



## Part 3: *The Unavoidable Choice*

### INTRODUCTION – Anabaptists, Evangelicals and Others

#### *Anabaptist Distinctives...*

1. Baptism (not the sinners prayer or profession of faith or confirmation) viewed as the primary initial opportunity to express belief in and commitment to Jesus.
2. Call others to follow Jesus as Lord rather than just accept him as Saviour.
3. Therefore encourage others to count the cost before committing to follow Jesus.
4. See church and state as separate spheres of life, given different roles by God. Hence, we are less politically active than many other Christians.
5. Place greater emphasis on the peace and reconciliation teaching of Jesus.
6. Expectation and acceptance of suffering as part of following Jesus.
7. Greater stress on the communal nature of the Christ-following life.
8. Value simplicity in dress, possessions, and relationships.
9. Non-creedal – tending not to look back to creeds and catechisms for our guidance, but to Scripture interpreted within ongoing community experience.
10. Greater emphasis on orthopraxy alongside orthodoxy.
11. Missed out on inerrancy and infallibility debates among academics, so developed no doctrine of either. We see Scripture as inspired and useful.
12. Christocentric approach to life and the Bible.

### LOOK TO THE BOOK – The Golden Rule & Road

**Matthew 7:12-14**

- The Golden Rule...
- The two gates...
- The two roads...
- The two groups...
- The two destinations...

### TAKEOUT – I'll Have That to Go Please

#### TAKEOUT #1 – True Holiness

The righteous life that Jesus calls his disciples to is not defined primarily by what we avoid, but by what we engage in and how we love, even when it's hard [see *Love, Romance, & Relationship* (Feb 2003) and *rEVOLution* (May 2008)].

#### TAKEOUT #2 – We All Have a Choice to Make

Is it possible that one single choice could change the rest of your life? Yes. From marriage to suicide we all make singular choices that change our lives forever. So it is with our spiritual lives. But that singular choice, to enter the narrow gate, does not end there. We have then chosen a new way of living, a new road to travel. The symbol of that choice is baptism.

#### TAKEOUT #3 – Christian Evangelism

Christian evangelism should not merely preach the ease of receiving a free gift without first stressing the Lordship of Jesus and the high cost of discipleship. Jesus encourages would-be disciples to first count the cost (**Luke 9:23; 14:25-35**) and to be prepared to travel the narrow road.

#### TAKEOUT #4 – How Many Will Be Saved?

Jesus has already promised that everyone who seeks will find and all who ask will receive (also see **John 7:37-38**), but here he warns that few will actually seek, and therefore find (also see **Luke 13:22-30**). Other passages suggest that many will be included in the kingdom (e.g., **Matthew 8:11; 20:28; Luke 16:16; Revelation 7:9**, etc.). God gives us enough information to take our own spiritual growth seriously, but not enough to judge anyone else's (e.g., **Matthew 13:24-30; John 21:20-23**).

### CONCLUSION – Embracing Jesus as The Way

**John 10:7-9:21:22**

### HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

#### Warming Up...

1. What Anabaptist distinctive(s) do you resonate most with? How about least?
2. After reviewing the rest of this week's teaching, talk about what most encouraged, inspired, or confused you.

#### Look to the Book...

3. Read **Luke 14:16-35**. A) What verse or idea stands out the most to you? Why? B) What are the excuses that people use to avoid the king's invitation to dinner? Think of some examples from our lives today. C) Does the parable of the dinner party suggest that God is stingy on salvation or generous? How does this teaching inform our understanding about the "narrow" nature of the road to life and the few who find it in **Matthew 7**? D) Jesus' call to put him ahead of even family can seem harsh to some people. Is it? Why or why not? E) Jesus says if someone doesn't first count the cost before undertaking a major decision, they may leave behind a half-built monument to failure, an object of ridicule. How does this apply to people who are rapidly coerced or manipulated into accepting the "free gift" of salvation by well-meaning but over-zealous and under-trained Christians today? What precautions should we bring to our evangelism in light of this teaching? Think of examples of how Christians today could apply this.

#### So What?...

4. Where are you in your spiritual journey? A) On the broad road? B) On the narrow road? C) Stuck standing at the crossroads feeling incapable of making a decision? D) In front of the narrow gate and ready to walk through? E) On the narrow road officially, but trying to keep one foot on the broad road for old time's sake? E) Other? After talking about where you are personally, talk about how you can best support each other in taking your next step.

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