

Date: August 25, 2013

Theme: The Narrow Door – Jesus is the Door to Heaven

Object: Slide of Narrow Door

Scripture: ²⁴“Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Lord, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’ ” (Luke 13:24-25 NASB)

Slide Everyone likes Knock, Knock jokes. I have a few to share with you this morning.

Knock. Knock. (Who’s there?) Ben. (Ben who?) Ben knocking at the door for ten minutes, please let me in.

Knock. Knock. (Who’s there?) Doris. (Doris who?) Door-is locked, that is why I’m knocking.

Knock. Knock. (Who’s there?) Adore. (Adore who?) A-door is between us, please open up!

Knock. Knock. (Who’s there?) Lettuce. (Lettuce who?) Lettuce me in, it is hot outside.

In our Bible story this morning, Jesus tells us about people who will be knocking at the door, but it will be too late. Where is this door that Jesus is talking about? It is the door to heaven. Everyone wants to get into heaven, but there is only one door in and Jesus says that the door is narrow. Jesus said, “Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be

able. Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' "

Does that sound a little harsh to you? Where is this narrow door that we must find and how do we enter through this door? You may remember from the Bible stories your parents have read to you that Jesus told a story about a good shepherd. In that story Jesus said, **Slide** "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved ..." (John 10:9 NASB) There is only one door that we may enter into heaven and that door is Jesus. Who can enter heaven through this door? Anyone! Anyone, who puts their faith and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. When we put out faith in Jesus we will **not** be left outside of heaven, crying "Let me in."

Here is one more Knock, Knock joke for you. Knock. Knock. (Who's there?) Orange. (Orange who?) Orange you glad to know Jesus. He is the Door to Heaven.

Dear heavenly Father, we thank You that You loved us so much that You sent Jesus, Your only Son, to be the door by which we may enter heaven and be with You forever. So it is in the name of Jesus, our Lord, our Savior and our Door to heaven that we pray this morning and always. Amen.

John 4:39-42

Sermon #25

Slide Savior of the World

Opening Prayer

What we will be studying this morning is the great spiritual climax found in the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. The Apostle John, the Beloved, uses a phrase in the story's end that defines Jesus' ministry and purpose for coming to the earth. We will gain understanding how the Samaritan woman's response to Jesus and then the village's response are related to John the Baptist's declaration in chapter 1 and to the Passover of Exodus and the Passover week of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. I know this sounds like a lot, but be patient with me and I hope to build this connection piece by piece. **Blank**

In this story found in John chapter 4, the woman believed in Jesus as the result of their conversation and immediately went to her own city of Sychar (*Suuc-har*) to tell all who would listen about this Jesus, the Messiah. Because of her passion and excitement for the salvation Jesus gave and the healing of her sins – she testified to the people of Sychar (*Suuc-har*) and they believed. Verse 39 of John chapter 4 says, “From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all the things that I *have* done.’ ” My brothers and sisters, may we never doubt that the witness of ordinary people is often used by God in powerful ways. Some people believed because of this woman's witness and others were moved to find Jesus and hear for themselves what this woman was talking about.

These Samaritan people then came seeking Jesus in verse 40, “So when the

Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.” Jesus agrees to stay in this Samaritan city. The fact that the Samaritans would invite a Jewish teacher or rabbi to stay in their city, with no fear of being rebuked by the town’s people, shows how completely Jesus had won their confidence. Also to invite Jesus, a Jew and a rabbi into their town indicated that they believed He was the promised Taheb or Messiah. This resulted in a mini revival that foreshadowed what would take place in the Book of Acts on the day of Pentecost. During the two days Jesus stayed many came to know Him and believe in Him as the Messiah.

In verses 41 and 42 we read the most amazing statement of these Samaritan believers, “Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.’ ” This is an amazing statement. When the Samaritans make the point in verse 42 to the woman who first introduced them to Jesus and saying to her, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves” it is NOT to disparage her testimony but to confirm it – they have now heard for themselves and judge her witness to be true. In addition, at this time, no one wanted a **Slide** “Savior of the world” - as we read at the end of verse 42. This profound statement was not what the disciples were prepared to hear. The Jews, and the disciples were Jewish, wanted a savior for Jerusalem, not for the world. The Samaritans wanted a savior or Taheb of Samaria, not for the world – we know this from Luke chapter 9, beginning in verse 51 where Jesus is preparing to return to Jerusalem, we read, **Address**
⁵¹“When the days were approaching for His (Jesus’) ascension, He was determined to go to Jerusalem; ⁵²and He sent messengers on ahead of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him. ⁵³But they did

not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem.⁵⁴ When His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, ‘Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?’⁵⁵ But He (Jesus) turned and rebuked them, [and said, ‘You do not know what kind of spirit you are of;’⁵⁶ for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.’] And they went on to another village.” (Luke 9:51-55 NASB) You see, my beloved, the Samaritans wanted the savior to save Samaria only, the Greeks wanted to save Greece and the Romans wanted to save Rome. But, Jesus was not this kind of savior; Jesus was the **S #1** “Savior of the world.” Jesus came down to earth for all mankind, for all races of men and He would sacrifice Himself and die for the sins of the whole world. Remember what John the Baptist said in the first chapter of the Gospel According to John, “The next day he (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming to him and said, **S #2** ‘Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’ ” (John 1:29 NASB) It is because of Jesus; His life, death and resurrection that not only the Samaritans and Jews and Greeks and Romans and all who have died and passed on before us, but you and I at this time in history and also for all who will come in the future – salvation is for all who believe – and for all believing people who will be saved until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is the Savior Jesus! **Blank**

