

A Description of God's Preachers II

by Rolfe Barnard

God's preachers preach a God-willed salvation, proclaim salvation by grace, not by disgrace, and leave a trail of death and life wherever they go.

Duration: 43:35

Scripture: Matthew 7:13-14, Acts 2:38, Acts 17:30, Romans 10:9, 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 2:12

Topics: "Preaching"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being born again and saved by the grace of God. He urges listeners to enter through the straight gate and walk on the narrow road that leads to heaven. The preacher highlights nine characteristics of a God-called preacher, including understanding the guilt and nature of sin, recognizing the curse and penalty of the law, and pointing people to Jesus as the only way of salvation. He also emphasizes the preacher's role in proclaiming the death and life found in Christ and the need for believers to strive for perfect obedience. The sermon is based on passages from Matthew and 2 Corinthians.

Transcript

Heinrich Heine, rising on his bed of agony, when asked if he had hope of forgiveness of sin, replied, Why, yes, certainly. That's what God's for. And so today, in the same spirit, we hear ringing up and down the passionate proclamation of what its adherents love to call a whosoever will gospel.

Now, if by this expression the university of the gospel offer is meant well and good, but we shoot beyond the mark when we seem to hang salvation purely on the human will, as we seem to open salvation to whosoever will. That sounds nice. On the other hand, we open it only to such, and who in this world of death and sin, I do not say merely will, but who in this world of death and sin can will the good.

Young preacher, grapes are not gathered from thorns. Figs are not gathered from thistles. Good and evil do not come from the same tree.

And it is useless and criminal to talk about whosoever will in a world of universal want. Here is the real difficulty. How and where can the sinner obtain the will to come to Christ? Let others preach what they call the whosoever will gospel, not I. For the sinner who knows he is a sinner and knows what it is to be a sinner, only a God will gospel will suffice.

If the gospel is to be committed to the dead wills of dead men and there is nothing above and beyond, who then can be saved? The answer is no one. No one. No one.

Don't you be led astray by this popular, I preach the whosoever will gospel. I know, but nobody will. That is reading men need God.

That is reading sinners must be shut up to God. That is the whole purpose of the new birth. Men can't give themselves a new birth.

That is God's word. Men are shut up to God. God must come to the rescue.

That is reading men are to be stripped of every hope and brought to the place where they will quit looking to anything else and just look to God. Oh, it is not a question of old sinner, well, I believe I will be saved. It is a question of the Spirit of God through the Word of God quickening that will and energizing that will and breaking that heart, arresting that man, crossing his path, giving him a power to lay hold on Jesus Christ.

But our Lord in the book of John chapter 6 shows us the way in our text and I invite you to study carefully this chapter. The door is not closed, thank God, the way is shown. There is hope, but the hope is outside oneself.

Mr. Spurgeon said, Christ is not mighty to save those who repent, but he is able to make men repent. He will carry those to heaven who believe, but he is more mighty to give men new hearts and to work faith in them. He is mighty to make the man who hates holiness to love it and to constrain the despiser of his name to bend the knee before him.

If that is not so, there is no hope for sinners, but it is so. We are not to preach the gates of heaven stand open, whosoever will may enter in. The real question is, who will make these dead bones live? We are to shut men up utterly to God.

The most pessimistic passage of scripture in the Bible is John 5.40. Ye are constantly searching the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life. But these are they which testify of me, and ye will not come to me that ye might have life. You won't do it.

You think you are all right. Isn't that pessimistic? That is so of everybody. If you leave God out.

But, oh, isn't that scripture? In John 6, a blessed scripture. It is the most optimistic scripture. Let me read it.

Men say it is terrible. We don't believe it. They say, we believe whosoever will.

I do too, but nobody will. But here in John 6.45, we have a God-willed salvation. No man can come to me except the God-willed salvation.

That isn't pessimistic. That is God's truth. That isn't shutting the door.

That is showing you where it is. That is shutting the door of the self and all self-effort. But, thank God, it is showing men where the door is.

Oh, the drawing power of God. How does it draw? Verse 45 says, It is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God. Listen to the word of God.

Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. That is the way to get saved. Not that old bent will of yours, but listening to God.

Faith cometh by hearing. Hearing by the word of God. God works faith in men as they give a listen to his word.

How does it draw? Oh, bless God, he awakens men to the sense of their need. How does he find out? In the book. In the book.

