

# South Africa Pastors' Conference

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## Session 4

### Making Disciples: The Narrow Door—Striving to Enter the Kingdom Luke 13:22-30

#### Introduction:

There is no place for a spirit of complacency and the Christian life, and yet sadly, each of us has a tendency for complacency. We tend to take matters for granted. We tend to become dull with respect to spiritual duty. We tend to become lazy with respect to spiritual discipline. We lose our alertness to spiritual danger. We become all too passive when the scriptures urged diligence. We become all too presumptive when the Scriptures urge caution.

Our own hearts tend toward these things. Give us half a chance and we will delude ourselves and stray. And then, there's so much of a helplessness in that direction. The devil is a real force who first deceives and blinds his prey, and then devours them. And there are false teachers who help us in our folly. They are all about us who deceive people all about them. And then there are sincere, well intentioned, but ignorant teachers, who fail to instruct God's people properly, failing to impart truth and failing to dispel error.

And so, given our own propensity to err and given the forces which would cause us to fail, the Lord has given us in the Scriptures numerous passages which should counter or correct these tendencies. In this passage before us we have an instance in which our Lord pressed upon His hearers a sense of urgency and responsibility to respond to His message, by turning from sin and following Him.

And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup>Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?"

And He said to them, <sup>24</sup>"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. <sup>25</sup>When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' <sup>26</sup>then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' <sup>27</sup>But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' <sup>28</sup>There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. <sup>29</sup>They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. <sup>30</sup>And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."

<sup>32</sup>And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.' <sup>33</sup>Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. (Luke 13:22-33)

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! <sup>35</sup>See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me

until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" (Luke 13:22-34)

Our Lord and His disciples are proceeding on His final journey to Jerusalem. Jesus taught the crowds along the way. With the arrival to His destination Jesus would meet His destiny, that was to die (cf. Luke 13:33). The time was short. His hearers must not put off responding to Him. For the day of salvation would soon end and then the judgment of God would befall that entire generation of Jews. (This was particularly true of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the seat of Judaism (cf. Matt. 13:34a-35). This journey to Jerusalem, the impending death of Jesus and subsequent judgment on Jerusalem, provide a sense of importance and a sense of urgency to his hearers as well as to the readers of this Gospel.

While they were travelling, one asked Jesus, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" This resulted in Jesus' teaching that we had before.

Let us what answer what may seem to be a rather simple question with an obvious answer: What is this matter of being saved"? (Matt. 13:23).

The word or idea of salvation permeates all of Scripture. The basic idea is of one being "**rescued from a life-threatening situation.**" This idea is found in a number of different contexts. (1) The Bible speaks of being "saved" from a disease or healed from a sickness which might have resulted in death (James 5:15). (2) God's Word discusses being "saved" from **danger which threatens one's life.** During a storm while in a floundering boat the disciples cried out, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" (Matt. 8:25). (3) God describes being "saved" from *the slavery of sin.* Romans 5:10, "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be *saved* by his life." (4) There is also the idea of being "saved" in the sense of *escaping the fate of a condemned group of people.* Acts 2:40, "And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation.'" This need of salvation is no less than a need to escape the wrath of God due to one's own sin.

When we speak of the salvation that God effects for us through Jesus Christ, all of these ideas come into view. The Bible teaches that all mankind is condemned due to sin, and is under His wrath. When the Bible speaks of becoming saved, it is the idea of being delivered from sin and its consequences, escaping the wrath of God by the grace of God, through faith in God's provision--His Son Jesus Christ.

When this man from the crowd asked the question, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" His perspective was probably this: "Lord, you have been speaking of God's judgment upon us, will there be only a few of us who will escape this judgment?" It would do us well to hear the answer of the Lord Jesus if we desire to escape God's judgment.

What was our Lord's response to the question? Essentially this: "Do not be so concerned with the matter of how many will be saved; rather, be concerned that you be numbered among them You strive to enter the door which leads to life."

In Luke 13:24 we read of "the narrow door." What did Jesus mean by the "narrow door" in this context? To what does this "narrow door" refer? Some say the "narrow door" is Jesus Christ Himself. They would refer us to John 14:6, "I am the way and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me." Or, John 10:9: "I am the door, whoever enters through me shall be saved." Now certainly, Jesus Christ is the only way by which one can be saved, but in the context of Luke 13:24 ***the Lord Jesus is not using the "narrow door" to refer to Himself.*** In this context, ***He is the Owner of the house, the keeper of the door,*** who opens and shuts the door, permitting or forbidding entrance. He refuses to open the door to some even though they had heard Him teach and had eaten with Him.

