

Standing at the Door

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Date: 09 February 2020

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[0 : 00] When I will have you to God's blessing, let us turn back to the portion of Scripture which we read in Revelation chapter 3. And we can take our text this morning from verse 20.

Where we read, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Revelation chapters 2 and 3, as many of you know, it contains letters written or given by Jesus himself to churches in seven prominent towns in Asia Minor.

The towns of Ephesus and Smyrna and Pergamos and Thyatira and Sardis and Philadelphia and finally Laodicea. And all of these towns were in modern-day Turkey, to the west of Turkey.

Now, at the time that these letters were given, which would have been towards the end of the first century, the Roman Empire was at its height. And the Roman Empire at this time was fiercely anti-Christian.

[1 : 15] Paganism was rife. And emperor worship was something that was not only pushed, but in some places, depending on where you were, it was enforced.

It was enforced on pain of execution. If you read back in some of the other letters here, you read about some people who were faithful unto death. They refused to conform.

We read about Antipas, the faithful martyr. He was a man who refused to give in to what others wanted him to do and to what the state wanted him to be.

He was faithful to his Lord. And when you read through these letters, you find that some of these churches were faithful churches. They were churches who served the Lord, who worshipped Jesus Christ.

And yet, what we find too is that there were those churches that were unfaithful. And the church in Laodicea was one of these churches. It's actually the only church out of the seven in which nothing is commended.

[2 : 23] Not even one of its people are commended or praised. We read even in the church in Sardis, another unhealthy church, that there was one or two, a few people who had not defiled their garments.

But even that, you didn't have in Laodicea. They were a church that were backslidden. They were a church that were on the verge of apostatizing. And yet, Jesus here, he comes to them and he speaks to them.

Jesus, in his grace, he addresses his church. I think we're justified in saying that he addresses his church for the last time. He gives the church in Laodicea one last opportunity to repent.

The Amen of God speaks to them. The words of the Amen. That is the truth of God. That word, Amen, is a Hebrew word.

But it's a word that we have in Greek. You remember in the Authorized Version where Jesus would say, Verily, verily, I say unto you. What he's saying there is, Amen, Amen, I say to you.

[3 : 31] Truly, truly, this is what I say. Most assuredly, this is what I'm saying. And this is the Amen of God speaking to the church. The true one.

The God who cannot lie. He who is the faithful and true witness. The speaker who is trustworthy and sincere. He is speaking to the church in Laodicea.

The beginning of the creation of God. The one through whom all things were made. And nothing was made without him. And he's speaking. And he speaks to us today.

The true one. Jesus Christ, he speaks in his word. And he speaks to us as a congregation. He speaks to us as an island. He speaks to us in the preaching of the gospel, doesn't he?

And he comes to Garibos Free Church. Just as he came to the church in Laodicea. And he implores us. To hear what he has to say. And not to harden our hearts if we don't like it.

[4 : 31] Not to turn away our ears if it doesn't sit well with us. But to hear what the Lord is speaking. And to take it to heart. And to put it into practice.

Well, the first thing that I want us to see about this church then. Is that it was a lukewarm church. I know your works, he says in verse 15. You are neither cold nor hot.

Would that you were either cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold. I will spit you out of my mouth. Notice what he says here.

Something that he says to every church. Indeed it's something that he says to every person. I know your works. Again in the authorised version. It's singular. I know thy works.

I know what you do. I know who you are. I know the good and the bad. I know the public and the private. I know your thoughts. I know your words.

[5 : 31] I know your actions. Everything about you. The things that other people don't know. The things that you don't want anybody else to know. He says I know. I know your works. And knowing the work of the Laodiceans.

He concludes that they are neither cold nor hot. That they are lukewarm. Now the ruins of Laodicea. And it is in ruins. There's two of the five of the seven churches that are today uninhabited.

This one and the church in Sardis. The two churches that Jesus criticises more than any other churches. And they're today uninhabited and in ruins.

Well the ruins of Laodicea are near the modern Turkish town of Denizli. And it's actually a very popular tourist site today. The Turkish government is trying to get it recognised as a world heritage site.