He overcomes pride and gets men to come as a beggar and creates sun, hunger, and thirst. All of that through the faithful preaching of the truth of God as it is in Christ. That is how God draws men.

I thank God for a saving God, for a God who arrests men, for a God who crosses men's path, for a God who works faith in sinners as they listen to his word. Faith does come as men listen to the word of God. Don't preach a whosoever will gospel in a world of whosoever won't.

Preach a God-will gospel to men and women and shut them up to an action of Almighty God to bring them to himself. Now I want to bring you the sixth characteristic of God's preacher and I turn, ask you to turn with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 2 and this characteristic and the one immediately following this are found in these verses, verses 14 through 17 of 2 Corinthians chapter 2. And the characteristic of God's preacher, that which must be so of anyone who attempts to preach in God's name today, that I wish to talk about now is simply this. God's preacher will proclaim God's salvation on God's terms.

God's salvation on God's terms. And our text, verse 14, reads like this. Now thanks be unto God which always causes us to triumph in Christ and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place.

For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things.

Now our text for the message today. For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God but as of sincerity but as of God in the sight of God speak we in Christ. Now Paul says that he's not one of many which corrupt, which huckster, which cheapen, which whittle down the word of God.

That's such a characteristic of modern day preaching that I wanted to say a word about it in this series of messages. We are not as many which corrupt, which whittle down, which huckster, which cheapen the gospel. By that Paul wasn't trying to sell Christ on the block to the highest bidder or the lowest.

He wasn't trying to cheapen the truth of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He says that we are a savor of death unto death and life unto life. And then he asks the question, who is sufficient for these things that will solemnize anybody who faces it, especially in this day of a nice smooth little gospel that men can receive and not be changed by receiving the Christ that's preached today.

God's preacher, my friends, will proclaim salvation by grace and only by grace, but he'll not proclaim a salvation by disgrace. He'll not make the law holy and the gospel less holy. He'll not preach what to call an easy way of salvation.

He'll not preach in such a way as to dishonor God or the law, which is a revelation of God's holy character and nature. As he preaches reigning grace and redeeming grace and sanctifying grace and sustaining grace, he'll not do it in such a way as to make God a minister of sin. He'll preach salvation by grace, not by disgrace.

He'll make clear that God puts down rebellion in a man's heart before he grants pardon to him. He'll not be the kind of preacher whose converts say they are saved but to continue all their lifetime in rebellion against the will of God in their lives. God's preacher will ring the changes on the fact that while sin did reign, grace now reigns, but it doesn't reign apart from, but it through righteousness.

Romans 5.21. God's preacher, therefore, as he preaches that salvation comes by grace and not by disgrace, will make very clear that God will put down rebellion before he'll plant the flag of peace in a man's heart. Desperately we need to ring the changes that people are saved, not at the expense of, but through the establishment of righteousness, that is, making the will of God supreme and precious in a man's life. That's how God saves sinners.

He'll preach salvation by grace and not by grace, by so preaching that God will use truth to create a thirst for and therefore teach holiness to men and women. Titus chapter 2, verses 11 and 12 ought to be studied here. He'll preach salvation that turns enemies into friends and that'll make men so they'll be happy in God's holy place forever and ever.

And God's preacher, as he preaches salvation by grace, not by disgrace, will thus proclaim God's salvation as it's offered on God Almighty's terms. He'll declare, whether anybody hears him or not, that these terms cannot be changed, are whittled down, and that they are as they've ever been, that God save men and women upon the condition of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He'll preach that saving faith in Christ must be preceded by repentance toward God, that a sinner must experience a heartfelt sense of his own sin.

He'll declare that an impenitent heart is no more able to receive Christ as Lord than a shuttered window is able to let in the rays of the sun. He'll preach that none but the humble, contrite heart is ever comforted by Christ as none but such will ever seek him, that repentance and faith must go together and that repentance leads to faith, that faith is one coming into handed to reach out for the prophet gift, to receive him as all-sufficient Lord and Savior, but that the term empty-handed means that one renounces his own fancied righteousness, that one turns loose of his own beloved idols. Just as I cannot cling to one object and receive with the same hand of another that's thrust out, I cannot hold something in my clutch fist and reach out in saving faith to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he'll preach that Christ must be received, must be surrendered to, must be accepted, if you want to use that word, as he is presented in the Word of God, as God's prophet to teach you, as God's priest as a offering for your sin and to pray for you yonder at the right hand of God, and as God's decreed, ordained Lord, God's Prime Minister to be the absolute ruler of your life. Under God, God's preacher will not cheapen the gospel. He will not be a hookster of the Word of God.

