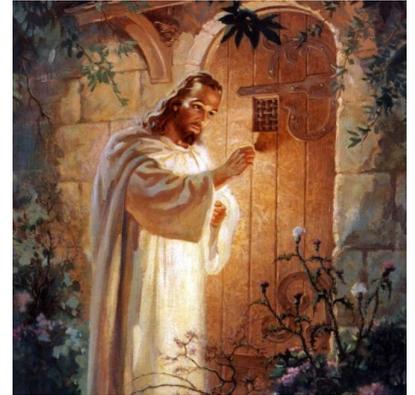


A PICTURE THAT TOUCHES YOUR HEART

We have a picture in our kitchen that was painted for us by a friend. It's a picture of Jesus standing in a lush garden knocking on a door, what a beautiful picture. The odd thing about it all is the door doesn't have a knob on it for Him to open. This door only opens from the inside.

I have always been a little confused about how one becomes a part of the Lord's family. A phrase that is common in some circles is, "I have accepted the Lord into my life." This picture re-enforces that phrase. Unless, as many of us believe, in order for someone on the inside of the house opens the door, the Savior will not be invited in.



When I was baptized, the Holy Spirit begins his interceding on our behalf and we are then able to open the door because of our knowledge of who is standing out there. We are part of His family and even the gesture of opening the door from the inside is a gift in itself.

So, the bottom line remains that we don't really accept the Lord's invitation into His family on our own, it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

I don't know if through the years any of you have been confused about how the Lord works in our lives, but if you have, this is the way scripture presents the wonderful gift to us. You can refuse this gift, just like any other gift you are offered.

I have been reading the People's Bible, the book of Judges. So many of the chosen people, the twelve tribes of Israel, too often chose idols, sex, alcohol and many other detestable bad choices. This really paints a dark picture of their actions. I once made the statement that the people of the old testament really led a sinful life and still they were God's chosen. The reply came back to me that we are no better.

We daily fall into the ways of the old "adam," and when we ask for forgiveness, our Lord is right there willing to restore us to His family. The door is opened and we are welcome to be in His family. Great news for us who are not worthy to be chosen as part of God's family.

1 Timothy 6: 11, 12, 20 & 21 ¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ²⁰ Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, ²¹ which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith.

Grace be with you all.



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