

Knock Knock! (Who's There?)

Joe Slater

Most front doors have a peep hole so you can see who is knocking. Then you make the decision whether to open the door. Safety and privacy are good things!

What if you heard the knock and knew it was Jesus? Would you open the door to let Him in? Of course you would! Or would you . . .

To the church at Laodicea Jesus said, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me”* (Revelation 3:20). No, He wasn't literally physically standing at their door. Don't look for Him at yours either. Both then and now, to hear His voice is to comprehend His word with our hearts. Then we, like the Laodiceans, choose whether to let Him in (i.e. whether to trust and obey).

The lukewarm Laodiceans had effectively shut the Lord out. In their smug self-satisfaction, they didn't think they needed Him. Jesus wanted them to repent and let him back inside so He could have fellowship with them (signified by sharing a meal together). But He would not commit spiritual “breaking and entering.” It was up to them to open the door if they wished.

Through His word, Jesus knocks on the door of the hearts of lukewarm church members today. He does the same for souls who have never obeyed the gospel. He desires fellowship with you; but He will not force Himself on you. Will you let Him in?

**Who at the door is standing, patiently drawing near,
Entrance within demanding? Whose is the voice I hear?
Sweetly the tones are falling: Open the door for Me!
If thou wilt heed My calling, I will abide with thee.**

(words by Mrs. M. B. C. Slade)

Community

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28 NASB).

Community is a powerful word. It pictures a group that are together in harmony and agreement. That is what God's people need to be. Jesus said the love His disciples have for one another is what proclaims that they truly are His. Without that mutual love, there is no community, only divisions.

The first letter to the Corinthian church points out their lack of community. They were divided as to whom they followed, they were divided by class, and they certainly were divided over spiritual gifts. Paul said they ought to be one *"so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another"* (I Corinthians 12:25).

We see a great sense of community in Acts 2:43-47. Because the members demonstrated love for one another, many joined their community. They spent as much time as possible with each other. Two powerful reasons given for us to come together is to encourage each other in faithfulness and to stimulate each other to good deeds (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Jesus tells us that if our becoming His disciples costs us our physical family, we will gain much more in our spiritual family (Mark 10:29-30).

The world is full of temptations trying to draw us away from Jesus. Satan is also active in trying to get us to give up. That is why we need to be a community. It is tough to go it alone. Therefore, be an active part of the community of God's family.

--Ed Wittlif (Denver, CO)

BALANCE

A plea for balance is often misunderstood. Balance is not found by locating two opposite extremes and staking out the middle ground between them. Instead, it is found by staking out the Biblical truth. When you do, however, you will find extreme departures in both directions.

Extremes in both directions are wrong and often equally harmful. Moses frequently said in the Law, *“You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left”* (e.g. Deut. 5:12).

Balance is not the same as “straddling the fence.” Biblical balance is taking a firm stand for Biblical truth while avoiding both extremes. It is carefully walking in the middle of the narrow way, avoiding the ditches on both sides.

WHO'S RIGHT?

Someone complained, “You folks think you are right and everyone else is wrong!”

Actually, most of us think the Bible is right, but we realize we're flawed creatures who may be wrong about some things.

On another level, however, I really do think I am right and everybody who disagrees with me is wrong. So do you. (Why would you believe something you thought was wrong?) If I did not think I was right about what I believe, I would change my beliefs to what I thought was right. So would you.

WHAT SETTLES IT?

Someone says, “God said it. I believe it. That settles it.”

That is good, but this is better: “God said it. That settles it, whether I believe it or not.

--Cecil May, Jr. (via *Preacher Talk*); some adapted