

06 – The Narrow Door **Luke 13: 22 - 30**

Step 1: Introduction (“striving”)

We’re reading the story of Jesus in the book of Luke. In today’s story we are going to see the word “strive.” “Strive” also means “to try hard.”
(write)

What do you strive for - ? (. . . give them time; point: *we strive for things that are important or beneficial to us*. If they aren’t coming up with anything, have some examples from your own life or from celebrities they would be familiar with)

Step 2: Background (Jews expected to go to heaven b/c they were Jewish)

Last week our story was about the Kingdom of God. Today’s story is also about the Kingdom of God. The people that Jesus talked to were Jewish. They were the great, great, great . . . great grandchildren of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Can anyone tell something about Abraham - ? (. . . see what they know) Abraham was the first Jewish person. Isaac was his son. Jacob was his grandson. The Jewish people of Jesus’ day believed that just because they were the great, great, great . . . great grandchildren of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob they would go to heaven when they died. Were they right or wrong? Let’s read our story.

Step 3: Key Questions

- **Who closed the door?** (*v.25 the owner of the house*)
- **Who came in after the door was closed?** (*no one!*)

Step 4: Read **Luke 13: 22 - 30**

Step 5: Answer the questions

Step 6: Talk about it

What do you think? Were all the Jewish people of Jesus’ day going to heaven - ? (. . .) Let’s look at verse 28. In verse 28 Jesus says “you.” Who is he talking to - ? (. . . *Jewish people*) Jewish people! Are they in heaven - ? (. . . *no*) No! Heaven is not a place where there is “crying” and “pain.”¹

¹ Use the words in your text.

Why are they not in heaven? What does the owner of the house say about them in verse 27 - ? (. . . *they are evil*) They are just ordinary people. Are they evil? What does this mean?

Let's think about "striving" again. In verse 24 Jesus says, "Strive to enter." The narrow door is the door to heaven. How would someone "strive to enter" heaven? What kinds of things would such a person do - ? (. . . point: they would try to be very good)

Many people – Jesus says it in verse 24 – many people will strive to enter heaven by being good. And some people will become very, very good. They might become like Mother Teresa. Or Mahatma Gandhi. Or even Siddhartha (Buddha).²

But what does the Bible say about being good? How many people are good enough to enter heaven? Let's look at Romans 3:23. (so reads. Point: *no one is good enough to enter heaven, the glory of God*) No one! Not Mother Teresa, not Mahatma Gandhi, not even Buddha himself. This is what the Bible teaches.

Going to heaven is a very important thing. We should strive to go to heaven. But we can't get to heaven by ourselves. We need someone to take us to heaven. That Someone is Jesus. Once we believe in Jesus, our life in heaven starts right here on earth.

Jesus went through the narrow door. He keeps it open for everyone who believes in Him.

Do you have any questions or comments?

Teacher's Note: I couldn't work this into the Bible time, but tea ceremony houses in Japan often have very small, narrow doors that are a bit difficult to enter. Once inside, there is the special ceremonial meal. So it's a nice cultural parallel to this parable.

² It is with some trepidation that I include Buddha, but it's true, he wasn't good enough for heaven according to the Bible