

Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
August 21, 2019

“WHERE'D EVERYBODY GO?”

I've mentioned this to a few folks, and now all of you get to hear (read) it. I'm having a bit of a struggle with the fact that half of the church leaves for 6 months or so, and now that has been exacerbated by the added fact that another half of those who remain aren't here either. Most are on vacation escaping the rainy and excessively humid weather of late summer, while a significant number are dealing with significant medical issues. I've never dealt with a situation like this before! I'm sure I'll adapt, but it's just a strange thing for me to process. Those who are here are doing a great job of keeping this ship headed in the right direction and I greatly appreciate that. Now that we're moving into the tail end of August it won't be all that long before our northern brothers and sisters begin to return. We look forward to all the things that we can do together as our numbers swell. But the truth is that we are not to be fixated on numbers. In this week's Gospel lesson from Luke chapter 13 someone in the crowd that is traveling toward Jerusalem asks Him; "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" While Jesus doesn't directly answer the question, He indirectly hints that this will indeed be the case. His reply is *"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) Jesus is that "Narrow Door" and He is the only way to enter into the Kingdom of God for salvation. *"For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."* These words of Jesus are added in Matthew's Gospel (7:13). Many today, even in the Christian Church, are preaching and teaching a wide gate and broad road; that "all roads lead to God". If this were true it would make Jesus a liar and His suffering, death and resurrection needless, useless and totally foolish. Jesus warns that this message is a sure path to destruction, and that those who preach it will be subject to the harshest judgment and condemnation. Our call is to be faithful to the Word of God, and to the Word made flesh; Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of the Father. We are to preach and teach repentance and the forgiveness of sins in His name, and in His name alone. That begins with all who are the closest to us and then extends outward through the community, ultimately to the ends of the earth. In our world today "In Christ Alone" may not be a popular message, but that doesn't make it any less true. Creating a saving faith in those who hear that message is the job of God the Holy Spirit, as we remain faithful to our job of proclaiming it.