

The Knock At The Door

Introduction. In Revelation 3:20, the “knock” expresses the activity generated by the divine hand of the Savior; the “door” suggests the opportunity of man to respond to the heavenly messenger.

When the great masters depicted this scene on their canvasses, Jesus Christ patiently stands dressed in the outer garment of a robe typical of the style and custom of the day with His hand outstretched, palm inward apparently having yielded a rapport with His knuckles on the common, crude portal that quite curiously bears no knob or latch admitting entrance from the outside, making it mandatory for the occupant of the house to allow access from the inside.

The scene impresses upon the memory a permanent picture of the great invitation to entertain the interests of the heavenly guest. We are going to analyze the verse in detail to glean the full meaning of this splendid invitation.

I. ***A Deliberate Knock***

- A. The word “behold,” which introduces this passage, is intended to attract the attention of the reader not necessarily in a startling way, but certainly by interrupting any tendency that might allow his thoughts to stray.
- B. A knock accomplishes two objectives. First, it announces one’s presence. Second, it asks for admission. When Jesus ascended into heaven, His disciples began to act upon the great commission (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48). It is the responsibility of the church to stand at the door of men’s hearts announcing His presence to the world and inform them that Christ is asking for admission into their lives to rule as Lord (Acts 8:4-5, 35).
- C. The church is designed to bring glory to God “by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Ephesians 3:21).

II. ***A Divine Knock***

- A. The knock is a divine knock, i.e., it is of divine origin. Salvation does not originate with man but with God. The ancient prophets plainly stated this truth (Isaiah 1:18; Jeremiah 10:23). The apostle Paul discussed the inability of man to foresee, much less foredetermine, the plan of salvation God designed for him (1 Corinthians 2:7-13).
- B. In the gospel of John, Jesus referred to Himself with the imagery of a door (John 10:7, 9). Peter affirmed the same fact in Acts 4:12.
- C. Faced with many doctrines, dogmas and declarations of men today, it is well to remember “the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (2 Timothy 2:10).

III. **A Decisive Knock**

- A. Although consisting of only two letters, the word "if" represents a decision between two choices with eternal consequences. "If" is a conditional participle denoting indefiniteness or uncertainty.
- B. While most people would not turn away even a stranger from the door of their home, the Lord Jesus Christ is welcomed in only by a few (Matthew 7:13-14; 20:16; 22:14; Romans 9:27; 1 Peter 3:20; Revelation 3:20).

IV. **A Directed Knock**

- A. The knock at the door is directed to "any man." In these words, the doctrine of John Calvin regarding unconditional election and limited atonement is defeated and the great commission of Jesus Christ is declared (Matthew 28:18-20).
- B. Man's sins are offensive to God (Isaiah 64:6). Yet, protected by the invitation bearing the designation to "any man," steps of faith toward God may be safely taken (Romans 4:12).
- C. Queen Esther was required by her uncle Mordecai to approach King Ahasuerus in his inner court in the interests of the Jews. Since she was not called, she could be put to death unless the king chose to extend the golden scepter. The support of her people attending her, she decided to enter the inner court of the king and said, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:10-17). The events rise to a crescendo in the next chapter where one of the most crucial decisions affecting the destiny of the Jews compassionately is made when king Ahasuerus held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand (Esther 5:1-3).
- D. The knock at the door empowers "any man" to seek the sinless Savior. How grateful the human race ought to be that the King of heaven has extended the golden scepter of opportunity to obey the soul-saving gospel of Christ.

V. **A Distinctive Knock**

- A. Just as it is today, it was the custom then to verbally announce oneself as he knocks upon someone's door.
- B. The Lord speaks today through the scriptures (Colossians 3:16). The words of scripture by which men will be judged are the words of Christ (John 12:48; Acts 3:23). The distinctive body of material to be declared to men is the word of God (2 Timothy 4:2). The faithful disciple will not hear or follow a stranger's voice (John 10:5; Isaiah 8:20).
- C. A distinctive knock implies distinctive preaching. While men say, "One church is as good as another, the scriptures say differently (Ephesians 4:5; Ephesians 1:22-23). While men say, "All roads lead to heaven," the Savior says differently (John 14:6). While men say, "Worshippers

may express the sincere sentiments of the hearts," the scriptures say differently (John 4:24). While men say, "Just as my children wear different names, God's children may wear different names," the scriptures say differently (Zechariah 14:9).

VI. **A Dutiful Knock**

- A. The duty of the hearer is to "open the door." The door represents opportunity here as in other passages of scripture (Acts 14:27; 2 Corinthians 2:12).
- B. The hearer's prerogative to "open the door" suggests ease of compliance with the Lord's demand. In former years, men were urged by denominational preachers to roll and tumble all night at the mourner's bench if necessary while worshippers beat on them and laid their hands on them hoping to assist them in what they called "praying through." However, the scriptures teach differently (Acts 22:16).
- C. A person properly instructed from a preacher or teacher that knows the Bible will not act in some strange, humiliating or undignified way, but he will follow the plain precepts of scripture. The response of duty's demand is, therefore, reasonable; that is, a man can understand what God wants him to do to be saved (Acts 9:6; Hebrews 5:9).

VII. **A Delightful Knock**

- A. The ones who respond to the Savior's knock at the door have the delightful prospect of enjoying His promise to come in and sup with Him. The word "sup" means "supper," the principal meal of the day, and "to dine" (Luke 17:8; 22:20).
- B. The blessing of such fellowship with God is seen between the Lord and Abraham in Genesis 18:1-8 and between God and Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel in Exodus 24:1-12.
- C. Christians eat the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The fellowship of which the Lord is speaking here points to the home of the soul where the redeemed will have almost unimaginable promises (Revelation 7:16-17).

Conclusion. The closing words of Jesus in Revelation 3 state His demand, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (vs. 22). At the pinnacle of His popularity during his personal ministry Christ preached to be ready (Luke 12:35-36). "Door of my heart, I hasten! Thee will I open wide; Tho' he rebuke and chasten, he shall with me abide."