

When God Will Shut the Door

by Mose Stoltzfus

The sermon emphasizes the urgency of striving for a genuine relationship with God before the door to salvation is shut.

Duration: 1:30:06

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 13:22-30

Topics: "Bearing Fruit", "Gods Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses a passage from the Bible where Jesus heals a woman who had been suffering from an infirmity for 18 years. The preacher also mentions another story where Jesus talks about a fig tree that bears no fruit. The sermon emphasizes the importance of bearing fruit in one's life as a Christian. The preacher warns that there will be consequences for those who do not respond to God's invitation and compares it to a parable where people make excuses for not attending a feast. The sermon concludes with a reminder that those who reject God's invitation will experience regret and sorrow.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings to everyone here tonight.

I am indeed blessed to have the privilege to stand here tonight and feel myself unworthy to have that privilege in life to speak to all of you. I trust God's heart, the Word of God this evening. Been a joy to be here this week.

I remember I had to think while sitting here. I remember singing a song in my youth about thirty-eight or nine years ago, thirty-nine years ago this winter I believe, Let Me Burn Out for Thee Dear Lord. I remember how I sang that song and I meant it from my heart.

This is one of the weeks that I have had the privilege to still have that prayer and that song answered in my heart. And I am very grateful for that opportunity to spend my life and my energy on you all. And tonight again we come to you and it is a sobering moment.

We have to say to see what God has done. We are in awe over that but we are also standing in fear and trembling as we recognize that the work is not yet done in our midst and we trust that God will again come to us here tonight and by his Holy Spirit move upon the hearts of those who have resisted God's call upon their life up to this hour. May we just stand together for a word of prayer.

Father we are just a vessel through which we have trusted that you have called to speak forth the words of truth. And we want to endeavor to do that in our weakness and feebleness of strength. But tonight God if you do not move upon the hearts of the people it will not get much good to what we are doing here Father.

We can spend the evening in singing and preaching but unless the Spirit of God moves upon the hearts of the people we know that it will be in vain and many will return back to where they came from. So Father we pray that tonight there will be some life changing decisions made. Some decisions that would totally renovate their thinking and regenerate their life and lifestyles from top to bottom.

We pray dear God that they would await to righteousness and not to sin and fall asleep to sin. I pray for that God. And I thank you God again for this blessed opportunity.

Break the bread of life. Break it Lord and send it like arrows and darts into the hard hearts that have resisted the word of God up to this time. Bless the hearts that are soft.

Encourage the ones that are born again and those that have given their heart to the Lord. And I pray Father sanctify those who yet need cleansing and sanctification likewise. We commit this service, this hour, this time, this evening hour unto thee O God.

O God we pray in Jesus Christ's name. Amen. Let us turn our Bibles this evening to Luke chapter 13.

Luke chapter 13. Reading from verse 22 through 30. 22 through 30.

Maybe I'll give a bit of the background first. Jesus, in this chapter, in his earthly ministry, as was his method and heart, went ahead and he loosed a woman of her infirmity that had a spirit of infirmity for 18 years over in Jerusalem. He had just talked about that he, in verse 6, he had come and he had seen a fig tree planted in the vineyard and he came, talked about a certain man who had seen a fig tree planted in a vineyard and he came and sought fruit on it and there was no fruit on it.

And he said unto the dresser, I've been waiting about three years now. I've come by this tree and looked for some fruit and there's no fruit. And I don't know whether Jesus had been preaching about three years when he said that, but I have to wonder.

I didn't check the chronological order, but it seems to be that perhaps it was in the last year of his ministry and he might have been preaching about two and a half, three years and he said this certain man, he'd come around looking for fruit on a fig tree for about three years now and there wasn't any, no fruit. And he decided, why does it take up space in the vineyard? You might as well cut it down. But the dresser of the vineyard said unto him, leave it alone, Lord, till I dig about it and dung it, and if it bear fruit well, but if not, then cut it down.

And so then he met this woman who had a spirit of infirmity that was bowed together and she couldn't straighten up. There was no way she could lift herself up and probably just laid around, I would guess, in a fetal position. And Jesus, he asked her, a woman, he says he called her to him and said unto her, woman, thou art loose from thine infirmity.

Yeah, he didn't even ask her whether she wanted to be. And straightway, he laid his hands on her and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue was upset.

He got rather upset at this because, in fact, he got really upset. He got, he said he was filled with indignation or he answered with indignation because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day. And he told him there are six days in which men ought to work and in them, therefore, come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath day.

And Jesus tried to reason with him. And it is that background that he speaks these verses in chapter 13, verse 22 through 30. Now let me read the verses.

And he went through the cities and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. And he said, then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto him, strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up and has shut the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us.

And he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are. Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence. Thou hast taught in our streets, but he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are.

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. When once the master of the house hath risen up and has shut the door, has shut the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, to knock at the door and say, Lord, open, open up to us, and he shall answer you and say unto you, I don't know you. I have no idea who you are.

And you're going to say, God, I was raised in a Christian home. My parents taught me memory verses when I was little, and I remember when I went to the teenage, in my teenage years, I even went to charity Bible school, and I sat under that preaching and teaching. And I went to prayer and sharing, and I didn't like it too good and didn't know what to say, but they didn't want me to go outside and to run away during that time, so I went.

And he'll say, I don't know you. I have no idea who you are. I've never known you.

I've never talked. We've never talked before. We've never visited before.

You're a total stranger to me. When once the master of the house is risen up and has shut the door, and you're on the outside. My, well, the title of my message tonight is when God will shut the door.

Now, this isn't very popular tonight. A lot of people don't believe God shuts the door. I don't know where they've got that, but somehow, somewhere, they have deducted that God doesn't shut doors.

The door is always open. Whenever you want to come in, you can go right on in. And they, they've made themselves believe that whenever and however I want to come in, I can come in at any time, day or night, spring and fall, summer, winter.

