

He's at the Door

by Jim Cymbala

Jesus is knocking at the door of our hearts, seeking fellowship and intimacy with us, and offering us eternal life and forgiveness of sins.

Duration: 28:12

Topics: "Second Coming"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being spiritually minded and mature in our thinking. He highlights that the main focus should always be Jesus and his body, which includes all believers regardless of the size or location of their church. The preacher then moves on to discuss the message to the seventh church, which is a warning from Jesus about being lukewarm in our faith. Jesus expresses his disappointment and threatens to reject those who are lukewarm. The preacher concludes by urging the audience to accept Jesus into their lives and emphasizes that the decision to let him in or not ultimately determines our eternal destiny.

Transcript

Let's focus on just one verse. In the book of Revelation, chapter three, verse 20, it's gonna bring us to the thought of somebody knocking at the door. Let's look at it, shall we? Here I am, this is Jesus speaking, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person and they with me. Let's, can we say it together? Let's say that passage together, at one, two, three. Here I am, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person and they with me. Right after this passage, we have the end of seven letters that Jesus wrote. This is toward the end of the seventh letter that he wrote in the book of Revelation to seven churches, seven literal churches.

This is to the church at Laodicea, Laodicea. Everyone say that, Laodicea. Some experts, they all agree that these were seven literal churches.

First one is the church at Ephesus and then there's others. The last one is Laodicea. Some Bible scholars think that they're symbolic because it's seven of seven church ages.

No one knows when one begins and the other one ends but there's this theory that Ephesus, where they lost their first love, was the first church age and now, before Christ returns, this is the final letter that describes general conditions on the earth among the people of God. To remind us of what we learned last week about the body of Christ, that the most important thing on the earth to Jesus is not politics, not elections, not economics, not anything like that. What's his main interest on the earth? His church.

Why? It's his body. His body is the church. The head gives instructions and gives purpose and the body carries it out.

But what did we learn last week? If the body is sick or paralyzed or limping, it's not gonna do the purposes of God as quickly and as efficiently as if it was healthy. So Jesus' main concern is with us today. This is what we're doing here and what happens through God today is much more important than the United Nations or any of this other stuff because they're not the light of the world.

We're the light of the world. Do I get an amen here? We are the salt of the earth. So you gotta be spiritually minded and mature and biblical in your thinking and keep the main thing being the main thing.

It's Jesus and his body. The closer you get to God, the more you're concerned about his body, whether it's a small church in Bolivia or a large mega church somewhere in America or Brazil. So now this is the seventh church and let me just summarize.

The message is kind of sad because Jesus says, I'm summarizing, I know everything about you, which he knows about every church. I know everything about you and I know that you're neither hot nor cold. You're lukewarm and because you're lukewarm, tepid, lukewarm water, I'm gonna spew you, vomit you out, spit you out of my mouth.

Strong language from our Savior, wouldn't you say? But he tells it like it is. Jesus is very confrontational, always in love but always gets to the point with us because he wants to help us. So this church was neither hot nor cold but they had a confession, a positive confession.

I am rich, like people say, you become what you confess, wrong. I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing and Jesus said, you don't even know. You're naked, you're poor, you're blind and you better come to me so I can fix it up.

Now they might have been materially, commercially, money-wise, they might have been upper income and maybe had some nice things. We're not sure what he's talking about there or maybe they were boasting in their spiritual riches but they were bankrupt. And now to this church that's neither hot nor cold but lukewarm after all Jesus has done, he ends this letter with this message which is given to no other church but that one and the message is, lo or behold or look, I stand at the door, notice, stand at the door and I'm knocking.

Here's the other noise. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come in and do a miracle. No, I will eat with him or her and they with me, fellowship.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. The letter ends with that phrase which is the end of every one of the seven letters. This is a wild thought.

This is reverse. This is reverse of everything it seems like that's in the Gospels. You know, in the Gospels it's ask of me, pray, seek and knock, right? You come to me.

All the teaching of the Bible, come unto me all ye that labor and have not. Come unto me, come unto me. No, now instead of him answering our prayer now the question is will you answer his request? This is totally reversed.

He's a rewarder of those that diligently seek him? No, now we see a new picture. He's seeking you, he's seeking me. He's seeking a church.

It's not seek God, it's God seeking you. Now what are you gonna do? It's not Lord, can I enter into heaven? It's the Lord saying to us, you don't have to ask me about entering into heaven. Can I enter into your heart? This is a total reverse.

What condescension? What love? What kind of gentleness is this? The Lord's asking this church. That blows your mind. He's standing at the door and that means he's outside.

How could you be outside the door of your own church? This is full of thought provoking information. He's outside of his own church trying to get in. Are they a Christian church? Yeah, they're not pagans.