He'll not fall into the trap of this generation of preaching a part of Christ. He'll preach the whole Christ to men and women as they are, and a man that in view of the fact that the one who hung on a cross, God's answered the actions of men in sending him to that cross by raising him from the dead and causing him to sit on a throne forever at his right hand by having turned everything over to him, even the reins of the hearts of men, so that men are in the hands of the sovereign Christ instead of Christ being in the hands of

men. We'll preach that, my young brother, and as such we'll mark ourselves as having one of the characteristics of a God-called preacher.

In the 16th verse of 2 Corinthians 2, I want to use this text, verse 16, to bring you the 7th in the characteristics of a God-called preacher, and the subject of this little characteristic or this characteristic to which I just gave you brief reference is simply this. God's preacher leaves a trail of death and of life wherever they go. Verse 16, Paul says to the one, we are the savor of death unto death, that's to the saved and the perishing, and to the other the savor of life unto life.

And who is sufficient for these things? For everybody don't believe our message, but we don't corrupt it, we don't cheapen it, we don't whittle down the office work in the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. God's preacher leaves a trail of death and life wherever he goes. You know, there can be no saving faith nor unbelief apart from knowledge.

Faith is not passive, it's active. And unbelief isn't ignorance, unbelief is rebellion. It's refusal to act upon evidence that's presented.

So there can be no faith in God or Christ or unbelief without some knowledge of them. Both men are active both in the acceptance and in their refusal to act as God commands. And God's preacher, therefore, will be used of God to shut men up to eternal death or eternal life.

And in doing that, he'll be dead certain that he preaches the gospel in its purity. Oh, not a part of the gospel, for the gospel is Christ, and Christ is the gospel, and the whole Christ, the Christ whose character and work in person is revealed in the word of God. He'll preach that Christ, prophet, priest, and king, in all of his blessed offices.

He'll preach it in all of its purity. He'll not whittle it down. He'll not scout at the offense of the cross or cheapen the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He'll preach the gospel in its purity and in its proper order. For the gospel must be, if it's going to be preached in its purity, it must be preached in its proper order. And I think that we need, I'd love for you to camp here if you're not clear, my friend, that this proper order is simply this.

The first message of the proclamation of the cross of Jesus Christ and all of the counsel of God to men is in the cross, not separated from the resurrection and ascension and present reign. It all goes together. All of God's counsel is there.

The first message of the cross is the proclamation of L.A.W. law, the condemnation. Why did Christ hang on a cross? Sin. L.A.W. law that must be satisfied.

Christ was dealing with law as he hung as a substitute for sinners. And so if we preach the gospel in its purity, we must preach it in its proper order. And that order calls for the proclamation and enforcing of God's holy law before we preach the gospel.

Now, why must this order be followed? It isn't today, and thus we have people get converted, but nobody knows from what. Why must this order be followed? Well, let me offer you two or three reasons. First, this order must be followed.

The law must be enforced and proclaimed and published and insisted upon because men are not interested in the gospel until they are slain by the law. Somebody says Christians need to be converted every day, but sinners need to be killed. They need to be slain.

They need, in the hands of the law, to come to the end of themselves. And men who are totally depraved, as we are, just not interested in whether Jesus died for them or anybody else or what good it does, unless they've first been slain by the claims of a holy God as written down in his holy law. You know, the gospel is the message of good news, but it's good news to whom? To sinners.

But to what sort of sinners? To the giddy and unconcerned? No, sir. The gospel has no good tidings for them. The gospel has no music in it to their ears.

They're quite deaf to the charms of the gospel, for they've no sense of their need of a Savior. Christ died for sinners. Of course, that's the gospel, but who cares? The gospel is good news to whom? Why, it's good news to those who have some sense of the holiness of God and their vileness in his sight.

It's good news to those who've learned something of God's righteous requirements of them and of their criminal neglect to meet such. It's good news to those who are somewhat conscious of their deep depravity and their moral inability to recover themselves. It's good news to those whose consciences are burdened by an intolerable load of guilt and who are terrified by their imminent danger of the wrath to come.

