

The Path of Totality

On August 21st portions of North America will experience the first total eclipse in 99 years. The moon will be in perfect position to totally block out light from the sun. The entire event will last a little more than two minutes, but will be a spectacular exhibit of God's creation, our solar system. It has captured the interest of the nation. All of



the continental United States can view this event but only those in a 67 mile wide path will experience the full eclipse. The perfect sightline is called the “path of totality,” which cuts like a sash diagonally from the state of Oregon to Charleston, South Carolina. Millions of people are planning to be in that path on this unique day.

Here is a second example of a narrow connection: Since 1914 the YMCA has run an initiative called the ragger program. The Christian emphasis program has seven incremental steps for a person to set goals to improve their life. Each step helps a person be closer in their walk with Jesus. A rag is presented at the beginning of each

step, not as an award of accomplishment, but merely as a reminder of the self-improvement goals a person has set for themselves. Each rag is a different color, with the final rag to be white. Very few people receive the white rag, as it takes at least seven years of involvement and an increasingly deeper commitment of faith with each step. The white rag theme focuses on dedication to a life of full-time Christian service. Many people start on the journey to grow in their faith, but few are willing to make the ultimate, total commitment of the white rag.



Likewise, even though it has captured nationwide interest, only a portion of the nation will be in the path of totality to get the full view of the August 21st eclipse. Although many people will travel to a spot to see the total eclipse at its peak effect, the rest will only see a portion of it and wonder what they missed. They had their chance.

Entering God's Kingdom is only for those who *truly* believe. The “gate” to Heaven is narrow, like the path of totality of the eclipse. To walk that path you have to surrender your life to Christ – not partially, but fully. You recognize you are a sinner and ask for forgiveness. It is more than just acknowledging there is a God. It is belief in Him fully. And because of your faith, you live the best you can in accord with the teachings of Jesus. As it is written, *“The righteous shall live by faith. You live by faith, and are then saved by your faith (Romans 1:17).*

So how are we to be saved? Remember the jailer in the Roman prison who asked Paul the very same question. *They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household” (Acts 16:29-31).*

Not everyone is willing to make that total commitment, but you can. Being saved requires us to give up control of our life and trust God. That narrows the path considerably. *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).* Being a member of a church or just being baptized is not enough. Attending church or Sunday School because it is your “duty” isn't enough. Neither is leading a moral life. We are not saved by anything that we do, but only because of God's Grace and what Jesus has done for us. The path of totality is both a journey and a desired destination.

People all across the country will watch the eclipse but only those who have made the commitment to be in the right place – the path of totality -- will receive its full effect. As with the white ragger, make the commitment to live a life of full-time Christian service *because* you believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Be a person who believes in totality in Jesus.

The eclipse will be spectacular. Hope you make the commitment to see Him in His full glory.

Question: Are you willing to submit yourself to God and believe fully in Him? How do you do that?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. We pray that we will totally turn our life over to You. Amen.