

We as Christians should be the expression of the absolute truth of God. The church should be the expression of the unique pattern of the gospel which was preached in the New Testament. But in trying to promote this one pattern, those around us who worship differently raise the cry: "Aren't you being narrow minded, saying that only those who conform to the true church will be saved? You're limiting God's mercy!" Well, to those who say that I say in return: "It is you who are limiting God: You are limiting God's truth, upon which his love and mercy stand!" It is important to know that there is a vast difference in being narrow and in being narrow-minded. Let us take, for example, the simple mathematical relationship: $2+2=4$. This is something that I have never known to be false. I do not expect it to equal 5 tomorrow. In fact, I would bet all I had that $2+2$ would equal 4 for the rest of my life. My point is: is this being narrow-minded? It is certainly narrow, for the law never changes. But it is not narrow-minded. Now, if you multiply 2 times 3 times 4 times 5 times 6, you get 720, which is just as narrow, but is not as obvious. It is not as easy to see when the pattern of the church is somewhat complicated, but it is not beyond our understanding; it is not very obvious, but it is as straight and narrow as the way Jesus says leads unto eternal life in Mt 7:14.

What happens when we make a mistake in our bank book? Will the bank say, "Oh that is all right, the hundred dollar error in your favor will stand." Of course not. But we wouldn't call them narrow-minded, just narrow. We realize that they must operate by the strict laws of mathematics. But we want to say to God, "I have distorted the truth just a teensy bit, Lord, but you won't mind, will you?" This is a grave error. We must be as narrow as God's truth and as wide as his love. We must never give in on the truths that he has plainly stated in his book of words.

Just think of a man who has been marooned out on the ocean in a life-raft for days, out of drinking water. Why can he not drink salt water? It is so close to being pure water, in fact it is pure water with just a little something added, surely it will be all right! But it is the narrowness of God in nature, and not narrow-mindedness that will cause the ocean water to poison the man if he drinks it. Corruption of the absolute pattern of God will in like manner poison the church.

We must live in the truth, for we must be in Christ, and he is the truth. We must be as narrow as that truth, and not narrow-minded. If you try to bend God's law, you are fighting God, and only God can win! Won't you submit to him now, as we stand and sing...