And so, it's rather easy just to go along in life, and I have some personal interests I'd like to experiment with and fulfill first, and someday I'll settle down and I'll, I'll, I'll come in that door. But God says, when once the master of the house has risen up and has shut the door, has shut the door. Now let's go to some word for word explanation of some of the words of this parable.

I believe it's a very, very deep parable, and I want you to know tonight, this parable's written to Bible school students. This Bible, this word is not written to the heathen, it's not written to the atheist, and it's not written to the agnostics. This word tonight is written to Bible school students.

This word is, is written to church members. This word is written to religious people. This is written to the church, not to the heathen.

Now there is a word to the heathen, likewise, and the word of God, and we recognize, but this parable, this portion of Scripture is written to the Bible school students of America. It's written to the Sunday schools. It's written to the church bazaars and carnivals.

It's written to the youth gatherings and, and, and recreational trips and, and all the fun things that men seek out to do. This is written to those that name the name of Jesus Christ. Now first of all, He says to us, strive to enter in at the straight gate, and I don't know how many have left of you that believe that, but that word strive, I looked it up in the Greek, and it means to fight.

It means to labor fervently. It means to literally struggle to get into the gate. Pretty contrary to what you're hearing in the evangelical world today, and perhaps what you've heard all the time in your life until you came here this week, and you're still trying to figure out what kind of doctrine is being taught here.

But it means to contend with the adversary. You're in a fight with the enemy, and some of you know what that's all about this week, literally. There's some here tonight sitting here that have been fighting, and they've been struggling, and that's just fine.

Go ahead and struggle, but struggle to enter in at the straight gate, and to enter into that gate until you have found it. Labor fervently. Fight! You're not going to fall into eternity.

I have to, first of all, tear down the false theology that I know is in some of your minds. You're not just going to bump into Jesus. You're not just going to stumble on Him some day.

The Bible says to the religious scene right here, and how much more to the unbeliever and the agnostic and the atheist, but He says to those who know the name of God, that they are to strive to enter in at the straight gate. They're to struggle. They're to press in there, and they're to labor fervently in order to get in.

Mark it down. Now, I failed to mention beforehand that I wanted to tell you that the Bible says here, Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? Now, there's enough of you who know German that you'll appreciate the German in this, and you'll have to excuse me the rest of you, but I'll interpret it for you

because it gives a different light. You're not quite sure what he means, but you can assume here that he's kind of wondering, Lord, do you really mean that there's only a few that be saved? But the German says, Es sprach aber einer zu ihm, Herr, meinst du, dass wenigstelig werden? Do you mean, Lord, do you mean that only a few are going to enter in? And upon that, Jesus gave these words.

That's the question he was answering. Do you really mean that, Lord? It seems like you're hinting in some of your parables, you know, you just got done saying that I've come around here three years looking for fruit on this fig tree and there isn't any. And now here I come and I'm about ready to cut this fig tree down.

And a fig tree is a symbolic of the nation of Israel. It's God's people in the New Testament era through the Gospels. Jesus is looking at Israel and is looking at the Jewish religion, Jewish nation at that time and the spiritual condition they were in or not in.

And he's saying, I've come around for about the last three years looking for fruit and I can't find any. And so therefore, the man's kind of got the hint and somebody caught on. It seems to me like you're not going to just take on this whole nation and save them.

And therefore, he gave this parable, this whole parable, this whole story, this whole shutting of the door is the answer to that question. I want you to get that. I want you to get that.

Meinest du, Herr, meinest du, dass wenige selig werden? Nur wenige, just a few, are going to be saved? And this is his answer. Strive to enter in at the straight gate. For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able.

And I dare to say, I dare to say that that is some of the most unpopular theology in America today. Now get this. Now get it.

There's a whole bunch of people, it says many, a whole bunch of people who would like to enter in. They want to go to heaven. They want to be with Jesus.

They want to sit down with the saints. They want to enjoy eternity and glory. They're not joking around with their buddies about shoveling coal in hell.

Have you ever heard about that in some of these worldly places, you know, where all this religious stuff is a total joke and people are talking about having parties down there and being down there with their friends and they make this whole Christianity thing just a pure mockery. It's not even thinking of those. This is talking about a group of people who actually would like to be inside there.

They want to even enter in. But Jesus says they won't be able to do it. They'll not be able.

Do you know a Jesus like that? That wouldn't let ten thousands upon ten thousands of people in that want to come in? Can you believe that? That there's a Jesus like that? That's not the Jesus that I hear about a lot today. That's not the Jesus that I read about in the books. That's not the Jesus I hear about in general.

They have another Jesus, you see. They have concocted a totally other Jesus. He's one who wouldn't think of not letting ten thousands of people who want to come, come.

In fact, they teach and preach all the time that anybody who just wants to come can just come right on in whenever they want to. It doesn't take any effort at all. God says, God says, when once the master of the house has risen up in the religious world and has shut the door, most of the people will be in the outside.

And I recognize tonight when I'm speaking to 650 students that I realize that that is a stark reality that we have got to reckon with and face. I don't want to face it. I don't want to talk about it.

But I want to tell you tonight, as I come here, I saw the moon is almost full and it's a clear sky with a few white clouds around the moon here and there. And it's a beautiful night. And I just had to think, my, the long suffering of God has waited and the years have rolled on in my time and in your fathers' times and grandfathers' and great grandfathers'.

Don't you get an idea there's no mercy on God and there's no long suffering of God waiting, waiting for the repentance of people, waiting for people to come to Christ, waiting for people to repent of their sins and to turn their hearts unto God. I don't want you to think that God has no, not a merciful God. He was merciful in those days and he is merciful now.

And that's why tonight, you know, it's just such a beautiful night. And we haven't been hindered of anything today. The cops haven't been here harassing us.