To what then does this "narrow door" refer? Answer: ***It graphically describes the life of the Christian as a disciple of Jesus Christ—forcing himself onward in the face of trial, temptation, and resistance, to follow Christ in faith and obedience.*** The disciple of Christ struggles against sin, and perseveres in faith and obedience. In the face of doubts and troubles, he labors to do the will of God in spite of all opposition.

Let us consider the description a little more closely by showing that this narrow “door” differs from the “narrow gate and difficult way” of Matthew 7:13 and 14. There we read our Lord's words:

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

The Greek word in Luke 13:24, which may be translated either as “gate” or “door”, is different from the Greek word our Lord used in Matthew 7:13, which also may be translated “gate” or “door.” The context must determine the nuance of meaning of the words. I would suggest that here in Luke’s Gospel it should be understood as a door into a large house in which there is a great hall prepared for a banquet.

In Matthew, we have the Lord telling his hearers to enter a small **gate** that leads unto a narrow road, which leads to life. But in this account in Luke, the Lord is urging His hearers not to enter through a small gate, but through a small **door** that allows entry into a rather large house in which there is a banquet hall. In Matthew, entrance through the **gate** begins the disciple’s life on a **narrow road** that leads to life at the end of the journey. The straight and narrow roadway depicts persevering faith and obedience to the Lord Jesus. In Luke, the Lord depicts salvation as being experienced after having succeeded in entering the door to the house. The door is not an allusion to the initial entrance into a life of discipleship; rather, *the door speaks of the entire life as an opportunity and occasion to strive so as to enter one day into the presence of the Lord and His people in the future banquet hall.* It should be noted that in both contexts, “life” or salvation is pictured as something that is experienced at the end of one's life or at some point in the distant future. But in Matthew the gate is entered once at the beginning of one's pilgrimage. In Luke disciples are striving through their entire lives to enter the door. We might say that the door of Luke 13:24 is the door of opportunity that we have now in this life to strive to enter heaven.

This is a narrow door that leads into a large house where there is *a banquet hall*. In this banquet hall is this large gathering of all the Old Testament Jewish saints as well as, amazingly, a large number of Gentiles who are all dining together at this large feast (13:28f). What is pictured by this great banquet hall is the Kingdom of God, in which the body of the redeemed of all ages enjoys peace, security, and fellowship with their King and Lord. However, on the outside of this house, are those clambering to enter, who believe that entry should be granted them, but are, nevertheless, excluded from the gathering.

The idea of a great banquet is an image that is used frequently in Scripture to depict the blessing and fellowship of the Kingdom of God. It is commonly referred to as the *messianic banquet*; it is a great feast that the Messiah provides of His people.

Eating together had a great significance in the ancient world. To dine together was the fullest expression of enjoyment of a relationship between friends. You did not really know a person if you had not sat down together had shared in a common meal. Here the full meaning and enjoyment of one’s relationship with God is to have a meal with Him. We may see the great significance in both the Old and New Testaments to this idea of a shared meal.

Now, when we think of Old Testament sacrifices we most often think of an innocent animal bearing being the substitutionary sacrifice for the worshipper; this idea of course central to the Bible idea of sacrifice. But frequently, in conjunction with this idea of a sin offering, a sacrifice is also viewed as a meal preparation in which the priest or worshipper would sit down and feast with God together. For example we have Abraham sitting down and dining with his 3 visitors in Genesis 18. Jacob dined on a mountain with his father-in-law Jethro in the presence of God (Gen. 31:53-55). And it may be that Isaac desired to dine before God prior to his death, so he sent Esau to prepare a meal. This would further explain why the blessing which went forth on Jacob could not be retracted, for it was issued before God with God witnessing the blessing.

Now the hope of Judaism was this: *one day the Messiah would come and a Golden Age would be established.* A great messianic banquet would be prepared and the people of Israel all reunited as one large family, would dine with their deliverer. We see this idea in the Old Testament prophets. In **Isaiah 25:6-8** we read:

<sup>6</sup>And in this mountain  
The LORD of hosts will make for all people  
A feast of choice pieces,  
A feast of wines on the lees,  
Of fat things full of marrow,  
Of well-refined wines on the lees.  
<sup>7</sup>And He will destroy on this mountain  
The surface of the covering cast over all people,  
And the veil that is spread over all nations.  
<sup>8</sup>He will swallow up death forever,  
And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces;  
The rebuke of His people  
He will take away from all the earth;  
For the LORD has spoken.