And probably with good reason. It's a place for archaeologists. And it's a place for those who want to see a bit of history. Who want to sample a bit of what it was like to live under the Roman Empire.

[6 : 38] And you may have seen or may not have seen about a year ago. A ten foot statue of the Emperor Trajan. Who reigned from the end of the first century into the second century.

One of the most successful Roman emperors. A ten or twelve foot statue of him was unearthed. Almost in perfect condition. And that statue would have been carved.

And it would have been situated in Laodicea. Probably just after this letter was written. Historically Laodicea was located between two towns.

Two other famous towns. Hierapolis. Which was around five miles to the north. And Colossae. You know the letter to the Colossians. That was around ten miles to the southeast.

And Hierapolis was famous for its hot springs. For its natural hot springs and baths. And the associated health benefits that these baths and these springs had.

[7 : 38] Colossae on the other hand. It was famous for its cold springs. For its cold water. And of course that had its own health benefits. It was fresh. It was drinkable.

It could be used for different things. Laodicea however had neither. They had neither hot water nor cold water. The places were seated.

Many things going for it. But water was a problem in Laodicea. In fact it was so scarce. That it had to be piped in. From quite a number of miles away. And by the time the water got to Laodicea.

It was tepid usually. And undrinkable. It was dirty. It was nauseating. So when Christ describes the church in Laodicea.

As neither hot nor cold. He is not saying that to be hot would be good. And to be cold would be bad. Or that hot is to be zealous. And that cold is to be disinterested.

[8 : 32] Not at all. If he was saying that. He would be saying that he would rather. He would be commending the church being disinterested in the gospel. And Jesus never does that. No what he is saying is this.

That either of these types of water would be useful. Either of these types of water would be good. But lukewarm water is good for nothing. You think about it.

What do you really use lukewarm water for? Very little. Probably even nothing. If you want a drink of water from the tap.

Well you run the tap for a wee while. Don't you? Until it gets cold. Then it's good. And you drink it. It refreshes you. Or if you want to go into the shower to wash yourself. You don't put the water on and jump in straight away.

No. You wait for the water to heat up. Then when the water is hot. You go in and you wash yourself. But lukewarm water. What do you use that for?

[9 : 28] Nothing really. It's useless. And that's what this church had become like. Good for nothing. Useless. This was a church friends that was no longer witnessing to the pure gospel.

This was a church that was no longer seeking to live holy and separate lives of holiness. This was a church that was no longer depending on God. These were a people who thought themselves self-sufficient.

They were no longer untainted by this world. They were no longer fleeing idolatry. This was a people who were compromised. They were so taken up with the world.

With wealth. With prosperity. With things. That their Christianity had become casual. It had become lifeless. It had become a Sunday thing.

It had become unhealthy. Just a bit on the side. And you know friends. Jesus' feelings towards his church are described in different ways depending on the circumstances.

[10 : 33] We read in some places that Jesus mourns over his church. What's become of it. Sometimes we read that Jesus rejoices over his church. Sometimes we read that he's angry with his church.

But you know what we read here? We read that he's disgusted with his church. He's repulsed by her casual attitude to himself.

Her casual attitude to the gospel. Her casual attitude to his law. He's disgusted by her lack of commitment. Her lack of holiness.

Her lack of zeal. Her lack of repentance. Her lack of spiritual life. He's positively nauseated by what he's seeing. Just as you would be. If you came to our house.

And we put a plate of food before you. And it was neither hot nor cold. It was lukewarm. You've maybe been to a restaurant. And everything's been great.

[11 : 31] Lovely ambience. The waiters or the waitresses are very quick. And the plate of food comes. And it all looks very nice. And you dig into it. And it's not hot. It's not hot.

You can't really eat it. You either just sit by and say nothing. Or you put it back. And maybe you go home. And you go on to TripAdvisor. I hope you don't. But maybe you do.

And you write. Well everything was good. But the food was cold. It was lukewarm. One star. Hopeless. That's what we have here.

A church that just wasn't cutting it. A church that just wasn't useful. A church that was nauseating to the Lord. And you know friends.

