**SOMEONE’S AT THE DOOR!**

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock (Rev. 3:20)*

Some of us have been knocking on the doors around our locality. Some of the residents have been very pleasant and willing to listen to us. Some have been less enthusiastic and haven’t been interested in any meaningful conversation. I suppose, though, we ought to put ourselves in their position. … When someone calls at our door and they want to speak to us about something that is important to them … but we are not the slightest bit interested. We just want them to go away.

Let’s use the picture of the Saviour standing at the door, and make a few observations.

Rev. 3:20 *(Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me)* is very often used within a Gospel context. The preacher who would use it in this way would often refer to William Holman Hunt’s famous picture in St. Paul’s Cathedral. It has the Lord Jesus standing with the lantern in his left hand, while He is knocking on the door with His right hand. The door in the painting has no handle, and Hunt explained that it can therefore only be opened from the inside. … I’m sure you have heard the story used in this way … that Christ will keep on knocking until He comes to the time when He feels there is no longer any point … and He walks away. He doesn’t force His way in, and He is completely at the mercy of the one on the inside as to whether He will be received or not.

It may be a nice story but sadly it is a distortion of the text and has nothing to do with the message behind the letter to the church in Laodicea. The Scriptures teach that were it not for the grace of God no heart would ever be opened to the Gospel. Remember, the sinner’s heart is cold and hardened, - it is dead to God and the Gospel. If it was left up to even the best of sinners, they would never yield to saving grace, - they would never ‘open the door’ and come to Christ. Salvation is all of God, - it is God the Holy Spirit who prepares the sinner’s heart that Christ may enter in.

No, this verse is actually for believers. It is appealing to those who have allowed their hearts to become lukewarm to the Saviour. Along their spiritual pathway, they have allowed the light in their souls to become a dim flicker. They had allowed other issues to crowd in on them, thus squeezing out the priorities of their faith. …
They had looked to see how best they could adopt the things of this world … and accumulate more and more for themselves, at the cost of their relationship with Christ.

They had done well. All their worldly efforts had been successful. They were riding around Laodicea in all the best chariots. They were moving within the circles of the elite in the city. They were going to all the best festivals and fancy banquets. At many of these occasions they would have been required to leave their Christianity at home. They would have had to speak like everyone else, dress like everyone else, and enjoy themselves like everyone else. … And after a while, you couldn’t tell the difference!

Of course, on Sunday mornings they would make their way up to the front of the church and take their seats. They would have enjoyed everyone’s greetings and kind words. They were as well received in the church as they were in everywhere else they went the rest of the week. They were very ‘facilitating’ people … but that was their downfall as far as Christ was concerned. They would have ‘facilitated’ anything for their own ends. Consequently, they were neither one thing nor the other … and Christ described them as being neither hot nor cold.

Now, imagine if the Lord came to us with such an accusation. … You’re “running with the hare and hunting with the hounds”. You’re not sure where you are. You think you can make friends with the world … the same world that contradicts My word and My ways. It can’t be done, Christ said … for if you continue in the way you seem to be intent on going, I’ll spue you out of My mouth. … That is the context of this verse, - it is addressed to believers.

At the commencement of this New Year, is there any need to examine ourselves as Christ stands at the door of our fellowship? Yes, of course, there is. There is always the need to examine ourselves before the Lord. Are we giving Him what He has paid for when He bought us with His precious blood on the cross? We don’t want to be lukewarm, and neither do we want to be cold … We want to be hot for Him. Charles Wesley wrote, “O Thou who camest from above, The pure celestial fire to impart, Kindle a flame of sacred love Upon the mean altar of my heart. … There let it for Thy glory burn With inextinguishable blaze, And trembling to its source return, In humble prayer and fervent praise…. Still let me guard the holy fire, And still stir up Thy gift in me.”
And then, consider the words from Jesus’ point of view. Behold I stand and knock. … Bearing in mind, He is not some kind of a pathetic Saviour battling for our attentions … but He is the Lord … He expects the very best from us. When the master paid the price to own the slave, everything the slave was and had belonged to the master. There was nothing held back. There was nothing that belonged to the slave, - the master owned it all. Therefore, as the Saviour stands at the door of our hearts He expects nothing less than everything! … When He stands at the door of our fellowship He also expects nothing less. … What does this mean?

Well, it means all that we are belongs to Him. He is within His rights to take everything from us, should He so desire. His purposes for us are the very best. Not a single faithful servant whom He has called out to a mission field in a poverty-stricken arena would swap places with a millionaire … because when God saves us He settles our hearts and minds to enjoy what He has given us. There is no greater place than being in the centre of His will.

And it means too that we want to find out more about Him … and to do that we read and study His Word. The Scriptures are written by Him and they teach us concerning Him. We see Him in the Bible … in His dealings with men and women and nations. He is active in all kinds of circumstances, - the greatest to the most seemingly insignificant. His Word teaches us how He thinks and acts. It teaches us His ways, His purposes and His sovereign will. They set before us His plans and decrees … And when He comes to our doors knocking, we know that all things He sets before us are in accordance with His Word and His will. He never would act contrary to His nature. He would never say something in the Bible and then choose to do the opposite. No, He upholds the truth of His Word in everything He does and in everything He expects from His people.

He is standing at the door … Often when we go to someone’s door, we are there to pick them up and accompany them to a particular destination … Well, that is another consideration we have in line with these words. Yes, I know the verse says, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. … But, there are times when He comes to our ‘door’ and He has something for us to do outside our own comfort zones, - He is coming to ‘pick us up’ in order to take us on. It’s good and right and proper that He comes in and sups with us … but it is also necessary to move on with Him. …
He has work for us to do and often that work takes us outside of the confines of our comfortable church setting. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (Mk. 16:15) … and He has promised to never leave us nor forsake us.

At the commencement of a New Year we renew our commitment to the tasks He continues to set before us. He’s coming again soon. The devil is getting busier and he is putting into the minds of people to set up obstacles to God and His truth … we must make sure we are with the Lord, ready and willing to do His work. When He knocks on the door we are not so taken up with something that would distract us … or we are not too comfortable and don’t want to be disturbed.

The homes we live in are ours because of the blessings He has showered upon us … so therefore they are His. The lives we have are His because He has so graciously granted them to us. There is nothing we can withhold from Him, and deny Him … for we are what we are because of the grace of God.

At the beginning of 2013, He’s standing knocking at the door … Are you making sure to invite Him in and enjoy His presence and His company? … If He is standing knocking at your door calling on you to come round the streets and doors of Kirkcaldy, would you follow Him? … Here is how simple God’s Word is to each of us this evening … Behold, I stand at the door and knock … Is anybody in?! … **Behold, Someone’s at the door!**

Who at my door is standing,  
Patiently drawing near,  
Entrance within demanding?  
Whose is the voice I hear?

Door of my heart, I hasten!  
Thee will I open wide.  
Though He rebuke and chasten,  
He shall with me abide.