Also in **Isaiah 65:13-16**. Here the Lord contrasts those who are under His wrath with those who experience His salvation.

Behold, My servants shall eat,  
But you shall be hungry;  
Behold, My servants shall drink,  
But you shall be thirsty;  
Behold, My servants shall rejoice,  
But you shall be ashamed;  
<sup>14</sup>Behold, My servants shall sing for joy of heart,  
But you shall cry for sorrow of heart,  
And wail for grief of spirit.  
<sup>15</sup>You shall leave your name as a curse to My chosen;  
For the Lord GOD will slay you,  
And call His servants by another name;  
<sup>16</sup>So that he who blesses himself in the earth  
Shall bless himself in the God of truth;  
And he who swears in the earth  
Shall swear by the God of truth;  
Because the former troubles are forgotten,  
And because they are hidden from My eyes.

The same idea is in the New Testament also. In the chapter following our text we read in verse 15ff:

<sup>15</sup>Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

<sup>16</sup>Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, <sup>17</sup>and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' <sup>18</sup>But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go

and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’<sup>19</sup> And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’<sup>20</sup> Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’<sup>21</sup> So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’<sup>22</sup> And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’<sup>23</sup> Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’<sup>24</sup> For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’” (Luke 14:15-24)

And then it is referenced in the last book of the Bible, **Revelation 19:9**, in which John wrote, “*Then he said to me, Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!*” And he said to me, “*These are the true sayings of God*”

We also see this idea of the messianic banquet outside of Scripture in early Jewish and Christian writings. This is from a 1st century writing which dates to the 1st century AD called 2 Enoch:

When the last one arrives, he will bring out Adam, together with the ancestors; and he will bring them in there, so that they may be filled with joy; just as a person invites his best friends to have dinner with him and they arrive with joy, and they talk together in front of that man's palace, waiting with joyful anticipation to have dinner with delightful enjoyments and riches that cannot be measured, and joy and happiness in eternal light and life; –and I say to you, my children: Happy is the person who reverences the name of the LORD, and who serves in front of his face always, and who organizes his gifts with fear, offerings of life, and who in this life lives and dies correctly! (2 Enoch 42:4-6)

This is a “narrow door” that may be entered only through “striving.” Our Lord uses the present tense imperative form for the verb “strive” – You are to *keep striving* until the day that you are granted entrance into the banquet hall. Jesus is speaking of the great effort that is to be expended by any and all who would enjoy eternal life. “Strive” suggests the idea of fighting, struggling, straining every nerve, to force one’s way through the door. Inside the people enjoy great peace and joy. All who are left outside the door will experience “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

This idea of you and me having to strive continually in order to gain entrance to eternal life is not heard in these days. There are a number of reasons for this: (1) *It seems to conflict with our general concept of faith* which is seen as merely trusting, simply and solely resting in Christ and His work alone apart from the need for grace enabled effort to do His will. (2) *It seems to suggest that one merits salvation through his works*, which we all repudiate with our whole being.

But these seeming contradictions only reveal the misunderstandings we have in these days, for it was not seen to be contradictory in former days. Listen to the words of the well-respected commentator **Matthew Henry**:

*Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* This, is directed not to him only that asked the question, but to all, to us, it is in the plural number: *Strive ye.* Note, (1) All that will be saved must enter *in at the strait gate*, must undergo a change of the whole man, such as amounts to no less than being born again, and must submit to a strict discipline. (2) Those that would enter in at the strait gate must *strive to enter.* It is a hard matter to get to heaven, and a point that will not be gained without a great deal of care and pains, of difficulty and diligence. We must strive with God in prayer, wrestle as Jacob, and strive against sin and Satan. We must strive in every duty of religion; strive with our own hearts, “Be in an agony; strive as those that run for a prize; excite and exert ourselves to the utmost.”

*Take note of the different* awakening considerations, to enforce this exhortation. O that we may be all awakened and quickened by them! They are such considerations as will serve to answer the question, *Are there few that shall be saved?* (1) Think how many take *some pains* for salvation and yet perish because they do not take enough, and you will say that there are *few that will be saved* and that it highly concerns us to *strive: Many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able; they seek, but they do not strive.* Note, the reason why many come short of grace and glory is because they rest in a *lazy seeking* of that which will not be attained without a *laborious striving.* They have a good mind *to happiness*, and a *good opinion of holiness*, and take some good steps towards both. But their convictions are weak; they do not consider what they know and believe, and, consequently, their desires are cold, and their endeavors feeble, and there is no

strength or steadiness in their resolutions; and thus they *come short*, and lose the prize, because they do not press forward.” (M. Henry, vol. 5, pp. 726,727).