We're speaking about a church almost 2,000 years ago. But the Lord is looking down upon our own churches today. Isn't he? Our own churches in the island as we gather together. In our places for worship.

[12 : 27] And he has a view of our churches. And you know what? He looks down upon our own individual hearts as well. Doesn't he? And he has a view of our individual hearts. And what does he see?

What does the Lord see as he looks upon us today? Does he see healthy congregations? Does he see healthy, spiritually healthy individuals? Does he see those who are truly living out their faith during the week?

Those who are taking all of this seriously. Does he see men and women who aren't just going about their business. Going through the motions as usual. But who are truly seeking the Lord.

Is that what he sees? Or does he see churches that are lukewarm? Churches that are neither hot nor cold. What a danger for us friends in every generation.

To become comfortable in the world. To become settled here. To let down our anchor here as if we're always going to be here. And yet to continue to go through the motions.

[13 : 29] To keep up the formalities. To be Christians in name but not in practice. To have a name that we're living because we go to church. And yet through the be dead. Is that what Christ sees today?

People who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. People who are keeping up their church attendance. But really are lovers of pleasure more than they are lovers of God.

Friend he looks into your heart today. What does he see? What does he see in mine? What solemn questions? What searching questions? Does he see somebody who knows the gospel?

Who's used to hearing the gospel? Who's heard it all before? And yet week after week you reject it? Is that what he sees? Does he see in you somebody who's almost persuaded to be a Christian?

And yet does nothing about it? Does he see that maybe you're not really moved by all of this at all? This is a place that you come to. This is a tradition that you have. You come here to satisfy other people.

[14 : 33] Perhaps to satisfy your own conscience. But at the end of the day you don't really care. Does Jesus' friend look at you and see somebody who's lukewarm? Somebody who's neither hot nor cold.

Somebody who to him, who to his cause, to his church is useless. Is that what he sees? Well he says, doesn't he, in verse 16, Because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of my mouth.

He'll spew you out. Because there's nothing that Jesus hates more, friends, than lukewarmness. Isn't that solemn? That you'll be spewed out. You who've sat under the gospel many years perhaps.

You've got Bibles on your homes. You've been taught the gospel story from the knee of your mother or your father. And yet the day comes when the amen of God will spew you out of his mouth.

When the faithful and true witness will take no more to do with you. That the hour is approaching. When the beginning of the creation of God will have sampled your lukewarmness for the last time.

[15 : 43] Are these not things that ought to make us think? That ought to make us stop? He's not talking to the world here. He's talking to the church.

He's talking to those of us who sit in the pew. Those of us who stand in the pulpit. And he's questioning us. And he's asking us where we are. And he's asking us, friends, of what use we really are to him.

What use we really are to the cause. Are we lukewarm? Are we one day going to be spat out of his mouth? Well, I want us secondly to consider two different perspectives on this church.

We've begun to see the perspective of Jesus. But then we have the perspective of Laodicea. We have it in verse 17. You say, I am rich.

I have prospered. I need nothing. That was the perspective of Laodicea themselves. This is the way that the church saw itself.

[16 : 54] Laodicea was a commercial center. It was actually one of the richest cities in the world at this time. Around 60 AD, there was a terrible earthquake in Laodicea.

And it destroyed most of the city. It left it really in ashes. And Rome, at the time, they offered money to the city to rebuild the city, as they did in certain situations.

And the people of the city refused the money. Because they had enough money of their own. And they rebuilt it themselves very, very quickly. They didn't need it. This was a well-off place.

This was a place which archaeologists tell us had three theaters. They had their own public baths. They had grand homes. They had a stadium which could hold up to 30,000 people.

This was a place with shops, with a market. This was a place where people came to be entertained. This was the Grange of Edinburgh. It was the Beers Den of Glasgow. It was the Chelsea of London.

[17 : 57] And the people there were proud. They were complacent. They were materialistic. They were worldly. But you know this. That is what it is. And the world will be the way that the world is.

But the church imbibed the mentality of the people. That is why Jesus is writing to them in this way. The Christians, so-called in the pew or in the homes, wherever they met, they had gotten rich themselves through the trades.

