

## **Think about it! (6)**

"Are only a few people going to be saved?" That was what "someone" – we don't know who – asked Jesus of Nazareth, according to what Luke tells us in the Gospel that bears his name (Luke 13:23).

Supposing someone were to ask exactly the same question today – what answer do you think they would get? I can think of several answers that I can imagine different people giving: (1) "What do you mean by 'being saved'? – what world are you living in?"; (2) "The only salvation that really matters is salvation in the here and now: the salvation of all the people who are dying of starvation; the salvation of all the thousands of homeless people who can be seen living on the streets of any city; the salvation of those who are suffering all kinds of injustice – come on, forget about 'extraterrestrial salvations!"; (3) "If you're talking about 'the other life' – you know, 'heaven and hell' and all that – O. K., there must be something out there, but I can't see a God of love sending millions of his children to hell!"

But how did Jesus answer the question that was put to him? Well, according to Luke, his answer was, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to" (Luke 13:24). How do you interpret the Master's words? I'll tell you how I understand them – let's see if you think my interpretation is reasonable: (1) Jesus answers the question, "Are only a few people going to be saved?", by speaking about heaven; (2) Jesus says, clearly and solemnly, that a lot of people will try to get into heaven, but won't be able to; (3) Jesus describes the door of heaven as a "narrow" door – in other words, one that doesn't offer easy access; (4) Jesus encourages the people who were listening to him to "make every effort to enter through the narrow door", as if just letting yourself be carried along by life meant not being able to enter heaven; and (5) Jesus clearly gives the impression that not everybody is going to be saved, and that a lot of people, even if they really want to be saved, are going to end up shut out.

What do you think of Jesus' answer to the question he was asked? Does what you think about the whole subject of salvation fit in with what Jesus said about it? What are you going to do about it?: look for some other meaning of Jesus' words – one that suits what you think better?; question the truth of Luke's account?; simply reject Jesus' teaching?; or take the Lord's words seriously and make every effort to enter through the narrow door of salvation?

"Someone asked him, 'Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?' He said to them, 'Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to'" (Luke 13:23-24).

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