

KIRBSTONES

ALONG THE NARROW WAY

curb-stone (kürb'stön') - *noun* - one of the stones or a range of stones forming a curb, as along a sidewalk or roadway. Historically, the curbstones were placed vertically along the edges of the roadbed and the paving material was backfilled against the row of curbstones. The curbstones served ⁽¹⁾to hold the material in the roadbed, ⁽²⁾to prevent the scattering of the material along the edges, and ⁽³⁾to define the road itself from all the adjoining areas.

¹³ "ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE. FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT.

¹⁴ BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT." - MATTHEW 7:13-14 - NIV

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Many of us live according to a widely held, but false assumption, that if we live as good people, then surely our eternity is secure. We strive to be kind, ethical, and helpful. These are qualities that reflect a life shaped by faith. However, Jesus' teachings invite us deeper, to a place beyond being just good people, into active, growing, and transforming relationships with God.

This raises an essential question for both individuals and for congregations striving to walk with Jesus in the twenty-first century. What are we truly doing day-to-day to impact our eternity? Are we content with our outward goodness, or are we intentionally responding to God's love for us, as we deepen our walk with him?

Scripture is clear that eternal life is not earned by our moral performance alone. Instead, it springs from knowing and being known by God through Christ. Jesus himself prays in John 17:3. Eternal life is relational. It begins now and finds its fullness when we see him face to face. It is about living daily in his grace, seeking his presence, and aligning our hearts with his.

It is natural to want to be good, helpful, and fair. Yet God's call is higher: to respond to his love with devotion, obedience, and surrender. The Apostle Paul reminds us,

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9—NIV

Good deeds flow from a personal relationship with God, not in place of it. What impacts our eternity is whether our hearts are anchored in Christ, and whether we daily seek him in prayer, worship, Scripture, and service.

In Luke 10:38-42, we see Martha busy serving Jesus, while Mary sits at his feet, listening. Jesus gently tells Martha that Mary has chosen something

that is far better than just serving God without a heart for the Lord.

"You are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better..." Luke 10:41-42

Martha's service was good, but Mary's attentiveness to Jesus' words was even better. We can fill our church calendars with activities, committees, and many worthwhile projects, yet neglect the one thing most essential: being present with God, growing in love and faith.

How do we move beyond being merely good people toward truly impacting our eternity? We do so by nurturing a life with God in a healthy vibrant prayer life, by being in God's Word everyday, and by joyfully tithing to God. Each of these combined in an individual's life will lead to a life of service because we belong to him. James writes for us to:

"Come near to God and he will come near to you." James 4:8

This is God's promise: as we draw close to him, he (1) meets us, (2) transforms us, and (3) renews us.

Jesus teaches that he has come that we may have life and have it abundantly, not measured by earthly comfort or even by our moral standing. This is measured by the depth of a personal relationship with the One who made us and saves us. A life rooted in Christ produces fruit that points us and others toward eternity.

How are we marked, not by good works alone, but by *hearts on fire* for Christ, working to *deepen our faith* each day, and our *intentionally impacting our eternity* by walking closely with him?

Are our eyes fixed on eternity? Are we growing in his grace? Are we serving him today and everyday of our lives? How are we growing closer to him?

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3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:3—NIV