And to be involved in the trades these days, you had to be involved in the trade guilds. And all of these trade guilds in the first century were linked to idolatry.

And they would have their annual feasts, which you would have to attend. And songs would be sung through the false gods. And sacrifices would be offered.

And the meat of these sacrifices would be eaten. And if you wanted to make money in Laodicea, you had to be involved in these kind of things. And it seems that they were. And they thought little of it.

[19 : 07] They thought little of their compromise. Apparently they didn't see it as a sin. This to them was a necessity. This is what they had to do to get by. You read about other churches.

Even in these seven letters. The church in Smyrna. Who were in poverty. Because they refused to do this. And the Lord praises them.

And yet, the church in Laodicea, they said, We need to. We need to be involved in this. The Lord will understand. He'll turn a blind eye to it. It's a bit like those who today say that they need to work on a Sunday.

Christians, perhaps. Members in the church. We need to work on a Sunday. And don't get me wrong. There are works of necessity and mercy. But you know, if it's not a work of necessity and mercy, we trust that the Lord will provide.

Don't we? We trust that if we take a stand for him, that he will take a stand for us. And that if we honor him, that he will honor us. Well, they were rich.

[20 : 13] And they thought also that they were spiritually well-off. They thought that God was blessing them because they were a good people. There's a parallel in one of the prophets.

Maybe it's Jeremiah. I can't remember at the moment. And he's speaking about Ephraim, saying basically the same thing. I am well-off. I am wealthy. I have prospered. In me there is no iniquity that can be called sin.

And so it was with his people. That was their assessment. We are materially well-off. We are spiritually well-off. All is going well for us. That was their assessment. And you know, friends, it's right that we have an assessment of ourselves, that we assess our churches, that we assess ourselves individually.

It was right that Laodicea assessed herself. But in assessing ourselves, our aim ought always to be to arrive at the same conclusion as God, to arrive at the truth.

And that's what the Laodiceans failed to do. Rather, they deceived themselves, didn't they? We can read on. You say, I am rich. I have prospered.

[21 : 19] And I have need of nothing, not realizing that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. Friends, the way that we see ourselves isn't necessarily the way that Jesus sees us.

The things that we tell ourselves about ourselves don't necessarily equate with the things that Jesus is actually saying. Because you see, naturally, we want to tell ourselves that we're better than we are.

We want to, don't we? Naturally, we lie to ourselves. That's why we need to come to the truth, to be brought back down to earth. We tell ourselves that all is well, and yet Jesus sees through it because he looks upon the heart.

He knows us better than we know ourselves. And he sees here are people who are wretched and who are pitiable or miserable. Who would have said it? You walk down the street there in Laodicea, it's perhaps the last thing that you would have thought.

Well-off looking people walking down the street laughing and joking, are people who had everything. People who were enjoying the pleasures of the world. A church that was popular in the community.

[22 : 28] A church that was well-liked even in pagan circles. A church that didn't rustle any feathers. And yet, despite the fact that they saw themselves as so well-off, Jesus says that they are wretched.

They are miserable in his eyes. Because they've neglected the one thing that was needful. They've neglected the source of true joy. They were miserable.

They were also poor. And this was a city that was rich. And not only was it rich, but it was a banking city. This is what they did. This is what a lot of the people in the pew, as it were, they would have been accountants or tellers or mortgage advisors or whatever it might have been.

You see, just as Edinburgh was once the banking capital of the world, so this was the banking capital of Asia Minor. This was the Wall Street of the East.

These people weren't just well-off. They made their careers out of money. That was their profession. That's what they knew about. They were experts in it. And yet, in Jesus' eyes, they were poor.

[23 : 40] They were spiritually bankrupt. They had no currency with God. And so he counsels them to buy gold dried in the fire. To buy from the one who has endured the fire of the wrath of God.

To lay up for themselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, neither do thieves break through and steal. To buy wine and milk without money and without price.

To come to the gospel table and to trade that which perishes for that which will never perish. They were also blind. And again, let me just say, some of you remember that the old ministers would often be telling stories about sailing, about sea, or about sheep.

