

DISEASES OF THE FLOCK: COMPLAINTS ABOUT ENTERING THE NARROW GATE

This is the plague of the modern age. Everybody wants to relax and enjoy life, and the world has specialized in providing us with all sorts of different ways to lead an easy life. The world has learned how to harness people's minds and money in order to sell them relaxation at the cheapest price possible. The Kingdom of God, however, requires a person to inconvenience himself, to refuse ease, and to resist pleasure. Which of these two alternatives are people likely to choose?

Either a person will side with the world and its pleasures (and so enter by the wide gate), thereby realizing his personal pleasures and losing himself in endless entertainment and enjoyments, or he will side with God and His love (and so enter the narrow gate), thereby realizing holiness and toil. Such a person will find joy in life with God.

It is impossible for a person to combine the delights of the body with the delights of the Spirit. It is impossible for a person to find agreement between the gratification of the body and the consolations of grace. Accursed is the shepherd who teaches his flock to drink from the well of sin, and accursed is the flock that eats such poison and calls other sheep to join them. If you are a shepherd who desires to rejoice in having a plentitude of sheep, and if you pride yourself on the immense size of your audience, then beware the widening of the narrow gate! The Lord's gate will forever remain narrow, and those who consent to pass through it will forever remain few. The servants of the present generation who try to stretch the gate to fit the weaknesses of the children they serve, whether to suit their tastes or to satisfy their requests, do not lead them to eternal life but rather to destruction.

This is our duty: "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age" (Titus 2:12).

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