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having itching ears;” (2 Timothy 4:1-4)*

Does your church scratch your ears, or faithfully  
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crucified and risen again?

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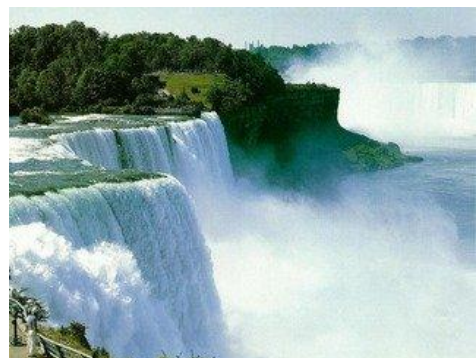
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# UP-RIVER OR DOWN-RIVER



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(editing by Kathy Boynton)

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Once upon a time, there was a cruise-ship named "Fallrider." It belonged to the Wide-Gate Company. It floated down-river toward a deep ravine where the river became a raging waterfall.

There were smaller, much more powerful ships than the Fallrider, which belonged to the Narrow-Way fleet. These more powerful ships carried people up-river against the current. These small Narrow-Way ships would pull alongside the Fallrider and warn its passengers to abandon ship. After rescuing a few Fallrider passengers, a Narrow-Way ship would take them up-river to a safe, but narrow, pathway. However, most Fallrider passengers mocked the Narrow-Way ships. They considered the Narrow-Way message far too restrictive and negative. They would cry out "How dare you tell me I'm headed in the wrong direction!?"

Additionally, some fairly large ships falsely pretended to be Narrow-Way ships. They also would pull alongside the Fallrider and lure passengers on board with very positive, non-confrontational appeals. They advertised extensive programs of entertainment and positive self-image. They considered any

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mention of the downriver falls to be taboo. In this way, they enticed many to change ships in mid-stream. However, these counterfeit Narrow-Way ships never headed up-stream to a safe path. Instead, they continued riding the current with the Fallrider.

The above story illustrates the following Biblical warnings regarding two different ways.

*"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."* (Matthew 7:13-15)

*"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own*

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