The neighborhood area, everything just goes on and we've got it so easy we can pull right in here without any roadblocks in the way and park our car and come in here and sit down. That's how easy it is to come and hear the gospel. It's not that way everywhere.

It's not that way everywhere. But the Jesus that I'm introducing to you in the written word of God in Luke chapter 13 is giving you another message. It's giving you a different concept that what you're about to hear in most of the places where you go.

You'll probably not hear this on a radio. You'll probably not hear it on many of the tapes you listen to. But God says that we're to strive to enter into the straight gate.

For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able. They will not be able to enter in. Now Jesus said it in another way in John.

John wrote about it when he said, I'm the door to the sheepfold. And he talked about that there are people who try to come in, not by the door, but enter in in some other way. You see, they still want to come in, but they're either trying to crawl through the basement and come up the steps from beneath or they're up in the attic looking down for a hole to come down into the room from above or crawl in a window.

But they don't want to go in at the door. Jesus is talking about the same thing. I am the door to the sheepfold.

If anybody's going to get in, they're going to have to get in by me. And the problem is that people seek to get in some other way. Isn't it? God's not going to allow it.

God's not going to allow it. Many, I'm telling you, mark it down, 10,000s upon 10,000s of people will think they're on their way to heaven and will find themselves outside of a shut door. They'll seek.

That's what it says. They'll seek to enter in. Well, we might say they weren't really seeking.

But I believe that according to the word of God, and I'm going to stay with the text, they were seeking to enter in. That's what it says. Now, I know they weren't seeking right.

And I know some of you haven't been seeking right. You have looked for another way. You don't want the hard way.

You don't want to bear a cross. You don't want to strive to enter into a straight gate. But you'd like an easy way somehow to get in where it's not so painful.

You won't get rejected, you see, by anybody. Everybody's still going to love you when you're done, see. And you won't lose any of your friends.

That's the kind of God that a lot of people are trying to seek to enter in. But God says you'll not be able. You will not be able to do that.

Now, it's interesting when he says here, when once. Now, some of you in your different English, you don't know what that word means. Us, Pennsylvania Dutch people, we use it a lot.

And some of you smile when you hear us say, well, if you just get that done once. You know, we use that word. It's one of those time words, you know, that it's high time to get it done.

Why don't you do it once? But that's what it says here. When once. It's one of those time words, I believe.

When once the master of the house has risen up. Well, I want to introduce you tonight to the master of the house. There are a number of other scriptures that talk about the master of the house.

In Matthew 10, 25 and 26, the Bible says, if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call him of his household? In Hebrews 3, 5, it says, but Christ has a son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. I heard Brother Rick quote that verse, I believe, just as I was walking down the hall the other day, teaching the book of Hebrews. And that shows us that Christ has a son, is over his own house, whose house are we if, don't miss that word, that's an extremely important word too in the word of God tonight, whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Firm unto the end. And then over in Mark 13, we have it one more time, verse 35, what's he there for? For you know not when the master of the house cometh at even or at midnight or at cock crowing or in the morning. Let me introduce to you to a Christian life who has the master of the house.

And I want to ask you and your Christian tonight, right where you are, do you have the master of the house? And that is simply some of this intertwined a little bit with the message on Monday night that Brother David had. I recognize that so few people have a master of the house. I don't know what they have.

He called him a sugar daddy. That's a pretty good description of him in a lot of people's minds. But I want to tell you tonight, he's the master of the house.

He's the master of the house. And if he's not the master of the house, he's not anything else either. He's not going to do any good for you.

He needs tonight to be the master of the house. That's what the Bible says. And we want to address him tonight and stand in holy awe and fear of the fact that the God that Jesus Christ whom we love and serve is the master of the house.

And whose house are we if we hold fast to confidence and rejoicing firm unto the end? Well one more time that it's used in the word of God, and that's in Luke 14, verse 17-22. This is now talking about how he sent his servant at supper time to invite the people to come to a meal that has been prepared, says, come for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuses.

The first said, I bought a piece of ground. I must needs go and see it. I pray thee have me excused.

And another said, I bought five yoke of oxen and I go to prove them. I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife and therefore I can't come.

So the servant came and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house got upset. He got angry.

Does your God get angry? Mine does. Oh yes, he's God. He's God.

Did you know he gets angry? Do you know it's all right for him to get angry? Absolutely. This God that I have, that I read about here in the word of God, he gets angry. That's what the story says.

He's not the sugar daddy we heard about on Monday night. Being angry, said to his servant, go out quickly into the streets and the lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor, the maimed, and the halt and the blind. And what he simply says that if you're not going to want to come to my supper, then I'm going to go out and get some other people to come.

And that's simply what he says here in the latter part of this great parable. He says, there'll be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out. All right.

Well, let's recognize that God's mercy and opportunity and pleading is upon you tonight. I do not believe, even though I'm going to speak about a time when God will shut the door, I want to tell you just in case you think I'm unbalanced tonight, that God has left the door open a long time. And I know it's still open tonight.

And I marvel at the wickedness of this world and how long that God keeps the door open. He has kept the door open for a long time. And I know some of you are taking it for granted.

Some of you are not doing right. You think that door is never going to shut. You have bought yourself a message of Jesus that's never going to shut the door.

But I'm going to introduce you tonight one that according to the word of God will rise up when he says he has enough and he's going to shut the door. He's going to shut the door. And a whole bunch of people won't be ready for it and will not be inside.

He has risen up. Now, the Bible says that we see him sitting at the right hand of God interceding for us. He is described that way, I believe, in the book of Acts and then when Stephen was stoned, we see him rising up with a deep interest of what was going down there on earth when his beloved son, one of his children, was preaching and telling the truth.

And they were picking up stones and killing him for it, which they did. And God left it happen. But I want you to know that the Jesus of the Bible stood up that time too.

There's a time, I want to tell you, when he rises up. And he doesn't just rise up when he's angry. He rises up in deep interest to your and my soul.