They go by his name. But somehow in another sense, he's outside when it comes to fellowship and intimacy. And he's knocking at the door wanting to get in.

Now this verse is used most times by ministers slightly out of context. We all have used it that way. We use this as an appeal to people who don't know Christ.

Listen everybody and I wanna say it to you in case you're not a Christian here today. He's standing at your door and he's knocking. If you hear his voice and let him in, you can be saved and you can know everything good that he has prepared for you.

Forgiveness of sin, eternal life, peace and joy and a million other things. So that can be applied to people who don't know the Lord but that's not the original application here. He's outside his own church.

How in the world would the Lord Jesus Christ not be in his own church? Obviously it can happen. You can get lukewarm, neither hot nor cold but lukewarm and now he's on the outside. If that's true for a church, then it's true for a person.

A Christian can be a Christian but in another sense, the Lord is saying, I stand at the door and I knock. Won't you let me in? Come on, won't you let me in? Now what door is he talking about? Not a physical door. The Lord's not standing at any physical door trying to get in.

It's obviously the door of their heart, of the church's heart. I stand at the door and I'm knocking at the door of your heart. Will you please let me in to where you really live? Notice here the primacy of the heart.

The heart is everything. Christianity is all about the heart. Yes, it includes the mind but Jesus didn't say, let me into your mind.

He said, let me into your heart. You can have thoughts about Jesus, doctrine about Jesus but him not be in your heart, dwelling, living, ruling, reigning, fellowshiping with you. So it's the door of your heart, my heart, the church's heart.

The person who's here today, that's the question. This sermon, unfortunately, has to be confrontational because how can I preach Jesus' words without being confrontational? They are confrontational. So

obviously, the question here, everybody, is he's knocking at the door of your heart possibly.

What are you gonna do now about it? Do you notice that he's doing it? Let's finish this thought. I stand at the door and I knock. Who's the I? You know, I try to ask all the Ws and Hs when I see any situation.

Who, what, where, when, why? Then how much, how long or how? So who? I stand at the door, who? Listen, the hands that are knocking at the door, if they were just open, you'd see the nail prints. This is the risen Savior, the one who died for us. Notice his condescension.

Notice his humility. Notice his love for us. He, first of all, leaves heaven and all the glory that he had.

We'll be thinking about that especially during the Christmas season, right? He left the corridors of eternity where he always existed and the glory of heaven. And he limited himself to a human body. He came to this earth, this polluted place, this evil place.

And he took the form of first a baby and then a man. And he limited himself so that you could hit him and hurt him. He was perfectly God, but he was perfectly man.

So when someone struck him, he felt it. All the nervous system worked with him. He felt the pain.

When they spit, he felt their saliva going down and the revulsion of it going down his face. When they put the spear in his side, when they put the nails especially in his hands, when they put the crown of thorns, he felt all of that. He left heaven and the glory that he had to take the form of a man.

Why did he go to that cross? The end of Christmas is Calvary. He wasn't born to be a baby. He was born to grow up and at 33, be a man who would die for you and I. Listen, he gave his life, in case you don't understand this, he gave his life and shed his blood so that our sins can be forgiven.

The horrible, filthy things that you and I have said and done, in the open or in secret, all of it, he shed his blood for our sins. Christ died for us. How many are happy? Put your hands together and say amen.

He died for us. That's who's standing at the door. He died, was buried in a tomb.

On the third day, he rose again. He ascended to the right hand of the Father in heaven. He then sent the Holy Spirit.

That's the one who's standing at the door. I mean, what more, if you're not gonna let him in, what more does he have to do? If you're not gonna live for Jesus here today, he's asking you and I, what more do I have to do? I left heaven. I became a man.

I let them massacre me all for you. And now on top of that, he's begging you and me for entrance. What more could he do? We all choose our eternal destiny.

Don't blame anything on God. He's standing at the door and knocking. If you let him in, you'll have eternal life.

If you don't let him in, what can I say? What can he say? What could anyone say? If you don't want him in, you don't want him in. But look who's standing at the door, standing aggressively, knocking and waiting. How long has he waited for some of us or some of us lukewarm Christians? How long has he waited? How many knocks? How long has he been knocking and saying, won't you let me in? You know it's not right

between us.

Won't you let me in? I'm not gonna hurt you. I'm gonna bless you. I'm gonna love you.

I'm gonna forgive you. Let's say amen to that. Amen.

Why? I got the who, but the why. Why? Because it's a love that you and I can't understand. Don't ever try to understand fully that love.

You can meditate on it, but nobody will ever get it. If you're lukewarm and you're a church, if I were Jesus, I say, you don't want me? Yo, I am moving on. Keep your door closed.

