

Seekers At The Gate Of Heaven Who Fail – Why?

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Luke 13:24

Luke 13:24, “*Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*”

Many will seek to enter that glorious gate and fail. This will be man’s final and most terrible tragedy.

The five foolish virgins. Matt. 25:1-13, “*Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*”

In this lesson we note some reasons why seekers at the gate will fail to enter.

Because they seek casually. They do not strive.

Not a matter of having a compelling desire to seek that gate, but merely a casual seeking.

You must strain to get in through the narrow door, because many will make the attempt to go in, but will not be able to do so. Strive to get in through the narrow door.

The difference between the two:

- Striving — casual seeking.
- Straining every nerve — trying.
- Doing your best — making an attempt.

There is a vast difference.

Illustrate: If your child becomes lost, you will do everything in your power to find him.

The Apostle Paul says we are to **strive** for materies. 2 Tim. 2:5, “*And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*”

Are we really striving?

Are we making a real effort to learn the way?

Paul to Timothy. 2 Tim. 3:14-17, “*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*”

Are we making a real effort to do what we learn — His will?

- John 6:45, “*It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*”
- Rom. 6:3-4, “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*”

There will be a lot of disappointed people at the wondrous gate.

Matt. 7:22-23, “*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*”

Because of the pride of life.

- Luke 18:10-14, *“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”*
- Num. 20:7-12, *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”*

Moses did two things wrong:

- He put a little pride in his words placing him equal with God: *“must we fetch you water out of this rock?”*
- He disobeyed God — God said to speak to the rock, and Moses smote it twice with his rod.

Does that bother you that God would do that for such an “insignificant” thing? God had made his position clear to Moses, and Moses disobeyed.

Who are we to complain to God? The children of Israel did that for centuries, and paid dearly for it.

Potter and the clay. Rom. 9:19-27, *“Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the*

clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.”

Loving the praise of men.

John 12:42-43, “Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”

Humbling ourselves.

- James 4:10, “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”
- 1 Pet. 5:5-6, “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”

Comparison of two dogs: one cowering before another in a submissive pose. If the smaller did not submit, a fight would begin. (Recognizing authority).

The pride of life.

1 John 2:15-16, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

The love of the world and of God are not reconcilable. You cannot serve God and mammon. The friendship of the world is enmity with God. They are enemies.

- James 4:4, “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*”
- Rom. 12:2, “*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*”

The lust of the flesh — The desires which come from our appetites and passions.

The lust of the eyes — The desires which are aroused by appeals made by our eyes.

The pride of life — The vain glory of this world. Lavish display of show to others. Proud or boasting. This can be done by our words, our dress, our furniture and home if done for show. An extension of this is placing things of this life above the things of God.

Demas valued his life more than his service to God. 2 Tim. 4:10, “*For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*”

Demas traveled with Paul on some of his journeys. Paul even spoke well of Demas in a couple of his earlier letters. This second, recorded letter we have of Paul writing to Timothy was the last record we have of any of Paul’s writings. Paul was in prison for the second time at Rome. The first time, Paul had some freedom to move about. The second time He did not have that freedom. This second letter speaks of his end coming near, and that there was much danger for other Christians. In the time of trial, Demas’ courage failed him, so he left. Paul asked Timothy to come to him soon, because he knew his time was near. Before the close of his letter, Paul said the Lord stood with him and delivered him out of the mouth of the lion.

Secular history says Paul’s first imprisonment at Rome lasted two years, and his second imprisonment lasted nine months before he was beheaded by Nero.

Demas failed Paul because of his lack of courage and, because (in the words of Paul, he “... *loved this world more than he loved God.*”

- Matt. 10:28, “*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*”
- John 12:25, “*He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*”

- Luke 17:33, *“Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.”*

Conclusion.

What was the difference between the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins? Both had been invited. Both had accepted. Both expected to enter. The wise had prepared; the foolish had not.

Rev. 22:14, *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”*

There will be few that will enter heaven.

Rev. 22:17, *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”*