And I can't imagine anything else but that some of the things that have been going on around here this week, that Jesus had to get up off of his throne occasionally and get a little closer to see what all was going on. When once the master of the house rises up, he doesn't only rise up to punish, he doesn't only rise up in wrath. Even though he does, when he shuts the door, he's going to get up and shut the door.

But I want to tell you, he has keen interest in your salvation tonight and he wants you to come and experience him and get to know him. And he is so interested in that, and according to that, with Stephen, when his word is preached and a man is earnest to do his will, God gets up too and has shut the door. And has shut the door.

Do you believe that tonight? Do you believe that God is going to rise up at some future day and shut the door? When once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door. Now, there's a few other times in history when he has shut the door. And I don't know, I can only give you just a few examples of that.

I see that many times. I've watched that. I tell you, I've watched that like a hawk.

In the news, periods of history that I can get a hold of and come across, when I hear and I see of things like that, when God says, now it's enough, and he rises up and shuts the door. And I tell you, I tremble when I read those accounts. I tremble.

I wonder if you're all trembling before God that way. I, of course, think of the time of the flood. And I don't know how you read the Genesis account.

I can see it understood maybe a little bit difficult to understand exactly what is meant there in that Genesis account of the flood. But I've at least considered the fact that when he built the ark, when Noah built the ark there, you know, and he got all the animals inside. And then the Bible says that God gathered Noah in and his sons and their wives, eight souls there were that got gathered inside.

And all the animals were in and they were in there, pens in there. And just everything was quiet and munching their hay. And it seems to me as I read the account that it could be that God left the door open for seven more days.

Not quite sure about that because of the way the language is there. I haven't dug into the Greek or into some of the other languages to see what it means, but it's a possibility that God left the door open for seven more days. And then the Bible says, and God shut them in.

But I want to tell you, there were thousands of people upon the day that God shut the door and shut them in there and it started to rain. And in the same day it started to rain. The Bible says the fountains of the great deep opened up and the water started getting deep.

And I tell you, there were thousands of people that were standing on the outside knocking on that door and trying to get him to open it and he wouldn't open. So what he says in this verse is that he's going to rise up and shut the door. He has given us glimpses of this through history over and over again, that God is a door shutting God also.

He will rise up someday and he will shut the door and you can claw at it until your fingers are worn off of your hands and God will not open the door. Because I believe it would have been that way. I can imagine they were scratching and clawing, but it wasn't Nod's job to open the door and shut the door and it's not ours either.

God will shut the door in due time. But I want to tell you, when master of the house will rise up and shut the door and you're going to be in the outside, you will not get in. When I saw that bright moon in the sky and the blessed opportunity that I believed we might have yet for one more night, wherever the gospels preached and all of you could sit here tonight, I realized that God in his mercy has that door wide open tonight yet.

But I also know, and I thank God for that, but I also know, don't you better take that for granted? Because God will shut the door. He will shut the door. Matthew 25 talks about it with the ten virgins.

You know how the five were wise and the five were foolish. And then he talks about how they ran out of oil, five of them, you know, and then he wanted to borrow oil from the ones that still had oil. And they were begging to have oil and they said, no, then we won't have enough.

Go and get yourself some. Go buy yourself some. And you probably have heard many messages, interpretations of that.

I won't go into it. So they went to buy some. In the meantime, the bridegroom came and he went in and he shut the door.

In fact, it says a little straighter than that. And the door was shut. Oh, that has a finality.

I remember up in New York City, in Washington Square Park, one of the brethren is probably sitting here tonight, had a little message there and he got up and he said, and the door was shut. That was his message. And I never forgot that.

That stuck with me. And the door was shut. And they went up and said, Lord, open unto us.

And God did take the bridegroom, did come over and say, who, what, who are you? Lord, open unto us. I don't know you. I don't know you.

I don't have any idea who you are. And he didn't open it. He didn't open it back up.

Now, you thought, didn't you, in your theology, that the mercy of God was so great, he'd open it back up, didn't you? Now, you know, the Bible didn't say that. But somehow it has twisted our thinking into a God. And we have fabricated a Jesus that would never think of closing a door and letting it shut when people want to get in.

But that's what it says. He shut the door and they knocked and cried to have it open and he wouldn't open it. The door was shut.

The door was shut. I remember an account. I've given it before in certain places.

I've had meetings. I'm not sure I ever gave it here before. I'm sure many of you didn't hear it.

But my mind goes to the Caribbean, the island of Martinique. On April 1902, on a good Friday, they had a party. And Martinique was an island where a lot of pirates lived and they had their ships and their stations there.

It was a place of wine, women and song. It was a place of gambling and prostitution and every other vice known to man in 1902. So they got high on alcohol that day and they nailed an old cross together and they crucified a pig on it in mockery of the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday.

I think it was somewhere about the third week in April. And it was a matter of days. There was some smoke coming out of a volcanic mountain, Mount Pelee, right behind them there, right behind the town.

Just a small island. St. Pierre was the name of the town. And the next day a little bit more and finally at night they saw a few red sparks coming out and kind of lighting up the sky.

A few people got a little bit alarmed and began to talk a little bit about sending their women and children, or at least their children, to higher ground maybe. But the rest of it, they were still in a festive mood and they were God-defying people, you know. And things just kept on going and kept on going and this thing kept spitting a little more and a little more.

God's mercy, oh, I'm amazed. At God's mercy for those two weeks and on May the 8th, 1902, that mountain opened up and the whole side of the mountain laid out across the people and only one man, I am told, survived. And he was in a dungeon down in jail.

And God had more mercy on that man than He did on every man alive in town. The fire rained down so heavy that ships burned at sea eight miles out. God shut the door.

He said, it's enough of this. You don't mock God and get by. Don't you ever think you will? Don't you ever think you will? I'll just give you the newspaper account here.