It's good news to those who've come to know that unless an almighty Redeemer saves them, then they are utterly doomed. Men, therefore, are not interested in the gospel until in the clutches of the law they die. In the second place, man is utterly ignorant of his condition in the sight of God apart from seeing himself in God's mirror.

And God's mirror for sinners to look at themselves and see themselves as God sees them is still God's holy law. Left alone, the sinner will have no realization of the desperate sickness of his soul. He'll not have any desire for personal holiness and spiritual health means personal holiness.

He'll glorify and please himself and have no interest in glorifying and pleasing God. It is still true that Paul was saved by the law is the knowledge of sin. He who thought he was all right says that the law came and said, Thou shalt not covet, and he died.

It is still true that sin as to its nature, rebellion against God, must be revealed. That sin as being contrary to the holy character of God must be felt. That sin in its infinite evil as deserving of eternal punishment must be felt by sinners before they'll be interested in the death of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, apart from the faithful proclamation of an enforcing of God's holier requirements, men will not only have not the slightest idea of their condition, men will not have the slightest interest in the death of Christ, but men will go on to hell ignorant of his supreme need to be born of the Spirit from above, to receive a new nature from God. The old nature must therefore be exposed by the claims of God as recorded in his law so that men will realize their need of a change in the sight of God and men will come to love God's will and be anxious to have power in their life to do it. That's how the law prepares the way for the gospel.

We preach the law of God to condemn sinners and the blood of Jesus Christ to heal them. The law, my friends, prepares some men so they're anxious to hear the gospel, and the gospel does come to them as

good news, and the first time that a man hears the gospel as gospel or as good news to him, that time will be the time he'll be saved. There are five things about God's holy law.

I ought to take two or three hours on this, but I just mentioned them and let you work it out. The law of God, the holy, just, perfect, righteous, good law of God, prepares the way for men to receive the gospel gladly, first by requiring inward as well as outward obedience. Ah, it must be of the heart as well as the head.

So we are sinful or sinless in proportion as we conform or fail to conform to God's holy law. Second, the law demands perfect obedience, perfect obedience. So as we see ourselves in God's mirror, we have our fearful disobedience revealed.

Third, the law is spiritual and it is utterly strict. Imagination is adultery. Causeless anger against a fellow creature is murder.

So if a man will look at that, he'll see his awful guilt and his criminal nature. Fourth, the law has a curse, it has a penalty, and if men will face it and hear its thunder, they'll see their frightful danger. Some of them will.

It's utterly severe. Oh, how terribly severe is the penalty of a broken law. And fifth, the law absolutely shuts men up to Christ.

If you have to deal with the law without Jesus Christ as your mediator, the sinner must be told he has no chance, for the law demands absolute perfection. It demands inward as well as outward obedience. It demands our spiritual and their very strict, and it has its awful penalty and curse.

And the only escape for sinners is to have a substitute, and that substitute suitable to God, his own begotten Son and God the Son, to be your Lord and your Master. God's preacher, therefore, will be careful to shut men up, to shut men up to a saving work of God in Jesus Christ. Now the eighth characteristic of God's preacher that I call to your attention, these are just brief outlines, they're just for preachers, they'll whet your appetite, I hope, and may be of use if God to challenge us afresh about this business of kind of preaching we must have in these days if we're going to be God's preachers.

And this characteristic that I mention is the eighth, I believe, and I call it God's preacher will preach salvation is entered by way of a S-T-R-A-I-T straight gate. In Matthew chapter 7 and Luke chapter 13, in Luke 13, the Lord says, strive to enter in at the S-T-R-A-I-T straight gate. In Matthew chapter 7, he says, wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction.

But straight is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life eternal. And the Lord was being true to the souls of men when he uttered those words. This straight gate, it's Christ.

It's difficult. It's not easy. It must be entered.

It must be entered. Many people have wrong views here. The Jews, for instance, they say we're already in.

Most people in America, they say we live in a Christian nation, we've joined the Church, we've been baptized, we got converted. But the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ is contrary to the ideas all about us. And that truth is evident in the fact that he says, few there be that find it.

Few there be that find it. Men believe today that Heaven can be obtained on much easier terms than those laid down by our Lord. Men are quite sure that Heaven can be reached without walking the only road that leads there, that the Kingdom of God can be entered without passing through much tribulation, that we may be disciples without bearing a cross.