Philip was evangelizing a few years later after our story of the woman at the well, as we read about in Acts chapter 8. One of the cities Philip preached Christ in - is believed to be the nearby city of Shechem and one can rightly think that the acceptance of Philip’s message might have been due, at least in part, to the testimony of those who were saved or the believers living in nearby Sychar (*Suuc-har*). If this is true, then Philip is an example of those who reap what was begun or sown by others as referred to in verse 38 of our study in John chapter 4.

To fully comprehend this amazing end to an exciting story one must ask, “What does the phrase **Slide** “Savior of the world” mean? We will look at the word “world” first and then word “Savior.” The first thing we want to understand is what John means by the word “world.” In the Greek the word is **S #1** “*kosmos*.” This word is found 185 times in the New Testament of which 105 are found in the books written by John and “*kosmos*” is found 78 times in the Gospel of John alone. The other gospels use the word “*kosmos*” sparingly. So we can begin to understand this word “*kosmos*” is an important word for John and is a word that conveys great concepts and themes found in his gospel. “*Kosmos*” means - to set in order or to decorate and to make beautiful. In the writings of Homer we can find this word “*kosmos*” used often with the same meaning. Today “*kosmos*” is the root of the English word “*cosmetics*” which are used to beautify ones face. By its definition and use “*kosmos*” would naturally describe the universe with its vase beauty, harmony and order. In John chapter 1, verse 10 the word “*kosmos*” is used three times with three different meanings, let me explain these meanings, **S #2** “He (Jesus) was in the world (meaning earth – the most significant part of the universe of God’s creation and the location of His plan of salvation), and the world (which now means the universe – a vastness with billions of amazing and beautiful stars and planets all in their proper order) was made through Him, and the world (meaning mankind – God’s most beautiful creation) did not know Him.” **Blank** In John’s writings the word “*kosmos*” most often means “mankind” or the entire human race that populates the earth. Jesus, Himself, makes a distinction between all “mankind” and those who believe in Him as the Christ. Later in John chapter 13 at the Lord’s Supper and Passover we read, “Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that **S. #1** He would depart out of this world to the Father” (here the word world means that Jesus would leave both the earth and mankind in general), the verse

continues - **S. #2** “having loved His own who were in the world,” (here Jesus is referring to believers living among “mankind” or in the world, but believers are no longer part of mankind or the “*kosmos*” they have been saved and made holy or separated from the world) the verse finishes with “He loved them to the end.” (John 13:1 NASB) Further on in Gospel of John, chapter 15, verses 18 and 19 this concept of believers not being part of fallen mankind or the corrupt world or “*kosmos*” is made even clearer as Jesus spoke to the disciples about their relationship with mankind or with the world saying, **Slide** “If the world (meaning mankind) hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world (again, meaning mankind), the world (or mankind) would love its own; but because you are not of the world (mankind), but I chose you out of the world (Jesus has redeemed the elect from mankind or the kosmos), because of this the world (mankind) hates you.”

Blank Satan hates Jesus and mankind in general belongs to Satan because of their unredeemed sin and therefore, mankind in general hates believers or the redeemed in Jesus Christ. Jesus takes this a step further two chapters later in His high priestly prayer to God the Father begun at the beginning of John 17, saying in verse 9, **Slide** “I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world (mankind), but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours.” So although, Jesus was crucified and put to death by sinful mankind or the “world” His death was so that all mankind’s sin might be forgiven. However, in actuality this only occurs for those who God has “given to Christ” because they then belong to God the Father. God has called the “elect” to Himself through the atoning life and sacrifice of Jesus, God the Son. If one belongs to Christ, he no longer belongs to the corrupt world or to fallen mankind, the “kosmos.”

In John chapter 4, verse 42 the Samaritans call Jesus **S #1** “the Savior of the world.” This is the second reference to Jesus and His relationship with the world - He is the

“Savior.” We saw earlier that John the Baptist said when he saw Jesus coming, **S #2** “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” Jesus is “the Savior” for those who believe in Him - for salvation is by faith alone. As God the Son, He was the sacrificial Lamb that would end all need for sacrifices – He is the final sacrifice for all people who believe. The word “Savior” means the one who rescues and Jesus has indeed rescued believers from their inherited sin nature. The Apostle John wrote in his first letter, **Slide** ¹ “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ² and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world.*” (1 John 2:1-2 NASB) As believers, we are to avoid sin for we are the redeemed children of God, but when we do sin; Jesus is the final and complete sacrifice, the “Lamb of God”, and atonement for all sins of all believers. Jesus died for the sins of the whole world or mankind, but not everyone will believe in Him. **Blank**