How different are words from what we here today of name it and claim it and rest in it. Consider these truths:

1. *Entrance through this “narrow door” is not a one-time decision.* Again, the verb is a present tense imperative -- You are to keep striving until the day that you are granted entrance into the banquet hall.

Now, we are infected with a spirit of **decisionism** in these days. Based on a *defective theology*, equipped with a *defective methodology* and a *deficient sinner’s prayer*, Christian workers go about leading people to make one-time decisions of faith, and thereafter assure their “converts” that, *regardless of their subsequent behavior*, they will be granted entrance into heaven. Sadly, these deluded, self-assured, complacent, individuals who live a self-willed existence, who say they believe but their faith seems to have little impact on their life, continue without challenge, unshakeable in their confidence that they indeed are safe. But when the Lord was asked about salvation, He emphasized “believing,” yes, but also “repenting,” “obeying,” “suffering,” “enduring” and “overcoming,” and here, “striving.”

2. No, entrance through this narrow "door" is not a one-time decision; rather, *it is a life-long endeavor of striving to enter through faith, repentance from sin, and obedience to the Lord Jesus.* Now when we speak in these terms some are troubled. Objections are levelled:

- a) “*If this is true, how can anyone be sure of his salvation?*”
- b) “*Suppose someone strives for a while then ceases, does he lose his salvation?*”
- c) “*Does not this imply that people merit entry by their striving, teaching salvation by works?*”

All of these objections are ill-founded. Yes, even while striving, one may be assured of entry. No, someone who strives for a while and then quits does not lose his salvation, he never received it. No, it does not teach salvation merited by works. It is all by God’s grace that He moves a person to strive, enables him to strive, and it is of grace that He bids free entrance to him at the last.

We might postulate one more objection:

d) “*If you teach this, then you are saying that people cannot claim to be presently saved.*” Let me respond to this by emphasizing that the Bible describes salvation in three tenses--past, present, and future:

- 1) We have been saved — “It is by grace you have been saved” (Eph. 2:5, 8)
- 2) We are being saved – “For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life” (Rom. 5:10).
- 3) We will yet be saved – “He who endures unto the end shall be saved” (Matt. 10:22).

These do harmonize with one another. But further, if you emphasize one aspect--past, present, or future--to the neglect of the others, it will result in error, and the troubling of souls.

How do these harmonize? Now all analogies break down if pressed too far, but the following analogies will serve us, I think. Let me explain by way of two illustrations: Consider this invented story of a young lady who is saved from a perilous situation: A young lady was riding her horse late one afternoon in a rather unfamiliar and desolate place. She became lost. It became dark and a storm arose. She knew not that she had come dangerously close to a great precipice. The horse started, throwing her. She went over the side of the cliff, falling a ways, before landing on a narrow ledge that prevented her from falling to her death. At dawn she saw her danger more clearly. If it had not been for the narrow ledge she would have perished. The ledge *had saved* her. Soon, a friend arrived and *saved her* from her predicament, drawing her up pulling her from the ledge that had saved her life. Now she *had been saved*. And as long as she stayed away from the edge and next to the side of the hill she would remain safe, but she was completely rescued after a time.

In a similar manner, we were falling headlong into destruction due to our sin. But our God delivered us from our death. He saved us. And now we are safe. We may be assured that indeed He has spared us. And He is coming for us when our deliverance will be complete.

But some presume upon their safety. They get up and wander around in the dark as though no danger exists. They go off into sin. They wander to close to the edge and fall into the abyss. Did they lose their salvation? I would say no; rather, their fall was only interrupted for a bit. They were no more truly saved than the false teachers in 2 Peter 2, who had escaped certain corruption for a time but thereafter plunged headlong to their fate.

Yes, God has saved you if you have embraced the gospel, but now you need to cling to Him (and even that is by His grace). You are to listen to Him, and you can rest in Him. You will be saved at the last. Entrance to His banquet will be granted you and to all who strive.

Or, salvation in its past, present, and future aspects may be described in this way: A *man* who has escaped capture and is seeking to work his way through enemy occupied territory to freedom. Imagine a very important man having been captured and interred in a POW camp during WWII. A rescue operation was planned and executed in order to save him from his predicament. Another was sent on the mission to affect his release. He does so, enabling the man to escape his camp into freedom. And yet, although he had been saved from his captors, he is yet in enemy territory. He is assured by his rescuer, however, that he will be able to escape to safety he puts his trust in him and follows him to their safe haven. Again, this illustrates how we have been saved and yet Jesus Christ is still in the process of saving us, and we will yet one day experience the fullness of our salvation.