Mount Pelee on the Caribbean island of Martinique began its volcanic eruption in late April 1902. Ash began to fall on the nearby city of St. Peter. Look at the mercy of God.

Look at His mercy. At first the city's inhabitants weren't too concerned, but some began to send their women and children to safer ground as the volcano became more active. Finally on May the 8th, 7.52 a.m., the mountain's upper flank facing the city opened and an intensely hot cloud of black vapor shot out towards the city like smoke from the muzzle of a cannon.

In less than a minute, the hot gas, a mixture of superheated steam at 1900 degrees, lethal gases and explosive dust reached the city and everything in it burst into flame. At the same time, a second black cloud rolled upwards and spread darkness for 50 miles across. Of 30,000 people trapped in the city, it is thought that only one or perhaps two, in some cases, news articles survived.

The city itself burned for days. And I tell you, there is those times when God shuts the door. I don't know about you, but when California started burning a couple weeks ago, and I'm knowing what I know concerning Los Angeles and its surrounding area being the hub of pornographic materials and smut literature and movies and what have you that is pumped out at the rate of about, what is it, 8,000 a year or something like that, and you see those million-dollar homes, and I don't know who they were, and I don't know what, but 2,800 of them burned in the last two weeks.

And I know natural catastrophes like that happen, but I also know that God rises up at times and shuts the door, and people can't get out fast enough. The fire was so high and so violent that men got into their mobile homes, their motor homes with their dogs, that they wanted to save their lives and cared more about dogs than they did babies for the last, I don't know how many years, and didn't even escape that way but burned on the road going out. I tell you, when once a master of the house has risen up and shuts the door and you're on the outside, it's not going to be well with you.

Over 700,000 acres have burned, and some are still burning. I understand. Although it cooled off a bit and some rain fell and things have gotten more under control.

Well, I don't know whether they're that wicked, that much more wicked than the people in Lancaster County or not, but I know when that discussion was held with Jesus in the Word of God concerning on those whom the Tower of Siloam fell, you know what Jesus said, except you repent, you shall all likewise perish. God is calling men and women to repent of their sins. God is calling men and women to get right with God.

God is calling men and women to get to know Him. And you begin to stand outside and knock. Lord, open up.

We want to get saved too. And I want to tell you again, like I've told you before, that is not written to the blasphemer who wants to be with their friends in hell. He says here, you've taught in our streets.

You've taught in our streets. I don't know how many of you have ever studied the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but this might have been somewhere in the A.D. 30s, about 35 years or so before. That city was destroyed with over 700,000 to a million people died.

Nobody ever was able to count them. But He was describing the very situation. They wouldn't have Him.

They crucified Him. They rejected Him. They wouldn't listen to His words.

There were times He felt like there was nobody following Him anymore. When He said in Luke, will ye also go away? Luke 12, that's what He said to them. Will ye also go away? But everybody else, when He told them that you're going to eat My flesh and drink My blood, they gagged and couldn't handle it and didn't have enough of spirituality in them to interpret it.

And so therefore, they gagged and walked away from Him and turned around and crucified Him as a madman. But now Jesus is predicting that when they find themselves, when the master of the house will rise up and shut the door and they find themselves on the outside, that they're going to have this conversation with the Lord and say, well, we know you. You taught in our streets.

But you know what? They're going to come up with a stark reality someday that there was a man called Jesus that preached in their streets and that it was taught about in their synagogues and they had nice little skits and plays and what have you about. But they're going to come up to the stark reality that it was another Jesus. Not the Jesus of Nazareth that we know, because they have fabricated another Jesus in our day, another gospel.

Paul says in Galatians, and it says, that's not the God of the Bible anymore. And therefore, they'll say, well, you've taught in our streets. And you can say, if you do not repent of your sins and give your heart to God this week, you can say, I went to Bible school.

I did this. I did that. I sang in the chorus that day.

I went to the prayer group. I even prayed a few words back there. I squeezed them out.

I tried to make along with it. But he said, I have no idea who you are. I don't know you.

You might think you wore a decent dress. You might have even covered your head. But if you don't know God, you'll be on the outside in that day.

You'll be on the outside. And I said, oh my, that's sad. Well, then he says, I know you not whence you are.

Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity. I don't know you. I remember when I was 15 years old and I was one of those fellows, young boys that was hungry.

I tell you, I was hungry. I don't know why. I don't know why I had such a hunger for truth and righteousness.

But I did. I wanted to learn. I wanted to find out what truth was.

And somehow I got to a revival meeting, even though I was in a church that never even dreamt of a revival meeting, didn't even know what they were hardly or at least didn't believe in them. And I somehow got to a revival meeting at 15 and a half and I heard the gospel. And the first night I heard it, I responded in my heart.

And I remember a fellow walked up to me and says, do you know the Lord? And I tell you, I just about broke to pieces on that very word. And I figured out one thing. I know, I knew that God said in His Word, depart from me.

I never knew you. And I figured one thing sure, I am going to find out how to know Him. I went home, knelt down beside my bed and I gave Him everything I knew to give Him.

And I didn't know very much. And I was pretty illiterate as far as the Word of God was concerned. I had hardly ever read the Bible in an interesting way or trying to find out what it meant for me.

I was pretty illiterate and pretty ignorant. But I knew one thing, God was drawing me and He wanted me and I gave it. I gave myself to Him as best I knew how.

And He accepted the offering. And I knew, that I knew, that I knew in short order that I knew Him. Something had so drastically changed.

And I, that's how I want you to know Him. I want you to know Him. You don't have to have all your theology and understand all those hard, difficult meat items of the Word of God.

You just, I just want you to know Him. I want you to know that you know Him. And it's, God's door is open for that yet tonight.

And I praise Him for that. Well, do you know Him? Do you know Him? And then He says here, I know you not whence you are. Depart from Me, all ye the workers of iniquity.

