

THE DOOR

“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 him, and he with me.” (Rev 3:20)

Doors are everywhere, and everybody knows what a door is. We have them on our homes and businesses, our church buildings and hotels, our banks and storm shelters. Doors provide a barrier of protection to those inside. That's why many doors have locks and security chains. That's why others are equipped with a tiny hole so you can see who is outside. Once someone is inside the door that protecting barrier is gone. That's why we teach our children not to open the door to strangers. That's why many prefer to keep a salesman outside the door. Once we open the door we become vulnerable.

The door on the ark protected those inside from the storm (Gen. 6:16). The door on Lot's house protected him from the perverts outside (Gen. 19:9 - 11). An old man from the hill country of Ephraim urged a Levite and his concubine to come inside his door for protection. When the concubine went outside the door she was killed (Jud. 19:11 - 30). The disciples of Jesus went to the upper room and shut the doors for fear of the Jews (Jn. 20:19). When Peter was delivered from prison he had to continue knocking at Mary's house before they opened the door and let him in (Acts 12:12 - 16).

So, just as we have physical doors, we also have spiritual doors. This means that we can be open, or closed to the influence of God. We have been created in the image of God and thus have the capacity to erect mental and spiritual barriers. So the Jews stopped their ears to the preaching of Zechariah, and Stephen (Zech. 7:11, Acts 7:57). They could hear voices, but the voices had no influence because they were "outside". The door to their heart was shut, and even Jesus will not break down that door. He lovingly stands outside the door and knocks. That door will not be opened until we want it to be.

This is not to say that God is completely passive in the process. For example, God opened the heart of Lydia to respond to the Gospel (Acts 16:14). God opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27). God opened Paul's heart on the road to Damascus. In none of these instances, however, did not open hearts against the will of those involved. God reveals Himself to us when we search for Him with all our heart (Jer. 29:13). It is when we choose to do God's will that our eyes are opened to understand it (Jn. 7:17).

Not only is Jesus waiting outside the door of our hearts, so also is Satan. When Cain, for example, was angry and downcast because his offering was rejected by God, the Lord warned him: "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." (Gen 4:6-7) You know the story. Cain opened the door to Satan and then committed the world's first murder. Judas made the same mistake and betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. The Scriptures explain the treachery of Judas by simply stating that "Satan entered into him" (Jn. 13:27).

English artist, William Holman Hunt was born in London on the 2nd of April 1827. He began his independent career as an artist at the age of 16. By 1851 he was so discouraged that he even considered giving up art and becoming a farmer. In 1854, however, he achieved his first great success. It was titled "The Light of the World", and was an allegorical presentation of Christ knocking at the door of the human soul. The picture was so important to him that he painted it three times, at different points in his life. It was while working on it the first time, however, that he became a Christian. This work produced perhaps the greatest effect of any religious painting of the century. "For the first time in England," wrote William Bell Scott, "a picture became a subject of conversation and general interest from one end of the island to the other, and indeed continued so for many years."

Christ is still knocking. Can you hear Him? If so, then please open the door and let Him in!