

## A Letter From the GMBA

“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, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. (Matthew 7:13-20, KJV)”

These few verses from the Sermon on the Mount speak volumes regarding the challenges faced by the true believer in Christ. We need not recount how the world and society continue to morph to a lower standard of moral and righteous living. What was once taboo is now accepted and even celebrated. What was once sin is championed as a symbol of civil freedom.

Jesus understood that the way to eternal destruction was broad, consisting of many avenues or ways to sin against the will of God. Some of these ways are obvious to us and still avoided by most. Some, however, are more insidious, and appear outwardly to be harmless and acceptable, but within hide evil and malice. Paired with the naivety and indestructibility of youth, these are the most dangerous to our new generations.

The strait gate is narrow because it leaves little room to maneuver. There is only one way to enter this gate. It is to relinquish one's identity in favor of Christ's image. It is to vanquish one's will and be fully subject to the will of God. This way is narrow indeed. It is a constant struggle to identify the battle between our will and God's will and then to completely subject ourselves to His will. The apostle Paul put it best in that famous declaration, "...I die daily (I Corinthians 15:31, KJV)." Jesus highlighted this concept when he placed a child in their midst and taught, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:3-4, KJV)." Our job as true believers in Christ is a simple one: lose yourself in Him. To do this is to enter into the strait gate *and* walk the narrow way. We cannot skip the gate and walk the narrow way. We cannot enter the narrow gate and walk the broad path of sin. Baptism in Christ isn't enough, righteous living in the will of God isn't enough. *Both* are enough by the grace of God and sacrifice of Christ. Young Christians, remember that we are not saved merely by making the covenant, we are saved by keeping the covenant.

Jesus stated that many who attempt to circumvent the will and way of Christ will cry out to Him at that last day, but to no avail. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful

works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:21-23, KJV).” Basically, Jesus was saying that our spiritual fruits will reveal to Him our true identity. Our fruits must match our claim to eternal life. Do we love God above all else? Do we love all mankind without reservation? These are the two great commandments (Matthew 22:36-40). They seem so simple but they mean so much. Love drives us to bear good spiritual fruit. It changes who we are and what we do. It makes us become something better. The Spirit of Christ entering within us brings us this pure love and allows us to bear that wonderful fruit so pleasing to Him. It inspires us to suppress our will and invite the will of God, to suppress our natural ways and invite spiritual ones. May the Lord inspire us to enter the gate, walk the narrow way and produce spiritual fruit in abundance.