

Are there really only a few saved?

According to the Bible, yes. Jesus Himself stated:

Matthew 7:13-14 ¹³ "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. ¹⁴ "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

There are some stark contrasts here given by Jesus to paint this vivid picture before his disciples and the large crowds gathered on that mountain in the Galilee region. As is his custom, Jesus often gives startling contrasts to drive the unmistakable point home. And here that point is that there are only a few who will be saved. Yes, you heard Jesus correctly, only a *few* shall enter heaven whereas everyone else shall be doomed to eternal hell.

Listen to Jesus' words: He commands the Jewish people there around him (including the *most* religious people of that day, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes) to "Enter by the narrow gate!" This presupposes that they *have NOT* entered this narrow gate yet. They are still living in Judaism. They are still trying to keep the Law – which is impossible (as Jesus shows through this Sermon on the Mount; cf. 5:48).

The next startling statement is that Jesus affirms that there is a broad path that leads to destruction (ἀπώλεια) and there are many who enter by it. This word for destruction is often used referring to hell. It does not mean that one will literally be "destroyed" as synonymous with annihilationism. Rather, it emphatically teaches that in hell a person shall have unending, physical and spiritual torture and heinous torments for all eternity – without end. Notice that those who enter destruction enter by *both* the wide gate *and* the broad way. Living as a "carnal Christian" will *not* lead to eternal life with Jesus Christ. No. On the contrary, walking on the broad path – the path the world accepts as the norm – will lead a person to destruction in hell.

But Jesus gives hope to these Jewish people. Indeed, he gives them the gospel! He tells them about the small gate! There is one path to salvation. There is only one gate leading to the Father. There is only one Savior who can save a sinful soul. That Savior is Jesus Christ! It is a narrow gate that saves a person. But Jesus continues. It's not *only* enough for a person to enter *through* that narrow gate. Notice he says that the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life. There must be a *way of living* that is narrow. There must be a wholehearted devotion of life that affirms and confirms one's entrance through that narrow gate. There is absolutely no room for habitual, sinful, pagan living in the Christian community according to Jesus.

It is my prayer that we would heed these verses and not only enter through the narrow gate, but also live life on the narrow path as we are devoted and committed to following Christ wherever he leads us. Remember this, there is ONE broad gate and ONE narrow gate. Many will enter through the broad gate and few will enter through the narrow gate. Test yourselves today! See if

you are in the faith – unless of course you fail the test! Repent today! Today is the day of salvation!