

Week of December 23-29

KNOCK, KNOCK

Scripture Reading: Read Revelation Chapter 3

One of the most familiar types of jokes is the “knock-knock” joke. Really creative knock-knock jokes can leave a crowd in stitches. Most knock-knock jokes, though, are pretty silly and only give rise to a couple of chuckles and a room full of groans. I’m sure you’ve heard a few of these along the way. They go something like this.

Knock, knock.

Who’s there?

Boo.

Boo who?

Aw, there’s no need to cry.

In Revelation chapter 3, we run into a knock-knock of another type. Jesus is doing the knocking but it’s no laughing matter. *“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.”* This verse often appears on a plaque somewhere underneath a picture of Jesus knocking on a door in a garden. Perhaps you’ve seen one or have one like it hanging on a wall in your home. The plaque is usually given with the intent and meaning that Jesus wants entrance into the heart of sinners and they need only open the door and Jesus will come in and have a relationship with them. While it is true that the Holy Spirit is wooing us and convicting us of our sins and calling us to place our faith and trust in Christ, that is not the context of the verse in Revelation 3:20.

In 3:14-20, Jesus is addressing the church of Laodicea. The city of Laodicea was an area known for its banking industry, its eye-salve and its wool. It was a very wealthy city and very smug. When the area suffered a devastating earthquake and Rome offered to provide assistance, the city indicated it could handle the repairs and restoration itself. Sadly, the church had taken on the characteristics of the city. It was a wealthy church, a smug and self-satisfied church. It had everything it needed. It apparently was well-liked in the community. Services were packed and everything was flowing. It was a happening place. One problem, though. Jesus was not in it! Jesus is on the outside of the church, knocking at the door, requesting permission to come in and join his body.

Laodicea is not an isolated incident. In every generation, there are Laodicean churches. They look good. Programming is all in place. Personnel have been hired and trained. The offering plates are filled to overflowing and the services are packed. The machinery is running fine but the reason for the church’s existence is being ignored. The Spirit isn’t present. Jesus isn’t welcome. He’s on the outside looking in, knocking at the door of the church...and that’s no joke. It’s a tragedy.

Action Step & Prayer Focus: When you attend service on Sundays, do you come to meet with Jesus or do you come just for the experience of the sights and sounds and fellowship? Would you even notice if Jesus didn’t show up? Pray for your church and its leadership that Jesus would always be welcome and honored in your midst.

Take-a-way: *Without Jesus, the church is left with only a knock-knock at the door.*