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out. Now what He was trying to tell them, you

remember, I said at the beginning, they were religious people, very religious. And they thought they were in line with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

They thought that was their forefathers and they were walking in line. And I want you to get this, this is very important. They had drifted so far away from the faith of an Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that they had no part nor lot in the matter anymore.

And still thought they were following Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is possible for you and I to still think, because of some religious connection we have to something and somewhere in our background, that we have these men to our Father and we have a good heritage and we were born in a Christian home and all these kind of things, but we have drifted and we have degenerated so far away from it that we simply are in no connection with a God that we even theologically believe in. And God would tell a person manly, a person like that, I don't even know you.

You're on the outside, I don't have any idea who you are. We've never touched hearts. And I know some of you know that.

You're sitting here tonight, you know you're not born again, you know you don't know Him and you have a hard time even keeping enough of focus on a message to listen it out for an hour. You're goofing off and making fun a lot throughout the week, laughing and joking and carrying on and you have no idea what you're doing. You have no idea.

If you have heart in your heart like that, you have no clue. There she'll be weeping. Some of the scriptures say wailing.

Here it says weeping and gnashing of teeth. When you'll see the door shut, Abraham, Isaac will be in. You thought you were following them.

You'll be on the outside knocking on the door, seeing if you can persuade him to still open the door. But he's not going to open. Now you thought that He would never leave you.

You may even have been born again and accepted Him as your Savior five years ago or a year ago or two. And you have backslidden so deeply and have gone so far away from God that you simply don't know Him tonight. You are not in connection with Him anymore.

But you're still hanging on to the fact, oh, He never left me. He would never leave me. He would never leave me, you know, or forsake me.

He's always kind and good. You have no idea that He would shut the door on you. You think sure that He would let the door open to you, even though you have grieved away the Holy Spirit so far.

You have your behavior and your activity. You are living in sin tonight. You are not clear.

You don't know what it is to have the joy of the Lord in your heart. You're not on fire. There's no fire burning in your heart.

You can't speak to a soul. You want to run when it gets hot. You want to get out of here.

There are students sitting here and they say, let me out of here. I got to go. I can't handle it.

Because of conviction in your heart. And your heart's not right. It's not clear.

And therefore, you can't handle it. Oh, that's sad. That's sad.

Oh, I don't know what kind of a Jesus you've fabricated for yourself or what kind of lie you've accepted. But that's sad if you have a Jesus that you think is never going to shut the door and never call for some justice and judgment and accountability on your life. But the God of the Bible is going to require that in your and my life.

Now, I want to tell you that and be very square and honest with you. When once the master of the house has risen up and has shut the door and you're going to be in the outside and you don't want to be in the outside, you'd like to be on the inside. You want to go to heaven.

You want to be saved. But you're not in the inside and He doesn't know you. And you're going to weep and wail.

And you're going to gnash with your teeth. You're going to say, and there's no way I can describe it, I don't know if I've ever seen a man gnash his teeth in his life. But I can well imagine that if they're on the outside of the door and the door is shut, finally, they will gnash with their teeth and say, Oh, no, I missed it.

I missed it. I missed it. How is it possible? Why was I so stupid? I sat there and they pled with me and wanted to pray with me and help me through and I wouldn't let them.

And that, that breaks my heart. That breaks my heart. You know, Revelation chapter 1 gives a picture of this Jesus that I'm talking about.

And David described Him in Ezekiel. Revelation 1 is another place. And again, it has Him burning as a flame of fire because He was described so well on Monday night.

And practically all of you heard it. I'm not going to reiterate that. But let me go back in Revelation chapter 8 and just talk a little bit about some of the things that are going to come upon the people.

You know, the Bible says, if I could just quote a few of these scriptures to you that talk about that, you know, that the wrath of God is going to be poured out, not only upon the heathen, the agnostics and the atheists. It says on the children of disobedience. The children of disobedience.

Did you ever consider that? You know, in the Word of God, the Bible says that in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 6 to 8, 6 and 7, it says, let no man deceive you with vain words, but because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. And He's talking about sexual immorality. He's talking about fornication.

He's talking about whoremonging and things like that, you know. And He's simply saying, He's calling that the children of disobedience. The children of disobedience.

And He says that the wrath of God or the door is going to be shut upon the people, the children of disobedience. Yes, the children of disobedience, the wrath of God is going to be poured out upon them. And Paul says in Colossians chapter 3, verse 5 through 7, mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concubines, covetousness which is idolatry, for which things say the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.

Christians that don't obey God. And God says that the wrath of God is going to be poured out. And then I turn back to Revelation.

And my wife and I have been going through that in our devotional time this last little while. And we read about 10 to 12 verses a day. And we sit there and we look at those words and we talk about it.

And we fall on our face before God. And I say I tremble. Do you know how to tremble at God? And I don't do as much as I think I should.

Sometimes I think my knees ought to shake together when I get a view of the wrath of God that is going to be poured out upon the children of disobedience. And we turn back there. We got to chapter 5 and 6. And we had some preliminaries there.

We had the four horses. And we saw the famine and the scarcity. And you know that food was really scarce in some of those end times there.

And then how a fourth part of the earth was killed with sword and with hunger and with death and with the beasts of the earth. Just like every wild animal in the woods is just going to come out of the woods and just going to come down upon the people and just begin to tear them up. Every lion, every leopard, every moose, everything with horns.

They're just coming down. God's going to put such a spirit in them to fight and to kill men. And they're going to keep on with these four things.

Yeah, with a sword that's each other, war, with hunger, starvation, with death and with the beasts of the earth. And according to the calculations of the population of the world, that'll take about one and a half billion people. And we don't think about it.

We read over those kind of words. We sit here and smirk and mock when people go up to the altar and you know, look at them go on, you know, and we sit back there and smirk on our face and harden our hearts. How can we do such things in light of what God says that will come upon the children of disobedience? And we act like it doesn't even say it.