All men are persuaded that we can serve two masters today and succeed in making the best of two worlds. In short, we preach to a generation that does not believe the gate is straight nor the way as narrow as Christ declared it to be. Men are quite sure that all one has to do in order to be saved is to, as they what they call, respond to Christ's gracious invitation and come unto him.

But, my friends, that's not as simple as it sounds. None can savingly come to him apart from repentance, the hating of and the forsaking of cherished sins, the love for the things of the world that close the heart against them must be banished. I say to you that the intentness of the eye on one object hinders it from the view of another, and no heart can savingly tear itself away from the world and hate its own beloved lust without first experiencing the mighty operations of the Holy Ghost.

This straight gate, this straight gate, must be entered, and this will not be easy. My Lord says strive. He says agonize.

He calls our attention to the fact there will be obstacles. Some people don't want to get in themselves, and they don't want you to either. The Pharisees didn't enter in to try to keep everybody else out.

They opposed others who sought to, and so we are preaching today to men and women whose godless relatives and worldly companions will do everything they can not only not to get in the straight gate themselves but to keep everybody else they can. But this straight gate, beloved, must be entered. Not enough to hear about it.

It must be entered. You know a gate serves two purposes. It both lets in and shuts out, and this gate, the Lord Jesus Christ's absolute submission to him, is the only entrance to that way which leads unto life, and all who enter not by it are eternally barred from eternal bliss.

What does entering this straight gate involve? It involves three things. First, it involves the acceptance of the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, the honest, actual receiving into the heart of his holy, searching, flesh-withering instructions. These are summed up by his emphasis upon the righteous claims and demands of God upon us, by his insistence upon our depraved state and our wicked hostility against him, by his insistence that no one can become a Christian while he entertains any doubt upon the authority of God's word, while he refuses to bow to the verdict which God has pronounced upon him, that one must know self to be utterly lost before one will have any desire for salvation, by the fact that one must accept God's sentence upon him before he will know how guilty he is in God's sight, that one must part with the lies of Satan and receive truth in order to pass within this gate.

Second, what is involved in entering this gate? The exercise of true repentance. Mark 14, Matthew 14, and 4, and 17 says, From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent. The mission of John the Baptist was to prepare ye the way of the Lord, to make ready a people to receive Christ when he appeared as the Lamb of God.

And in what did this readiness consist? They repented and confessed their sins and owned that death was their due by submitting to Luke's baptism. My friend, the gospel is not less holy than God's law. The

gospel requires that our hearts bewail our past sins and be firm and sincere in resolution against all future sin.

The blessed Spurgeon said, You and your sins must separate or you and your God will never come together. No one sin must you keep. They must all be given up.

They must be brought out like the Canaanite kings from the cave, hanged up before the sun. You must forsake them, abhor them, and ask the Lord to overcome them. It is by the abandonment of idols and the pleasures of sin that we turn and come through the straight gate.

What is involved in entering this straight gate, the Lord Jesus Christ, not only the acceptance of his teachings, not only true repentance, but the complete surrender of ourselves to God in Christ. The Lord Jesus is the door into God's presence, but we must receive him as prophet to teach us, priest to die in our stead, as Lord to rule over us. To believe savingly is to receive him as prophet to teach us, as priest to atone for us, and as king to rule over us.

Only as his holy teachings are really accepted by a contrite heart is any soul prepared to place any value on his cleansing blood, and the sincerity of one's acceptance of him as Savior is evidenced by his readiness to submit to his royal scepter. He must first be king of righteousness in your life before you'll be king of peace. Christ's blood, his cleansing blood, is available to none who are unwilling to throw down the weapons of their warfare against God.

It is by complete surrender that sinners enter this straight gate. God help us to preach the S-T-R-A-I-T, straight gate. And then the last characteristic that brings to a close this sort of outline of nine characteristics of God's preacher, I think I've given you meat here to challenge you.

I hope I have. And I want to bring this message to a close by saying that God's preacher not only will preach the straight gate that must be entered, but he'll preach the narrow road that must be walked. Verse 13 of Matthew, Chapter 7. Be that findeth.

It's interesting to us to note that both of these gates are gates entered in by profession, one straight and the other is wide. One is narrow and the other is broad. This broad road that's entered into by wide gate, everybody on it is religious.

