Date: 10/30/21 (Based on Key Card of 10/22/2016)

Title: Key to the Kingdom

Theme: Jesus is your key to heaven.

Object: Keys in my pocked including key to front door of church. Large heavy paper key with picture of Jesus on both sides. Words: “Jesus is my Savior” and “Jesus is my Lord” (one on each side).

Text: Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV) “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

Jesus is talking here about getting to heaven and being part of the kingdom of God.

And He says that there are many people who are traveling in life down a big wide road that leads to destruction: eternal death.

And only a few people are walking up the narrow path that leads to eternal life in God’s kingdom.

I hope we’re all on the narrow path, don’t you?

Now I have a niece named Jenine.

About 5 years ago she got married, and we went to her wedding in Chicago.

When she was just a little girl, maybe 9 or 10 years old, she asked a question that has stuck in my head to this day.

We were at a family gathering at my parent’s place in Pittsburgh, PA, and out of the blue, she asked this question:

“Is it easy to get into heaven, or is it, like, really restrictive?” [repeat]

Her question reminds me of what Jesus said in the verses we read today.

I have wondered for 25 years now how I should have answered that question, and, if I had to answer it today, here’s what I would say.

“Yes, Jenine, it is easy to get into heaven, and Yes, Jenine, it is really restrictive. Let me illustrate it this way…

I carry around a few keys in my pocket that are attached to my Swiss army knife. Let me show you.

[Show keys and tell what each key is for. Emphasize that each key opens only one thing.]

So let’s say I come to the church and I want to get into the church.

Is it easy or hard to get into the church?

Well, if the church is locked and I don’t have a key, it is really hard to get into the church.

But if I have this key, it is really easy to get into the church.

I just walk up the front steps, put the key in the doorknob, turn it, and the door opens and I walk right in.

So is it easy or hard to get into the church? It’s both!

It is really easy if you have a key, but it is really hard if you don’t.

Now how does that answer Jenine’s question: Is it easy to get into heaven or is it, like, really restrictive?

It is easy to get into heaven if you have the right key, but only those who have the right key card can get in.

Now here’s the important question: how do you get the key that will get you into heaven?

Well, I have brought a picture of the key to the kingdom of heaven with me this morning. Would you like to see it?

[Show key. Whose picture is on it? (Jesus)]

Jesus is the key that gets us into the kingdom of heaven.

On one side it says, “Jesus is my Savior” on the other side it says “Jesus is my Lord.”

When we ask Jesus to forgive our sins, He becomes our Savior; when we ask Him to be our boss, He becomes our Lord.

When Jesus is your Savior and Lord you have the key to heaven, and it’s really easy to get in.

But if you don’t have Jesus, heaven is, like, really restrictive: Nobody gets in without Jesus.

How many would like to have Jesus, the key to heaven?

Let’s ask Jesus to come into our hearts and be our Savior, our boss, and our Friend.