Now, what does it mean more specifically to strive to enter the narrow door? **How does one strive to enter the narrow door? It does not mean merely that you *listen* to the Word of God regularly** (13:26). It does not mean merely that you *believed* what you have heard (13:26). It does not mean merely that you had *a measure of acquaintance* with Jesus. These people had heard Him, apparently believed what He said, and some knew Him quite well, even having eaten with Him; but this is not “striving to enter the narrow door.” It does involve on-going repentance from sin, a continual following of Jesus in faith and obedience (13:27). We are striving to enter the door even now, as we attend to the Word of God and as we strive, by His grace to order our lives according to what we hear. We dare not be hearers only, deceiving ourselves, we hear and do as He enables us to do so by His grace. And again, it certainly does not mean that you are attempting to merit entry by your good works. That is the quickest way to be excluded.

Now the Lord not only gave the command to strive, but He also gives motivation for doing so. Let us consider why should one strive to enter the narrow door?

*First*, we should be continually striving to enter the narrow door because *the door is small and only admits a few at a time* (13:24). Here the idea is that it takes effort, or struggle to get through the door and inside. Does the Bible present salvation in this way? Yes. It is through much tribulation that we do enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).

*Second*, we should be continually striving to enter the narrow door because *the door is open only for a time and then will be closed*; that is, opportunity is now; but the time of opportunity may be short (13:25-27). We are not to delay, but to begin our entry now and continue to strive to enter. Doing so will assure our entry, but delay may imperil us, for many will at a later time, when it is too late, seek to enter, but the door will be shut to them.

*Third*, we should be continually striving to enter the narrow door because *many are deceived*; we should strive now so that we will not found among them. Jesus said, “for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” The reason people were not striving was that they were deceived in thinking they had ample time, that the judgment of God had nothing to do with them, and that they had a perfect right, a guarantee of entry, apart from this matter of striving. In short, they had been deceived by others and they had deceived themselves.

Allow me to give an illustration, which is based on a historical event. The time was 713 BC. The place was Jerusalem. Hezekiah was king of Judah. Assyria was the world power. Isaiah was God's prophet of the day. Jerusalem was a "walled" city. When an invading army came into the land all of the inhabitants would enter the city where protection was afforded them. In 713 BC the Assyrians were completing their final conquest of Judah. The Northern kingdom of Israel had fallen in 722. Now Judah was being attacked. Rumors filled the land of the impending invasion. "Flee to Jerusalem! The Assyrians are coming!"

But here is a man in his fields. His crops are due to be harvested in just a few short weeks. A few of the neighbors have already packed up and moved to the city. But he waits. They had warned him to flee the wrath to come! But he forestalled, "I will, I will, but first I must secure my harvest. There will be time."

The day of the harvest arrives. He rises early and is in the fields. But a noise is heard; it is the machinery of war. He sees the troops coming along the hills. Quickly, dropping everything, he gathers his family together and flees to nearby Jerusalem. But as he approaches the "narrow door" which is alone the place of entrance, he sees throngs of people seeking to enter, but the gate has been commanded to be shut and barred for the enemy was now there. The man and his family find themselves shut out. Within is safety. Without is destruction. His procrastination and failure to gain entrance when there was opportunity brought him ruin.

Now the Lord Jesus was warning His hearers of the impending judgment on this people, and they were to act immediately for presently there was time, later would be too late. And He tells us that "now" is the time. Today is the day. To "make every effort to enter the door." All who do strive in this manner will gain entry, but those who refuse will themselves be refused at a later time. May God give us "to strive to enter."

*Fourth*, we should be continually striving to enter the narrow door because *the consequences of failure tar are so severe* (13:28-30). There will be tears of great disappointment due to missed blessing. There will be tears of great regret due to neglected opportunity. There will be tears of great heartache for they see that even Gentiles were admitted entrance freely, but they themselves are barred from entry.

As we close, let me ask you this question: could you honestly say that your life may be characterized as striving to enter the door? As we said at the beginning, there is no place for a spirit of complacency in the Christian life. We cannot presume on mercy; yes have faith in God Who is a God of great mercy, but do not presume upon it. It is time to awaken from lethargy and begin to strive if we have been neglectful and lethargic. Be aggressive with this matter: "lay hold on eternal life", as instructed Paul. Be alert. Be prayerful. Be diligent. Seek grace from Him Who alone can enable you to do these things.

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