

Luke 13:22-30

14th Sunday after Pentecost

September 10, 1995

A door. Jesus talked about a door. Just like this one.

Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many will try to enter and will not be able.

Jesus was speaking to the crowd. Someone had asked, "Lord, will only a few be saved?"

Now that is a nice general question. We could debate that question all day and no one or nothing would be changed. You say few, I say many, I'll open my Bible, you open yours. I'll pick one verse, you pick another. It will be great fun.

But Jesus said, You, strive to get through that door. Do everything it takes to get through that door. Many will try and will not be able.

Narrow.

You cannot go through that door a whole country at a time. As if being an Israelite in Jesus day or an American in ours would get you in. When the door is shut the one inside will say to those outside, I do not know where you come from. Just drifting along as part of a good country won't be the ticket of admission.

You cannot go through that door a whole church at a time. As if we have all the right answers, the right teachings, the right practices then we all are in. Jesus, we ate and drank with you. You taught right here in our own church. And he will say, I do not know you. go away from me all you evildoers.

The door is narrow. You cannot go through as part of a family. Mom believed, or Dad believed or sister is so very faithful. The door is narrow.

Strive to enter by the narrow door. As Jesus speaks these words to you and me today, one thing is clear. The door is open now. The door is open for you.

Yet how hard it is to go through a door. To leave one room and enter another.

You know the doors that you must pass through, all the doors that are open now and will one day be closed. Doors of forgiving, leaving behind hurts and angers and the joy in another's pain. Leaving that room of remembering the wrong done to you, entering a room where all the furniture is new, a new beginning for you and that other person.

Or maybe the door is leaving a room of self harm, or harming others. Leaving the room of angry outbursts, or destructive habits, or drifting along wherever the winds blow you. Maybe you have thought about going through that door so many times, tried and failed.

Or maybe the door is leaving the room of self-preoccupation where you are all you think about. You know there is another room of giving and sharing and love. Of listening, of caring but you are trapped in having more and more for you.

Every door is narrow, difficult to pass through. Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you will try to enter and will not be able.

The door is open now. But one day it will be closed. Maybe even now it is slowly closing. Maybe the habits grow so strong, the room you have been in grows so comfortable that you stop even thinking about the narrow door to the room you really want to be in.

Strive to enter by the narrow door.

JEsus said, I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to

the Father but by me.

JEsus is the way.

He said he is the gate for the sheep.

He is the door through which you pass. Jesus is the narrow way. Not faith in just anyone or anything, but faith in Jesus is the way to the Father.

Faith in Jesus is the way to new rooms. Faith in Jesus is the way to new life for you.

But along the way there are those many other doors to pass through. Doors so narrow, so hard, but so important for our life. How can we get out of the rooms that are full of death for us? How can we get through the doors to life the way God wants it to be for us?

Jesus says, I am the way. A new room is possible for you for he will walk through that door with you. In him is the strength and the courage and the hope you need for a new beginning. Now. Today. The door is open through him. Every door is open.

September is a time of lots of new beginnings. God wants new beginnings for you. Forgiving, getting help in working on the relationships of your life, giving more of your self to others, sharing more of what you have been given.

The doors are narrow. But no door is too narrow for him who gave his life for you. Not sin, not sorrow, not death will defeat you. He will bring you through every narrow door. Believe. *walk with him*