

6.30 Evensong – 28th August 2011
Trinity 10 – Year A

Sirach 11: 19-28
Revelation 3: 14-end

I am standing at the door, knocking. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.

Have you ever gone to someone's house and knocked on the door, but no one ever came to answer it? You know that they are in there, the TV or the radio is going full blast, but they don't answer the door. If you knew they were inside, would you still stand there and keep knocking? Those of us who have collected for Christian Aid know this feeling well. Lots of time people never get saved, or if they are saved never get anywhere near God, because they never answer the door when God knocks. Maybe you can look back this week on your daily life and see where God has knocked, but you just never answered the door. Maybe God wanted you to do something, learn something, get rid of something, but you never answered the door.

Why don't people answer the door? Some people come and sit here in church week after week, and never get anything from the services. They don't hear. They're too busy, entangled with the affairs of life. Some are so pre-occupied with life outside of the church, that they never hear what's going on inside. People can get so busy that they will never hear about anything to do with God. There is too much noise in their life, and they don't hear the knock. When you come, sit down and relax, get in line with the Spirit of God. Put your mind on what Jesus did, and will do, and what's going on here. Lose the world, at least for a short while.

Some people are just too far away to hear. Psalms 10 says: **Why standest thou afar off, O LORD?** Some are like Peter was, following afar off. **And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.** Something happens in the life of people and they find themselves faraway from God. But God has never moved. Lot's of times things get into our lives that shouldn't be there, and before long we are too far away to hear the knock. Oh we can pretend to hear the knock, but those who are close enough to really hear it, know when God is knocking and when he is not. People get things into their lives like envy, malice, mistrust, jealousy, or just plain sin. Revivals come when people get those things out of their lives, and out of their hearts, and get close to God and hear the knock.

God does know what we have been doing in our lives, and we know that he knows. Many times when he knocks, we know he wants to fix something that has gone wrong, but we are afraid to answer the door. When we confess our faults, and let God's light shine in to us, it cleans us up. When things are bothering us that we know about, and then we get it all right with God, it always feels better. But for some, they won't open the door because they know he wants us to stop something.

People in our day and time like to have their ears tickled. People can get so excited that they forget to have fellowship with God. I think sometimes people getting too excited is a tactic for not doing what God wants them to do. People will not take time to be still and know God. Psalms 46 says: **Be still, and know that I am God.** In the Book of Acts, Peter had been in prison and had escaped. He was knocking on the door when a lady named Rhoda came and she was so excited that she didn't open the door. It was a while before Peter was able to get inside. Excitement is great, it's blessed, as long as we can still hear the knock of what God wants us to do.

Paul wrote to the Galatians: **Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.** All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbour's work, will become a cause for pride. Sometimes people have been beaten back, beaten down, beaten up and in such a bad shape that they may just be too weak to get to the door. Those of you that are spiritual; don't tell others how spiritual you are - prove it. Help carry others burdens. Maybe if you would answer the door, you could also carry a few to the door yourself.

Two monks were going to a monastery and a bad snow storm came up. They came across a traveller who had fallen and was helpless. The first monk said: "Let him alone, his fate has dealt with him." The second monk put him on his shoulders and carried him, but the weight slowed him down, and the first monk went on. Almost at the monastery the monk carrying the fellow tripped over the first monk who had frozen to death. But the second monk had kept warm from the body heat generated by carrying the fellow. He was asked afterwards, what was the most tragic thing he had seen, and he thought a bit and said: "Not having a Burden to bear."

Now are you wanting to be a better Christian, or just want to be saved and that's it? Because there is more to this thing than simply being saved. Amen.