You don't want me in? I'll go to somebody else. I'll go to somebody else's house. Would any of you and I go to somebody's house we know and Walter and his wife, they knock on the door.

They knock on the door. They know the people are in. They knock on the door.

They ring the doorbell. They kick the door. They do everything and nobody comes to the door to let them in.

What, are you gonna stay there all night? No. Go back home. Go to IHOP.

Have a pancake. Go anywhere. But you're not gonna stand there and knock all night.

But Jesus knocks not all night, all year. All decade. Come on, how many have found that in your own life? He waits.

He's so patient. So patient. So patient with unbelievers who curse him and mock him and guess what he does? He still knocks.

Well, I don't want you and for Christ's sake, get out of my face and he still knocks. And they use his name as a curse word. Right now, some Oxycontin deal is going on right now in Long Island and someone's probably saying, for Christ's sake, give me the money, will you? Jesus Christ, give me the money.

And you would think that would let him say, I'm never gonna even be near you. You talk like an animal. No, he knocks.

He loves everybody. He keeps knocking. You and I can give up on people.

He doesn't give up on people. He keeps knocking, knocking, knocking, knocking, waiting, waiting. I stand at the door and knock if anybody hear my voice.

So those are the two sounds. Let me close. The two sounds are knocking and if anybody hears my voice, what does that speak of? That speaks of the woings of the Holy Spirit because Jesus is in heaven but he sent his Holy Spirit to represent him and that's all the woings and all the pangs of conscience that he uses to try to get us to open the door.

I have learned a long time ago that even people say they don't believe in God and they curse God and they don't wanna know about religion and Christianity and mock it. Guess what? He's knocked on their door too through conscience. They just don't wanna admit it.

They're too proud. But their conscience has told them, that's wrong. What are you gonna do when you die? No, I don't wanna think about that.

I don't wanna think. And they can deny it, go into a total state of denial but he's knocked. He gives dreams.

He speaks through conscience. He gives little wooings of the Holy Spirit. When you're drifting away as a Christian, he'll remind you of a moment in your life when your heart was open to God.

How many times has he done that for me? When I was drifting, he would remind me, wooing me by his spirit. I'm at the door, I'm knocking, I'm knocking. I love you, I still love you.

I don't care what you've done. I love you, I love you, I'm knocking. Don't you hear my voice? Don't you hear that whisper? Sometimes he'll send a song into your heart.

And that song will remind you of how much he loves you. How many have ever had that happen? Just a song will come to you and it'll remind you, I'm drawing you, I'm standing at the door and knock. If anyone just hears my voice, all those wooings, all that waiting, maybe for somebody here today, he's been waiting for 10 years, a decade.

Because notice, he's not asking you to join a church. You can come to a church, Laodicea was a church and he was outside the door. You can be a church attender.

And still, in terms of your relationship with the Lord, somehow he's outside the door of your heart. So let's close. Then we just have the choice.

Everybody's destiny here is on you and it's on me. Jesus makes it plain. You know, no, you're predestined to do this, you're gonna do that, you're forced by God, you're already programmed to go to hell or you're programmed to go to hell.

Heaven, I don't see that here. I see Jesus saying to us, if anybody opens the door, I'll come in. If you don't open the door, what can I do? I'm a gentleman, I'm not gonna break down the door.

Jesus does not break down doors. He waits. Now, he has to draw you by his spirit.

I got all that. But where you're gonna be a million years from now will be decided by you, not by me. Where I'm gonna be a billion years from now is gonna be decided by me.

If you open the door, he comes in. If you don't open the door, what can I say? He doesn't open the door, we don't open the door, he doesn't come in. And now we face eternity without Jesus.

But don't anybody say, he didn't try. Oh no, yes, he tried. How many can say aloud amen to that? Anybody loses out with God, it's not because Jesus didn't try, because we know now.

To the most abhorrent people, he knocks. You know, the man who wrote Amazing Grace, he's a slave trader, animal, degenerate, living person, John Newton. The Lord kept knocking and saved him and turned him into a great saint.

Because his love is so far beyond our love, it's like crazy, right? I mean, his love, I wouldn't love people like me and you, right? But he keeps loving. How many are happy he loves? Lift your hand, he just loves, keeps knocking. Oh, that's what he's after.

He's after fellowship. If anybody opens the door, what are you gonna do? You're gonna come in with like a new car, and a big financial blessing like the televangelists, a lot of them are trying to sell. No, no, the best blessing that Jesus could ever give you is himself.

When you have Jesus, you have everything. Am I right or wrong here? When you have Jesus, when you have fellowship with Jesus, you can be eating a little can of tuna with some bread that's stale, but you are looking good. How many say amen, you're looking good? And if you don't have Jesus, or if you've drifted away from him and he's outside the door, you can be at Peter Luger's with a steak this big, and a big, big old, they got some big potatoes that are ginormous there, right? But you're empty.