And they did that primarily, not only because of their own interest, because that's what the people knew about. That's what they were experts in. That's what they had seen. And that's what Jesus is doing here.

He's speaking into their own context. He's speaking to them in language that they will understand. And just as they were people who knew about money, they were also people who knew about eyes.

[24 : 53] He says they are blind. Those are well-known eye hospitals in Laodicea. You can read up on it. And in this hospital, they developed a famous eye salve, which you would apply to somebody's eyes and it helped people's sight.

In some cases, it managed to restore a measure of sight to those who were blind. And so again, these were people who knew about sight. These were the doings of this world. These were the people who knew about eyes.

If anybody knew about eyes, they knew about eyes. And yet Jesus calls them blind because they've got no spiritual insight. Their eyes were closed to the truth.

They were closed to themselves. Their eyes were closed to eternity. And so Jesus calls them to anoint their eyes with his eyes salve in order that they might see. To believe in him who would show them the truth.

To learn to walk by faith and not by sight. To learn to look to Jesus and to say, one thing I know, that whereas I was blind and blind I was, that now I see.

[26 : 00] They were also naked. They were naked and they knew it not. There was a healthy textile industry in Laodicea. And the famed material, the raw material which they used was black wool.

And they were exported throughout the province and throughout that area of the world. And if you were going to walk down the street in Laodicea, this is what you would see, I'm sure. This was what was in fashion.

This is what the woman would be wearing in the churches. Nice black coats. Pricey garments. And yet though their bodies were well clothed, their souls were left naked.

They were left uncovered. They had no righteousness before God. They had no covering from his wrath. And so he counsels them to buy from him white garments that their shame, that their sin, that their iniquity might be hidden.

He calls them to be clothed in the perfect and the pure and the holy righteousness of Christ, which is what white garments refers to in the rest of Revelation. He calls them to be justified by faith.

- [27 : 12] That's what he calls them to do. These were our people, friends, who were tested in prosperity. And they failed that test. And they were found to be spiritually bankrupt.
- And you know, the people of this island were once tested with adversity and with poverty. And yet they came through it. I remember reading about some of the first evangelical administration point.
- Robert Finlayson who came in 1829 and went to Lox a couple of years later and Duncan Matheson who came after him. And how not only the church but the manse was filled with people, poor people, hungry people.
- And yet they weren't just hungering after the food of this world. They were hungering after the gospel. They were hungering after God. They were hungering and thirsting after righteousness. He didn't point and they had nothing.
- The cupboards were empty but the churches were full. They looked to God in their trial. They depended on him in their trouble. And you know, friends, the Lord is now testing us with another test.
- [28 : 24] He's testing us as he tested the church in Laodicea with prosperity. And what does he see when he looks down? He sees that the cupboards are full but the church is empty throughout our island.
- friends, as people, we're generally well off, aren't we? But how are we handling our riches? Are we handling them or are they handling us?
- What effect are they having on our Christianity? What place are we giving them in our lives? You're here today perhaps and you have everything that you need so you think.
- What need do you have of Christ? What need do you have of him? You have everything in the here and now. You've built your house, you've got your car, you've got your family, you've got your hobbies, you've got your Netflix, whatever it might be.
- Why do you need to think about eternity? But you know friends, if you really think about it, if you think about your own life and if you dig down into your heart, you'll realize very quickly that you can have much of this world's pleasure and yet be wretched and miserable.
- [29 : 37] And you can have much of this world's wealth and yet you can feel very poor inside. You can think that you're seeing clearly, that you're understanding well and yet you can be truly blind, can't you?
- You can be well turned out throughout the week in expensive clothes and even here today and yet before God all these seas are filthy rags. And you know friends, that's why we have to learn to assess ourselves, is it not?
- Not through our own eyes but through God's eyes. That's why we have to learn to examine ourselves not according to the standards of this world or even according to the standards of a spiritually lackluster church but according to the standard of heaven.
- What's your assessment of yourself today? More importantly, what's God's assessment of you? What a question, what a solemn question.
- question. It's one that we need to answer. But thirdly, I want us to see, and time is going, but I want us to see that Jesus sets a gracious ultimatum before this church in Laodicea and before ourselves.
- [30 : 47] And he says in verse 19, those whom I love I reprove and discipline, be zealous therefore and repent. You see, Jesus has a love for his visible church.
- and so because he loves her, he speaks plainly to her. He speaks honestly to her. He tells us here today perhaps things that we don't want to hear, perhaps things that we would have rather not have heard.

