



spared from the wrath of God. The taunting and ridicule he received from those around him would have been an enormous difficulty. Why did Noah endure? Because he was numbered among *the few* who would follow God and he had the promise of life.

The Israelites were often looked down upon by the established nations around them. Despite their constant failure to follow God's laws, they

were *the few* that the Lord chose to be His own people. The remnant of God's people that returned from captivity were *the few* people of God who remained on His side and endured. Why? Because of the promises God gave them.

When Gideon and the 300 men under his command went up against the Midianites they were undoubtedly underestimated and mocked. They endured, knowing that God promised them victory and rest from their enemies.

How much more will we gain if we are apart of *the few* who find the narrow gate? We have the promise that if we endure the difficult life of following Christ we will receive life. God has always desired to use *the few*—those who are the best of the best. It should be our constant desire to be numbered among *the few* who walk the narrow way. What are we doing to distinguish ourselves? Are we willing to deny ourselves the pleasures of this world so that we can follow Him completely? Let's be *the few* who follow Christ.



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Faithful Sayings Issue 15.28 July 14, 2013

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ISSUE

15.28

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

July 14, 2013
2013



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM

10:20 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Jeff Nunn

Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers

Eddie Cook

Steve Dixon

Jack Langley

Neil Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Walker McAnear

Lance Purcell

Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope

Andrew Dow

"Few Are They Who Find It"

By Andrew Dow

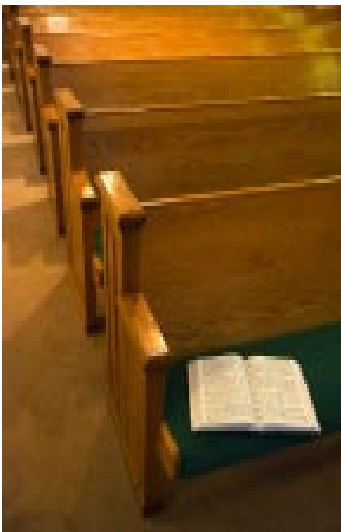
Matthew 7:13-14 reads: "**Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few**" (ESV).

As we explore the Bible it is astonishing how many times God uses people who are small in number. This is especially interesting when we examine the Biblical account and see times when God could have used people of vast numbers and strength, but instead chose to use the few. Consider a few examples of this.

In Genesis chapters six through nine we find the story of Noah. When man became so evil that "**every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**" God sought to destroy the world (Genesis 6:5-7). However, we read in these chapters of one righteous man and his family. Peter describes how in the time of Noah "**a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water**" (1 Peter 3:20). Of the entire population of the world, the Lord only chose eight souls. Certainly they could claim the title of *the few*.

Consider the Israelites. When the people of Israel left Egypt and came to Mt. Sinai the Lord said to them, "**if you will indeed**

obey my vice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:5-6). The Lord chose the children of Israel to be His holy nation. Certainly Jehovah could have selected a nation that was numerically superior to the Israelites, but He chose them. We may recall as history progresses that the children of Israel were sent away into Assyrian and



Olsen Park church of Christ

Babylonian captivity, yet the Lord spoke through the prophets of the remnant that would return (Zephaniah 2:9; etc.). The children of Israel were few in number, but they had the honor of being called by God.

Another example of this can be found in Judges chapter seven. In the days when the Israelites were being oppressed by surrounding nations, the Lord sent judges to lead them in battle against their enemies. On one such occasion, Gideon was called to lead God’s people. When Gideon arrived with an army of 32,000 people, Jehovah told him, **“The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand”** (Judges 7:2). It wasn’t until Gideon sent home 22,000 who were afraid and 9,700 who knelt down to drink water that the Lord was finally satisfied with the army. The remaining men in the Lord’s army amounted to 300. **“And the Lord said to Gideon, ‘with the 300 men... I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand’”** (Judges 7:7) These 300 men were *the few* who were chosen by God to complete His purpose.

If we turn to the pages of the New Testament we find that the God we serve has not changed (cf. Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8). Jesus clearly demonstrates in Matthew 7:13-14 that it is still *the few* who will find themselves on the side of God. Let’s note that, in this passage, Jesus presents two options and then issues a challenge to us.

OPTION #1 – THE WIDE GATE

Jesus first tells us that **“...The gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who find it are many”** (Matthew 7:13). This gate is one that leads to ruin and destruction of the soul. There are, however, certain things about this pathway that make it appealing. 1) It is appealing

because **“the way is easy.”** We can see how traveling a wide path is easy. It is much easier for us to drive through open roads than through restricted work zones full of barriers. To travel the wide road is essentially effortless. 2) This way is appealing because **“those who find it are many.”** If we are truly honest with ourselves we will admit that all too often we want to follow the crowd. We desire to be able to do what they do, dress how they dress, and go where they go. We may have friends who are traveling this easy road, and we want to be with them. Entering through this gate, however, will lead to destruction.

OPTION #2 – THE NARROW GATE

Next, Jesus describes the narrow gate: **“for the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few”** (Matthew 7:14). It is interesting how Jesus speaks of these gates. They are described in exact opposite terms. Everything that the wide gate consists of is opposed by the narrow gate. While the wide gate is easy, the narrow way is hard. While Jesus offers freedom from the burden of sin, he never suggests that the Christian life is not without its own struggles and hardships (Matthew 11:28-30). The Christian life is not without difficulty and hardship. As a result, as Jesus points out in Matthew chapter seven, only a few find the narrow gate. In the same way that God used Noah and his family, the Israelites, the remnant of Israel, and the 300 men led by Gideon, He makes it clear that those who will enter through the narrow gate are few in number. These few souls are the ones who will follow the narrow way to life. The

reward for following through the difficult, sometimes lonely gate is eternal life.

THE CHALLENGE

Prior to giving the details of these two options, Jesus issues a challenge to His listeners: **“Enter by the narrow gate”** (Matthew 7:14). Jesus challenges us to enter by the narrow gate and partake in all that would follow such a lifestyle. We are encouraged to take the route that few people will choose to follow. We are called to travel a road that may be different from our friends and family. We are challenged to step through a gate that will lead us to life.

CONCLUSION

As we read the Bible we ought to be impressed with the difficulty that people of faith endured before us. It’s hard to be a part of the minority. Out of the entire population of the world, Noah and his family were