But it does say it. And I believe it. I believe these things when I read them.

I read about the kings of the earth, the chief men and the captains, you know, calling for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of him that sits on the throne because they can't bear to face that God that they have thought was a sugar daddy. And they had the wrong one. And the one in Revelation and Ezekiel showed up, whose eyes are like a flame of fire.

And he burns us in a furnace. And those penetrating eyes look straight through him. And every evil deed and act that they've ever done comes up in front of their face.

That's how I envision it. Well, we go on to chapter eight, you know, and over there in chapter eight we have the opening of the seven seals. And they begin to pour out left and right upon the earth.

And we go down over that. My, we see a third part of the trees burn up and all the green grass burns up. And then we have a third part of the sea becoming blood, a third part of the ships being destroyed.

And we have a third part of the rivers turning into blood. Or no, that's a lamp as it fell upon the third part of the rivers and upon the fountains of waters of the springs and wells. And it became wormwood.

And men would drink of the wormwood. And it was so bitter that they died from the bitter water that they drank. But they were so thirsty that they had to drink.

And there they were. And they died by the drools from it. And then we have the fourth angel sounding.

And we have the moon getting dark. It's not going to shine. If you are not a Christian tonight, you go out and take a long look at that beautiful moon tonight.

It's not always going to shine. Someday it's going to turn into blood. And it's not going to look very pretty.

And when the sun rises tomorrow morning and God has given you mercy, you better take a long look at it. Because someday it's going to quit. And the door is going to be shut.

The door is going to be shut. But where I tremble, where I tremble is in chapter 9. I can't get over that. You know, a key, an angel comes down with a key to the bottom of this pit and it's like, you know, people say in just today about all hell broke loose.

I've never seen a reality of all hell breaking loose like it says in chapter 9. But that's what it reminds me. Because his key was put down there and they opened up this bottomless pit. And out of it, it says, does it say how many? I think it says, anyway, there's smoke.

First of all, smoke came out of the pit like it was the smoke of a great furnace. And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke. And then these locusts came out upon the earth and they had scorpions.

The power of scorpions as the scorpions of the earth have power in their tails to bite. I just came back from Belize, Central America about six, eight weeks ago. And there's some of the students here from Belize and they didn't tell you about those scorpion bites.

They were telling me down there what it's like and how horrible the pain is of a scorpion bite that a person just trembles and shakes all over with pain for, I don't know how many hours, but hours or maybe about a day or so of the bite of a scorpion. Well, this thing, hell is going to be opened up and they're going to have the faces of women and iron breastplates. And when they make their wings go, they're going to sound like horses going to battle.

And these will be the most hideous creatures you have ever laid your eyes on. And they're going to fend out all the horde and torment men and women for five months with the stings in their tails, like it would be the bite of a serpent. And people will howl and scream in pain and misery for it.

And the Bible says that men will seek to die and can't die. They can't even commit suicide. No escape whatsoever.

Thus saith God. Do you believe that? Do you really believe that? Or is it a fairy tale to you? Do you tremble at my words, like the prophet says? Isaiah. And so it goes on and it gets worse.

The judgments keep going. And you know the thing that bothers me? That really, really, really, in the end of that chapter, chapter nine. I mean, it says there in verse 20, And the rest of the men which were not

killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils.

Now, if you want to know what the activities of the world are going to be like in the end times when this happens, follow me. That they should not worship devils. And idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk, neither repented they of their murders and their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Now, I don't know. It gets pretty discouraging to pick up a newspaper and read what's going on in the world today. But normally, this is what's in it.

It talks about money and advertises all the things that you can't do without, you have to have in order to enjoy life. And then, of course, it talks about the scary movies that they have just made that everybody runs to see. And then it talks about murders and sorceries and fornications and thefts and Harry Potter books and all the whole thing, you know.

This earth is like that tonight. Now, I don't know how long God's going to have mercy, but I know one thing. God says, once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door, then you're going to be in the outside.

You're going to be in the outside. Christians. Now, I'm going to call them what they call them, without a lot of fanfare about it.

Christians on the outside. Because everybody says they are one, you know. Christians on the outside.

One of our sisters went to Wal-Mart the other day and looked at a lady and handed her a tract and she lost it right there in the Wal-Mart. To think that this lady would, our sister would think she's not a Christian. Yeah, everybody's a Christian.

Well, the master of the house is going to rise up and shut the door on Christians. If you want to call them Christians. And they won't repent of their sin.

And they're going to be filled with fornication and with sorceries and with murders and with thefts. And every one of those has manifested this week. Every one of them.

I don't know of anybody confessing that they killed somebody, but I know they had hate in their heart. The Bible says that's the same. But as far as the rest of these sins, they're all here.

They've all been here. And you know, back in Revelation chapter 21, it so clearly says, let me read it to you. Verse 8. But the fearful and the unbelieving and the abominable and the murderers and the whoremongers and the sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Now, I recently went into the local Christian bookstore here and picked up a newspaper about the Agape Love Farm gathering. You know, up here in Mount Union, Pennsylvania. It was held in 2002.

It was a dry summer. And 80,000 people showed up there. And these were religious people.

They were all, I would guess probably by far the majority of them would have said they were Christians. But you ought to read the rest of the newspaper. You ought to read the rest of it.

And you look at some of the singing groups that they had there. Look at some of their names. Audio Adrenaline, Delirious, Switchfoot, Pax 217, Cross Movement, Reliant K, Creation Worship, Mary Mary.

Here's even one called The Shekel Shirt, taken from 10 shekels and a shirt. And the group calls them The Shekel Shirt. All in the name of Christianity.

And I saw somewhere else. Yeah, here's some more. Groups called Beanbag, Benjamin's Gate, Five-Hour Iron Frenzy, Grits, Hangnail, Pillar, Sidewalk Slam, Super Chick, Rock and Roll Worship Circus.