You can be a Hollywood movie star and be nobody home, just empty, empty. And here's one last word to all of us. Him coming in in a stronger way begins to expel all the things you've been fighting against with very little success.

When he comes in, other stuff has to get out just because he's in. How many get what I'm saying? Say amen. A lot of people, including myself, you see something negative in your life, you see some temptation, you see some besetting sin, you see anger, you see resentment, you got a nasty attitude toward whomever, and you fight against it, you know it's wrong.

You can fight until the cows come home. It's not going away by you saying get away. You let Jesus in and he starts dealing with it.

He start, not overnight, not overnight, but a lot of junk goes out the minute you just open that door. And then the more he stays and takes possession of every nook and cranny, all the dark stuff leaves because Jesus is in. Come on, let's say amen to that.

So how about it? Have we learned anything today about Jesus? This is a good word for all of us. And he wants to help you. But what you have to do is say, come into my heart.

Come into my heart. He'll come. He's knocking, he's waiting.

Some of you need to do it because you've never really had your life changed. You've never been born again. You just grew up with this understanding.

Try to live a good life and go to church and read the Bible once in a while and that'll get you into heaven. It will not, I tell you now in the name of Christ, it will not. You need a relationship with Jesus.

You need to open the door of your heart and say come in, come in Jesus. If you're here today and you're a believer and your communion, your fellowship with Jesus has kind of broken down over the years, I was vulnerable, I told you. The times in my life when I felt him knocking, I'll go further even in the ministry.

Early on in the ministry, I had some very cold seasons where the Lord had to knock and knock and say how you gonna pastor if I'm outside the door of your heart in terms of fellowship and communion? Who you gonna help? Not gonna help a soul. Would you close your eyes with me? Anybody behind me? Anybody in front of me who would just like to close the service by being at the altar? I don't care how many of you come, I will put my hand briefly on your shoulder in an agreement with you and with me today too. I wanna open my heart to Jesus in a new way.

Pastor, you're a pastor. I know, I wanna open my heart to Jesus in a new way. I want more of him, less of me.

If you feel the spirit wooing you, like I said, then just get up out of your seat right now and come to this altar, whether you're in the choir or in the balcony or downstairs here. And if two of you come, I'll put my hand on two shoulders. If 200 of you come, I will not let you leave until I just agree with you.

We're opening the door to Jesus in a new way in our lives. Jesus, thank you for loving us. I'm just gonna talk from my heart to you, Jesus, in front of all these people.

Thank you for loving us. Thank you for knocking and knocking and knocking and knocking and calling and calling and calling and calling. Help us to love you back like you love us.

Thank you for not turning away and getting sick of us, like we've all gotten sick of ourselves at times. Thank you, Jesus. If there's anyone here, Lord, who has never received you, I'm gonna pray a prayer to end the meeting.

Open their eyes that they might understand your love and your grace as they put their trust in you. For us Christians who have drifted away, some things happen. We lost our joy, we lost our peace because somehow you got on the wrong side of the door.

Thank you for knocking through this meeting today. We open wide the door of our heart for you. Come in, sit, talk to us, we'll talk to you.

We're gonna tell you a lot of problems and things we're facing. Now talk back to us, through your word, by your spirit, because it's a two-way communion you want. Thank you for loving us.

Everybody in the building repeat after me. Dear Jesus, forgive me of my sin. I make no excuses, I've been wrong.

Thank you for loving me, dying for me, raising again from the dead, knocking on my heart. I say yes to you. I believe you are the Son of God, and I confess with my mouth that Jesus is my Lord and Savior.

Take care of me the rest of my days. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever and ever. Strengthen me.

Teach me how to pray. Teach me your word. Give me good Christian friends, and keep me close to you.

I pray it in Jesus' name. And everyone said amen. Amen.

Let's give them one last celebratory hand clap of praise. I wanna keep my word, and I couldn't get to everyone, but anyone who came forward who just wants to shake my hand before you leave, I'll be down here for whatever it takes. Then I gotta get up and see my mom.

By the way, I invite you to a birthday party next Sunday at nine o'clock. You don't have to bring a card, and I won't have any cake for you either, but it's still gonna be a party. Next Sunday, we're celebrating 102 years old, 102.

Did I tell you, I saw her after the service last week, and I said, look, she's in my office, I'm hugging her and kissing her, and I say, Mom, next week you're gonna be 102. And she went, eh. I now, as a minister of the

state of New York, pronounce you dismissed.

You can turn and hug one another. Do it right now, hug one another. Give someone a hug.

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