

# Bible Studies for Life: November 12

*Confident in the Face of Hard Questions: Won't All People Ultimately Go to Heaven? • Matt. 7:13-23*

*By Becky Brown*



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In conversations like these, we must remember to never scold questioners or position ourselves as the adversary. That stance only drives people further away from the Lord. Our verse to hide in our hearts needs to be 1 Peter 3:15, "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."

When the Holy Spirit opens a door for spiritual conversation, we need to be armed from scripture with the truth and not simply flaunt our own personal opinions. These studies were designed to help us be ready for moments such as these.

Universalism is a system of thought that says, in the end, all will be "happy" because all are, by nature, the creatures and children of God. Nothing can be further from the truth. Universalism does not acknowledge the reality of our ever present sinful nature.

The amazing sovereignty of Holy God created each of us with the ability to choose Him or reject Him. He sent Jesus to make a way for those who choose to serve The Father. His shed blood on the cross paid our sin debt. Those who believe that truth will spend eternity with God. Those who reject that truth will spend eternity separated from God.

The verses for this lesson are taken from the Sermon on the Mount. The words are in red in our bibles because Jesus was the speaker that day. His message covers chapters 5, 6 and 7 in the Gospel According to Matthew. Toward the end of His sermon, Jesus begins to press his listeners toward personal commitment. Oh, how I wish I could have been one of those listeners! I've had the privilege of standing there near that location on the Sea of Galilee. My family and I sat there and read the entire sermon together.

To reign with God in heaven, we must allow Him to King of our hearts on earth. Honestly, it's as simple as that! Residents of heaven must first be servants on earth. In this message, Jesus spent the first two sections showing people how to live with servant hearts. In this section, He gave them a life pathway to follow. He does not want us to be lost physically OR spiritually. He does not hide the map, He reveals that He is the WAY!

Remember the game show that offers you what's behind door number one, two or three? Jesus showed them only two "doors" and He hid nothing from anyone. Jesus revealed the need for decision. When it comes to Jesus, we are either for or against, on one side of the fence or the other, gathering or scattering. There is NO middle ground. A choice is offered to and required of everyone.

Jesus even declared the best answer in His first words: "Enter by the narrow gate for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life and few are those who find it."

Two gates and two paths are described here. One pair leads to death and destruction. One pair leads to life and re-creation. Jesus recommends the narrow gate and the narrow way which lead to life. He states that there will be "few" travelers on that road. He eternally desires that the wide gate and the wide



road be empty! With genuine heartbreak, He already knows the wide road will be filled with folks who choose to reject Him and His teachings.

I used to see this picture and visualized these to be the gates to heaven and hell at the END of the road. Well, there "gates" or openings to allow entrance into both places. It is vital that we see the gates are located at the BEGINNING of the journey! These gates represent our critical moment of individual personal choice. The road of life is located PAST that gate. Each person must choose.

So, Jesus wants YOU in heaven with Him. Choose the narrow gate! The narrow road will be in front of you and the Journey Companion is out of this world!

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