And yet the Lord himself is speaking. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, remember that, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy. And the Lord, faithful as he always is towards his church, and gracious, he calls her, he calls the lukewarm to seal, he calls the worldly to repentance, he calls to ourselves today, friends, throughout our island and throughout our country, and he calls for change, not change in the way that you normally hear it in our church culture these days, but change in the form of repentance, a change of attitude, a change of life, he calls us to turn back to himself with a full heart, with a whole heart, and you know what that means in your own circumstances, don't you?

You know what it means in your own life, you know the things that have to change. It's in light of this exhortation of that Jesus, that he comes to speak the words of our text, and he says, behold, I stand at the door and knock, and if any man hear my voice and open, I will come in unto him.

These are words today for the seeker. They're words for the backslider. These are words for the spiritually careless. Jesus, in his grace, he stands at the door of this church in Laodicea, and he waits patiently for seal and for repentance.

[32 : 48] He waits for faith in himself and trust in himself, and he stands here today as well, does he not? And he stands patiently, and he knocks, and he speaks, and you could even translate it, that he leans upon the door, that he puts his weight against the door of your heart, and he seeks admission into it.

You see, friends, Christ's heart today is towards his church, it's towards sinners, it's gracious towards the lost, and he calls out to you today, whatever your situation, and he stands at your door, and he says, if any man hear my voice and open, if any man, any man, any woman, any boy, any girl, you can't say then, friend, that this isn't for you, you can't say that you've gone too far, you can't say that this offer doesn't extend to you, it does, if any man open, friend, can you hear the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ speaking into your heart today, can you hear it in the free offer of the gospel, can you hear it as you open your Bible, can you hear it as you listen to the preacher in the pulpit, can you hear it in your providence, the things that have been happening in your life, the way that God has been speaking to you in the home, in the workplace, through the little things, can you hear it in your conscience, the Lord calling you to himself, the Lord saying to you as in the song of

Solomon, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

Oh, if you're hearing his voice, how long can you ignore it? That's a question. How long can you put him off? How long will you? How long will you leave him standing at the door?

And you're probably the type of person, and I can say this, I don't know many of you, you're probably the type of person who would never leave anybody standing at your door, even if it was a stranger, you would invite him in, you would give him a cup of tea, you wouldn't dream of leaving anybody standing out in the cold, you'd open it to a stranger, and yet you leave the Son of God outside.

[35 : 03] Why is that? How do you justify that? You reject him, and yet despite your rejection, and this is what I want you to take note of, despite your rejection, perhaps over many weeks, over many months, over many years, yet perhaps even over decades in this church, he continues to patiently knock, and to wait at your door.

The God of heaven and earth, the creator of the universe, he knocks at the door of your heart and he seeks admission, and you must respond.

Now, let me say, it's God alone who regenerates, it's God alone who gives spiritual life, it's a spirit alone that quickens, that works faith, and yet what this is emphasizing, friends, and therefore what I must emphasize is conversion and your own responsibility in it.

You know, you're a responsible person, you are. You're accountable for your own actions. You are in the issues of this life, you are in the issues of eternity, you're responsible for your own soul, and you're responsible for what you do with the offer of the gospel, and with the Christ who stands at the door of your heart, and today, friends, he continues to knock, and he continues to ask you to open the door, to grant him access, the merchant who in the market counseled you to buy gold from him, he's as it were, followed you home, and he's come to your door, and he stands on the doorstep, and he seeks admission, and he calls you to let him in, oh, friends, see that you let him in, why would you not, see that you open the door, and that you embrace the knocker, that you embrace him with both arms, that you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of your soul, that you invite him into your heart, that you invite him into your life, that you invite him into your home, see that you turn from your sin, that you repent, and anything that's coming between you and the

Lord today, and there are things that are, oh, that you put them aside, and that you trust all of your life to him, and all of your eternity to him, that you cast your whole self upon his care, that you rest in him and him alone, for all of your salvation, for all of your righteousness, because today he stands in the preaching of the gospel, and he knocks, and he offers you all that your soul will ever need, and he makes a promise to you, that if you open the door, that Jesus will come in and sup with you, or eat with you, as it is here, he will come in and eat with you, and you with him, and then the one who conquers, he will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my father on his throne.

