in the world. We are the most preeminent, prominent nation in the world. The first shall be what? Last.

My exhortation, my invitation to you is this. Do not be too smart. Do not be too smug. Do not be too affluent. Do not be too busy. Do not be too critical. Do not be too moral. Do not be self-righteous and fail to run through that door. For some who are last, this life is as close to hell as they will ever get. And for some who fail to pass through the door, this is their heaven. Hell awaits them and this is as close—this is as close to the kingdom of God as you will ever be.

THE NARROW DOOR IS JESUS CHRIST

And Jesus closes with these final words that, in fact, he is that narrow door. The narrow door is Jesus Christ. Luke 13:31–51, “At that very hour some Pharisees,” religious leaders, “came and said to him, ‘Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.’ And he said to them, ‘Go and tell that fox,’” which is a very negative title and a criticism, “‘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.’” O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood,” or her chicks, “‘under her wings, and you would not! 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!’”

God has opened a door from us to him. God has opened one narrow door from us to him. That door is Jesus Christ. Jesus says in John 10:9, “I am the door. He who passes through me shall inherit eternal life.” Jesus says, “I am the door!” The door of salvation! The door of invitation! The door from God to man! The door from heaven to hell! The door that is available to you in this very moment is Jesus Christ!

God became a man. He lived without sin and here he is on his way to Jerusalem and Jesus is focused, committed, devoted, and resolved to getting to Jerusalem. And the religious leaders come to him and they say, “Jesus, be careful. Stop preaching. You will be put to death.” And Jesus says, “I know, that’s why I must get to Jerusalem.” The great city of God where the presence of the Holy Spirit dwelt in the Holy of Holies, where the priests and the sacrificial system and the worship of God around the temple, all foreshadowing the coming of Jesus Christ were absolutely anticipating the fulfillment of all that was promised and longed for. And Jesus had to get to Jerusalem. And he had to suffer and die in our place for our sins as our savior to pay our debt to God and to take the door that had been slammed shut by our great-great-great-grandfather Adam through his rebellion, folly, and sin, and as the new Adam, the last Adam, to open that door, that the light of the kingdom of God might shine into the darkness of this world and that you and I would be invited to pass through that narrow door.

Jesus Christ is the door of salvation and provision. He died in your place for your sins as your substitute and savior. And he knows exactly what his mission is and here he is absolutely committed to seeing it through to the end. He who has no sin became sin for us. God became a man to open a door of opportunity for men and women to come to God. Jesus is that door.

Dear friend, let me implore you, let me beg you, don’t complain about the door. Don’t go searching for another door. Don’t try one of the other thousands of doors that religion and ideology and philosophy would give you. Don’t criticize the door. Don’t critique the door. Don’t just stare at the door. Don’t walk away from the door and don’t place your hand on the wrong knob. Don’t walk through the wrong belief system—that’s all a trap;

that's all a lie. Instead, run, run to Jesus! Run through the narrow door!

He used the word earlier, "strive." That's language of an athlete who is running and passionate and compelled and zealous. There's a sense of urgency. Run! Some of you are presuming on the grace of God. Some of you are living in the path of the wrath of God. Run through the door that God has opened! Run through the door that God has offered! Run by faith from your sin through Jesus to eternal life.

This is your decision. I have done all I can do. Jesus has done everything that can be done. And now it is your decision what you will do. And what is the heart of Jesus? Some of you would say, "What a cruel God. What a mean God. What a capricious God to send people to hell." What is Jesus doing here in the text, dear friends? What is he doing? Is he laughing? Is he scoffing? Is he dancing? He is weeping. He is weeping. His heart is broken.

Yes, Jesus has risen from death. Yes, Jesus has ascended into heaven. Yes, Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. But the heart of Jesus today is the heart of Jesus as it was in that day. He is on the other side of this door, this narrow door, and he is weeping. His arms are stretched out. His eyes are filled with tears. He knows when you will die. He knows where you will go. He knows how you will suffer and that is what justice requires. And he is weeping, inviting you to run by faith through the door of salvation that he has suffered, died, and risen to open for you. This is the love of God. This is the love of God for you, dear friend. I believe Jesus is right now weeping for us as he was weeping for them. And it is my prayer that you would run. But that is something, dear friend, that you must decide. The narrow door is open and the decision is yours.

Father God, we thank you that though we deserve nothing but hell and judgment because of our sin and folly and rebellion, you in love devised a plan to open a door of salvation from your world to ours, from your holiness to our sinfulness, from our death to your life. Lord Jesus, we thank you that as God you humbled yourself and became a man, that you lived the life we have not lived, the life without sin, that you died the death we should have died, the death for sin, that you rose to conquer sin and death and to open a narrow door of opportunity between your kingdom and the nations of this earth. Jesus, I pray for my friends a sober heart, a sense of urgency, that there is a door and it is open and on the other side you stand with tears in your eyes, scarred hands stretched out, willing to embrace any who by faith would run through that narrow door. Jesus, I pray for my friends, that they would run to you and that you would embrace them. Amen.

[End of Audio]

Note: This sermon transcript has been edited for readability.