Let me build a case that God has always had a progressive plan that was fulfilled by Jesus and God is a God of purpose and order. For thousands of years the Jews lived with the basic rule of **S. #1** **one-lamb-for-one-person** or one sacrifice for each person’s sins. This began with Abraham and Isaac. Then the time came when the Jews were enslaved in Egypt and after 400 years God led them out of Egypt into their own land. Before the Jews left Egypt God instituted the Passover. Each family was to take a lamb and examine it for defects. Only a perfect lamb could be chosen. On the night of the Passover, the lamb was killed and eaten and its blood spread upon the lintel and side posts of the door of the house as a sign to the angel of death to “pass over” that house as the angel went throughout Egypt slaying the firstborn. First there was one lamb for one person and now God showed that **S. #2** **one lamb** could be sacrificed **for one family**. After they left Egypt and the Exodus

was begun, months later in the wilderness the people came to Mount Sinai where God gave them the law. In the law were the instructions for the Day of Atonement and then later, after the building of the tabernacle, once a year the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the Mercy Seat. Here was the progression: one lamb for one person, one lamb for one family and now **S. #3** **one “lamb” for a nation.** But, now Jesus comes and as John the Baptist made clear, **Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”** Jesus is the **S. #4** **One Lamb for the sins of the world.** **Blank**

Let me continue to build my case for the progressive plan of God that was a symphony perfectly orchestrated with perfect timing and was brought to a climax through Jesus, the **S. #1** **“Savior of the world.”** We observe Easter and prior to Easter we observe Palm Sunday. Many see Palm Sunday as when Jesus presented Himself as King to warm and receptive crowd. I am not sure this is correct. Jesus did not enter as King into Jerusalem only to be surprised several days later by people rejecting Him. The crucifixion was necessary for the celebration of Easter’s resurrection. Palm Sunday, then, was the prelude to the crucifixion. At Calvary Jesus died as the **S. #2** **“Lamb of God.”** Palm Sunday was the day on which Jesus offered Himself as our substitute and our atonement – a Lamb entering Jerusalem to be prepared for the sacrifice observed in the yearly Passover. Jesus was the final and last Passover Lamb.

At this point you may be wondering what this has to do with Jesus being the **S. #1** **“Savior of the world”** and **S. #2** **“the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”** Let me see if I can bring these ideas together for us to understand the wonderful order or “kosmos” of God. Remember it is tradition that Jesus was crucified on what we call Good Friday. This tradition was set in the third century and

may not, may not, be accurate. In fact, recent studies build a strong case that Jesus may have died just before sundown on Thursday of Passover week, because there were two Sabbaths in that Passover week. There was the regular Saturday Sabbath that began at sunset on Friday and the Friday Passover Sabbath that began at sunset on Thursday. According to this reckoning Jesus would have died on Thursday and have spent three nights and three days in the tomb, as He foretold, and Jesus would have risen from the grave before sunrise on Sunday, the first day of the week. Sunday was the new beginning of salvation for the world.

What I want you to see now is the relationship between the “Savior of the world” and “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” and **S. #3** the Passover. If Jesus was crucified on Thursday before the beginning of the Friday Passover Sabbath then he entered Jerusalem on the prior Sunday, just as the Bible indicates and this means as Jesus was entering Jerusalem - it was at the very same time when thousands of Passover lambs were being led into the city to be taken to thousands of Jewish homes to be prepared for the Passover. Does this not symbolize in the most dramatic way the claims of the prophets and Jesus’ that He is “the Lamb of God”? When Jesus later died, as He had predicted, it was at that precise moment, when according to the eye witness Apostle John, that the Jewish people were actually killing their Passover lambs and feeding on them. Does not this symbolism impact you! Jesus was the Passover Lamb the final and complete sacrifice. Does this not impact the way we understand and celebrate the Lord’s Supper!

Now the question comes to each of us. Have you taken into your mind and more importantly into your heart that Jesus is **S.#1** “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world?” If you have - He is then the **S. #2** “Savior of the world” for those who He has called. It is my hope you now see how the woman at the well, the

people of Sychar (*Suuc-har*), John the Baptist, the Exodus and the Passover are related as part of the great “kosmos” of God. How all of these showed Jesus to be the “Savior of the world.”

In closing I must ask, my beloved, are you trying to merely wade into Jesus - just a little – for if so, it will not work! As we saw a couple of days ago with Chloe’s baptism you must go all the way in – you must die to yourself and be raised with the living resurrected Christ. The proof of your being wholly committed to Jesus is seeing you living out your faith in obedience to Jesus and all that He taught. Too many people who call themselves “Christian” are merely playing “Christian” and I must say - they are playing with eternal fire! Believe in Jesus as your Savior and live eternally! For the scriptures tell us plainly, ⁹“if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and **Slide** believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰for **Slide** with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with **Slide** the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹For the Scripture says, ‘WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.’ ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for **Slide** the same *Lord is Lord of all*, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; ¹³for **Slide** ‘WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE **SAVED.**’” Amen! (Romans 10:9-13 NASB)

Closing Prayer