

Why Will Few Be Saved?

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Jesus plainly teaches that most people will be eternally lost, separated from Him forever, while few will be saved (Mat. 7:13–14). From both observation and Scripture some reasons few will be saved are apparent.

Not because they can't. The old Calvinistic doctrine of predestination teaches that before creation God chose by name the ones who would be saved (Calvin's "elect") and that one not so chosen can't be saved regardless of his desire. Such is utterly repugnant to those who understand that God has left the choice of being saved or lost completely up to the individual. Salvation is available to all through Christ (Heb. 10:10) and all men are urged to accept it through obedient faith (Mat. 11:28–30; Rev. 22:17). It will not be God's fault that most walk in the broad way that leads to destruction.

Not because God hid the way. If salvation is available, but the way of salvation remains hidden, God is responsible for the damnation of the majority. The Gospel is a **revelation** of the mystery of salvation through Christ that had formerly been hidden (1 Cor. 2:7–13). It was an understandable message that the apostles were told to preach to every creature (Mark 16:16). The Truth must be knowable, or it can't set us free (John 8:32). Paul urged the Ephesians to "be not foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). The confusion of doctrines and churches is not the Lord's doing, but man's. God's plan of salvation, pattern for His church and will for our daily lives are all simple and understandable.

Prejudice. Many form an opinion about things before careful examination, especially in matters of religion. Some have heard the simple Gospel many times but are so blinded by prejudice against it that they will not obey it and will be lost.

Followed a man instead of Christ. Preachers are fallible just like all other men and they should never be followed just because they are preachers. The Corinthians made this mistake and were sorely rebuked (1 Cor. 1:10–13). This is the major cause of religious division. Preachers must be "tried" to see whether they are of God (1 John 4:1) because "false prophets" still abound (1 Pet. 2:1–3). The Bereans searched the Scriptures to see if Paul was preaching God's truth (Acts 17:11) and so ought all men to do with their preachers. "If the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Mat. 15:14).

Worldliness, materialism. Many will be lost because they are too much attached to this world and the things in it. The narrow gate that leads to life eternal is simply not wide enough for sexual sins, placing other things before God, hateful attitudes, drunkenness, and similar things (Gal. 5:19–21). The straitened (difficult) road that leads to Heaven is one of self-denial and self-discipline (Luke 9:23; 1 Cor. 9:27). It is a changed life that refuses to be fashioned after the world's demands and pressures (Rom. 12:1–2).

Jesus urges all men to enter the narrow gate by believing and being baptized (Mark 16:16) and to walk in the straitened way (Luke 9:23) so that we may one day have life eternal.

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