I thought that was probably the truest one in the bunch. And that whole crowd, that whole crowd for the most part of it, believes that the door is open for them. They have their heads shaved.

Others have spiked hair, colored in all kinds of fluorescent colors. They're living like the world. They're fornicating in their tents, probably.

That's the kind of activity that goes on. The preachers are divorced and remarried and living with some other man's wife. And they're all going to heaven.

I tell you, listen to me, and I know that there's some of these CDs that probably I even mentioned might be out in your cars tonight. When once God, when a master of the house, has risen up and shut the door, you're going to be on the outside. If you're going to follow that Jesus that they're preaching, and you're going to follow that gospel that they're twanging to, and they're going to look like that devil in his crowd, and name themselves these God-forsaken names, then I tell you the master of the house is going to rise up and shut the door, and I believe with all my heart they're going to be on the outside.

And if that's the music you listen to, and that's the way you're going, and that's the kind of stuff you're hanging around in, and that's the way you believe, and that's your theology, and you think you're going to crutch along like that and get to heaven. The Bible says, straight is the gate, narrow is the way, and you're to enter in by the straight gate and the narrow way. And don't you think for a moment that God is not going to rise up and shut the door, and that these people are going to be on the outside wanting in.

And they are. If you'd ask them, you want to go to heaven? Sure, I want to go to heaven. You want to be with Jesus? Yes, I love Him.

That's what they'd say. And they sing about Him all weekend, three days long, and chant and dance and carry on and all that. But I tell you, raise their hands and close their eyes and swoon to the beat of the horrible rock music.

But I tell you, I don't believe they will enter in. I do not believe it for a minute that that kind of crowd, I'm not going to say and judge that there's nobody there that is ignorant and insincere and has just tried to find their way and all that. But for the most part, I believe they are going to be on the outside.

And I am burdened tonight that you would listen to their music and you would mess around with a crowd like that, that is as deceptive and as poisonous as can be, trying to persuade you that you can still have Jesus and live like the devil in his crowd, and you can still get in. And the Bible says on the authority of the Word of God, that the master of the house is going to rise up and shut the door, and that people are going to be on the outside and clawing at the door and pleading to get in. And he's going to say, I never knew you.

I've never known you. I don't know who you are. Get out of here.

Get out of here. Get out of my presence. The German says, I don't want anything to do with you.

I never knew you. You don't obey me. And I've tried to tell you over and over again in my Holy Word.

And it even says in the directions here, bring your Bibles, bring your camping stuff, you know, and bring your Bibles. And that's why it says, but that Bible says that the wrath of God will be poured out upon the children of disobedience. And they are breaking the commandments of God left and right, up and down.

And they don't care. And they don't tremble at my Word. And they aren't serious about it.

They just blink their eyes at the written Word of God and just go right on plowing on through their life. And they think that moon out there is going to shine for the next hundred years. But when once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door and you're on the outside, the fun's over.

The fun's over. And you're going to say, Lord, I spent three days up there singing about you and raising my hands. I don't know you.

And you're going to start weeping and wailing and gnashing your teeth. When you'll see those radical people that you thought were crazy for taking God so serious. On the inside, you yourselves thrust out.

May God have mercy. May God have mercy. Well, we're going to give an invitation to him tonight.

And I don't know where you're at. I don't know. I just got told this afternoon somebody had a good old bonfire with that kind of stuff last night.

He came home from the meeting and he called home to his parents and said, burn all my CDs. Burn the recorder too. I don't want to.

I think they were burned here. But then he called home and said, erase all my computer stuff. Erase the whole thing.

I don't even want to see it when I get home. I tell you, my dear people, it is time we come back to a Jesus that's the God of the Bible and that will change your life and turn you from this half-hearted, flip-shot Christianity and give you something that's worth living for and something that will clean your life up and something that will give you victory over sin because God says that sin shall not have dominion over you. And you can overcome it and you can live a godly life in Christ Jesus.

You've been hearing about it all week. And I want to tell you, if you have not made a decision to clean your life up for God, if you have not been converted and given your heart to God, I pray tonight you would respond to the invitation of the Gospel message tonight. Shall we sing, Brother Samuel? 512.

And I encourage you to do business with God tonight. I encourage you to, don't you, don't you put it off because the master of the house is going to rise up one of these days and shut the door. Shall we sing? You come.

Come right now. Don't wait on a song. Amen.

God bless you. And you have not given your life to God. You've been kicking against the pricks all week long.

Hear our cry. God's opportunity and grace is upon you tonight if you hear these songs. Giving you the opportunity to get your heart right with God.

Come to Jesus tonight and get everything settled. Shall we sing? Christians pray. There seems to be such a resistance, Lord, here tonight on those that need to come.

God, I pray for them. I know they must make that choice, turn their will, but we pray for them tonight. Oh, God, Satan would not get the advantage.

Satan would not be able to bind them to stand there and sit there and not budge. God, I pray, may the Spirit of God come down upon them and help them to weigh this whole thing. Count the cost, Lord.

Help them to count the cost. We don't want just an emotional experience, Lord. We want a life-changing response to God.

We want a willingness to fall upon their faces and repent before you, Father. I pray for them, God. I pray for them.

And bless those that have responded, God, that they could break through tonight. We pray it in Jesus' name. Shall we sing again? I just say, keep coming.

You come tonight. Is there anyone else who wants to come? Let's sing another verse. Thank you, Christians.

Tomorrow, that they would be touched, continue to be touched, though still fascinating and putting off their day. All right, we're going to let those who respond and find their way back to their respective boys and girls. If you need a counselor back there, they'll give you one.

If you just want to be alone and cry out to God, they'll give you that opportunity. Likewise, back in the prayer room. So you can just get up at this time.

Go back there. Do business with God. Do business with God.

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