They've made a profession of faith. They've called Jesus Lord. And they got on that broad road by listening to false prophets, by false prophets who made the gate easy to get in and the road a lot broader than it is.

This isn't the road of drunkards and whoremongers. This is the road of church people. And it's solemn today.

God help us to preach the gate that must be entered this straight and the road that must be walked is narrow. You know, there are only two gates by way of profession to be entered. One is this wide one, one is a straight one.

There are only two roads to be entered by profession, real profession or false, and one is to be traveled. One is a broad road and the other is a narrow. There are just two possible destinations for the people you preach to.

Either your people are walking the path that leads to life or they're walking the path that conducts to the eternal torments of hell. That we may know on which road we are and the road people are on to whom we preach, Christ describes each. He defines the entrance, the breadth and the numbers.

It's wide, broad, got a wide entrance and multitudes on it. You know, God has ordained two distinct final abodes of men after this life. Between them there's a gulf that's fixed.

I know this isn't acceptable to people. They say they may not be good enough for heaven, but they're surely not bad enough for hell. They believe in another place, I suppose, beside heaven and hell.

There's another class of people, according to them, besides saint and sinner. The Lord Jesus Christ shall not have it so. It's light or darkness, it's truth or error, it's Christ or Satan, it's holiness or sin, it's salvation or damnation.

Look, then, for a moment by way of outline at this road, this broad road that leads to destruction, men are born on it, men are born on it. And it's wide, therefore it's easy. Not many restrictions on it.

Get any, get any going on, it's very easy because it's going downhill, it's following the crowd of Church members. It's crowded. Mr. self-pleaser, Mr. lover of pleasure, Mr. form of godliness, Mr. broad-minded, Mr., Mr., you can't be perfect.

They're all on that road. It's very deceptive. Those on it have no idea where it leads.

They think people on the narrow road are radical and they're fools. It seems right to a man, but it's fatal. It leads to destruction, the Lord said, hopeless, eternal destruction.

It conducts men to the bottomless pit, the unquenchable fire, the undying worm. It's the way of the ungodly, and scriptures declare that the way of the ungodly shall perish. This road must be abandoned if hell is going to be escaped, and this only by a radical about-face, by turning from sin and self and turning to God in Christ to live a holy life.

Know just a few things about the road that leads to life. This is the road we must proclaim. It must be entered, but in order to be entered it must be sought.

It's not sought today because it's a little straight and narrow. Multitudes prefer the broad road, and they're not looking for the narrow. The broad road's very pleasant.

The narrow road's very repellent. The broad road's very easy. The narrow road is awfully hard.

Oh, this broad road, you see, it's people, folks, they only believe what the devils believe. It's people, but people say we're saved by a simple act of faith. But, ah, it's isolated from change in good works.

This road that leads to life not only must be entered, but it must be traveled. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up the cross and follow me. That's what the Lord said.

The gate which leads to this walk is narrow. It'll not admit those who are loaded with weapons of rebellion against God. Cannot squeeze through if you walk arm in arm with the world.

To enter, the heart must be humble. Sinful pleasures relinquished. Worldly companions abandoned.

The Lord Jesus Christ received, submitted to, as Teacher, Savior, and Lord. That gate, my friends, is but the entrance, and the road must be walked. It'll not be a flowery bed of ease.

It's bounded by the will of God. It's uphill in these religious days, marked by steady perseverance and faith and obedience. Thank God it leads to life.

It leads to life. This road's too narrow and it's too steep and too hard. It's out of reach for any, save those born of the Spirit, washed in the blood, saved by the grace of God.

We'd have called men everywhere to seek to enter in this straight gate and to strive to walk in this narrow road. We'd have warned men with tears that the wide gate leads to a broad road that leads to hell, that the straight gate leads to a narrow road that leads to heaven. The folks who walk in it love the Lord Jesus Christ.

They've been given a new nature. They strive against sin, strive for perfect obedience, not perfectly but devotedly, look for Him to take them to their desired haven. I have given you, by way of outline, nine characteristics. They're not all the characteristics of God's preacher, but as I've tried to think through, each one of them, I think, strikes at a weakness of modern-day preaching.

And I trust God shall be pleased to use this message to challenge and perhaps instruct and encourage all who listen to it to be God's preacher.

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