

Two Roads

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

– Matthew 7:13-14 –

Jesus closed His Sermon on the Mount by drawing us into a realization of the dichotomous nature of human existence. There is a decision between two gates of entry to make, a distinct choice between two roads to travel, two trees yielding two types of fruits among which we must discern, two types of professors that will stand at the great judgement, and two foundations upon which we can choose to build our lives. Each of these dichotomies is highly instructive to the meditative hearer. Let us consider the differences between the broad and the narrow ways that the Master laid out for our sober consideration.

The road to Hell is a broad one. It has so much room to hold all walks of life simultaneously. Its travelers include the Pharisee with his punctiliousness as well as the Sadducee with his ostentation. The Herodian with his sniveling allegiance to the powers that be is comfortable on this road, as is the Zealot so vehemently steeped in his revolutionary fervor. Atheists, pagans, naturalists, occultists, Muslims, Buddhists, self-proclaimed “Nons”, and even faithful “Christian” churchgoers all tread this road in droves. Divide mankind how you will, and every group owns a significant portion of this seemingly limitless avenue. Moralists and nihilists traverse in congruous numbers, as do the rich and the poor, kings and paupers, academics and fools, the famous, the infamous, and the unknown. Democrats, Republicans, Independents, et. al. claim equal representation as well. What binds all of these travelers – so vastly different from each other and in many cases even diametrically opposed to one another – to this way that leads to a singular and undifferentiating destruction of hellfire and brimstone? Pride and spiritual neglect are the common denominators amongst this infinitely diverse mass of humanity.

But over yonder is another road. It is one that is much less travelled. No one really traverses it in company. It is a lonesome path – one that is quite long, very steep, and particularly arduous. While there is significant diversity on this road, with travelers hailing from every tribe and nation and kindred and tongue, they share a common characteristic of soul. It is an insatiable spiritual desire – to know as they are known. These are the poor in spirit, that mourn for sin and long for mercy. These are the meek of the earth, that hunger and thirst after righteousness, pure in heart with an intense desire to see their God. They long to hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” And though the road is narrow, even while scaling its ever-increasing heights, they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Which road are you on? And, who do we love that yet travels the broad road? There are no other questions we will face today that are more important to answer. -- D. Murcek