[38 : 07] In the ancient world, to eat at a table with somebody was a great privilege, it was a mark of friendship and fellowship, it was an intimate thing, it was a great honor to be invited to come to a table.

I realize that that's gone in our culture, today you'll find perhaps in a home, you'll have signed one person at the kitchen table sitting, another person standing at the worktop, another perhaps in the living room with his food in his lap watching the telly, somebody else maybe teenager up in the bedroom eating, it's not the way it was, not the way it was here, it's not the way it was in ancient times.

The dinner table was an important place, it was a place for talking, it was a place for friendship, for fellowship, that's what Christ offers friends, he offers his own friendship, he offers his own companionship to those who open the door, he promises intimacy with you as a lover of your soul, and friendship with you as a friend that taketh closer than a brother, that's what he offers, and indeed more than that, he says, those who overcome, who conquer, they will sit, not just at a table with him, but that they will sit with him on his throne, who can go into these things, these things are in many ways too strange for us, they are too high to understand, we're told that the believer will judge angels, that the Christian shall be crowned with glory, and with honor, because by the grace of God they open the door to the knocking savior, and as such they themselves will be saved from judgment, they will be rescued from the gates of hell, their souls will have been saved from death, that's what

Jesus stands today to give, that's the safety that he gives, the security that he gives, that's the glory and the comfort that he offers, the salvation and the deliverance which is yours today in Christ, oh to have a part in such salvation, to be wise enough today to open the door and to welcome Jesus in, well friends let me conclude and just say this, if we're honest, and honest we must be, we'll all find a bit of Laodicea in our own souls, will we not?

We're naturally complacent, we're naturally wretched and miserable, poor and blind and naked, we don't deserve the least of God's mercy, we've all sinned, we've all come short of the glory of God, but praise God that Christ continues with us, that he continues to stand at the door of our hearts and to knock, praise God that he is patient, that he's long-suffering, that he is plenty, he is in mercy, and that he is slow to wrath, and today friends, he stands and he knocks, and he continues to stand, and he continues to knock, and he continues to call upon you, and he continues to seek admission, what are you doing with the knocking of the Savior on the door of your heart?

[41 : 18] Are you ignoring it? Are you closing your ears to it? Are you pretending that you're not hearing it? For some of you it's as clear as day, for some of you it's as clear as a knock on this pulpit, and you can hear the Lord speaking into your life, and asking admission into it, and you're saying, not now, I'll leave it for now, another time, I'll put it off to another week, another time in my life when I'm not so busy, when I don't have this on and that on, I won't let him in, I will let him in, I won't let him in now, I won't let him in today, I won't let him in on his time, I'll let him in on my time, and the day goes, and the opportunity passes, and the knocking ceases, and you know friends, the day is coming for many of you, sorry to say it, but the day is coming when the knocking will cease, it will,

God's spirit will not always strive with man, it won't, the day is coming friends when perhaps you will be the one knocking, and you will be the one banging, and you will be the one shouting at the door of heaven, seeking your own admission, and the Lord will ignore you, and he will close his ears to your crying, and he will say, I will leave him as he left me, I will leave him forever, as he ignored me, I will let him in, because friend, you never opened the door of your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, when he was pleading with you for admission, when that day in the church in Garibaldi, he spoke to you, and he gave you the opportunity to repent, to be salous, to turn to him, to put your faith in him, to give your life to him, he gave you every opportunity, and you rejected him, well friends, don't let the day pass, because the

Lord Jesus Christ today, he stands at the door of your heart, some of you I'm sure, and he knocks, don't put him off, don't turn him away, don't ignore him, he that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the church, amen, let us pray.

A good time, let us do our children