

Sermon Notes

A Knock at the Door - Rev 3:20

April 25, 2021

I. Introduction

- a. are there any *life changes* you need to make... Passover is time of new beginning... forget past, sins, failures, regrets, disappointments... leave the *if-only* behind...
Exo 12:2... *“this month is the beginning of months... first month of your year...”*
2Cor 5:17... *“you are a new creation in Christ... old is gone, new has come...”*
2Cor 6:1-2... *“don’t receive grace in vain... now is time, now is day of salvation...
sotheria... *deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation, health, rescue*...”*
Phil 3:12-18... *“make every effort... forget past... look forward to what’s ahead...”*
- b. before we can change... must decide what is center... and what is circumference...
for many, world has become center... and Christ has become circumference...
Jer 9:6... *“live in world of deception... in deception, they refuse to know Me...”*
Matt 21:9... *“Jesus was in the center... blessings on Him, praise God in heaven...”*
John 15:19... *“you are not of the world... I have chosen you out of it...”*
Rev 7:7... *“the Lamb... who is at center of throne... will shepherd and guide...”*
- c. center of our faith is Christ... not creeds, commandments, church, ceremonies...
not our ideas about God, but His ideas about Himself... revealed thru Christ...
only when our center is Christ can we begin process of change... pray...
John 1:18... *“the Son... at the Father’s side... has revealed the Father...”*
Col 1:15... *“He is the image of the invisible God... firstborn of all creation...”*
Heb 1:3... *“Son is radiance of God’s glory... exact expression of His nature...”*

II. Knock at the Door

- a. many go to bible looking for change... change is not found there... change comes
only thru Christ... bible not revelation of God, Jesus is... life is not found in
pages of scripture... it is in Christ, uncovered in those pages...
Luke 2:28-35... *“my eyes have seen salvation... a light for revelation to Gentiles...”*
John 5:39... *“search scripture for eternal life... they point to Me... refuse to come...”*
2Cor 3:18... *“beholding glory of Lord... transformed into same image... by HS...”*
Gal 1:12... *“did not receive from man... came by a revelation of Jesus...”*
1Pet 1:13... *“set hope fully on grace... brought to you by revelation of Jesus...”*
- b. OT revelation incomplete... shadow, not reality... progressive until completion and
perfection found in Christ... He changed the standards and made His word final...
Matt 5... *“you have heard it said, but I say to you... you have heard, but I say...”*
John 13:34... *“new command I give... love one another... as I have loved you...”*
- c. many look for change thru law, commandments... rules, regulations are imposed
morality... Jesus is inspired morality... love from inside, not legal from outside...
freedom, not bondage... want to, not have to... law reveals Jesus, not rules...
Rom 7:4-6... *“dead to law, produce good deeds... aroused by law, sinful deeds...”*
Phil 2:5... *“treat one another with the same spirit you have in Christ...”*
1Tim 1:8-11... *“law good when used correctly... law not meant for righteous...”*
Luke 24... *“all things written about Me in the Law, Prophets, Psalms...”*

- d. commandments produce Pharisees... love of Jesus produces Christians... change
doesn’t come thru creeds (formal belief statement)... creeds attempt to put in words
what we see in Jesus... can’t be fixed... revelation alive, always unfolding thru
HS... Jesus never changes, but our revelation of Him does...
John 16:12-14... *“many things to tell, can’t now... HS guide you into all truth...”*
Heb 4:12... *“word of God is living and active...”*
Heb 13:8-9... *“same yesterday, today, forever... establish heart in grace...”*
- e. sometimes we look to ceremonies to change us... baptism and communion are
wonderful outer expressions of inner love... can’t change you... can even become
idols... baptism becomes salvation... communion becomes exclusive...
1Cor 11:27-34... *“eat bread, drink cup... when you come together, welcome one another...”*
Gal 3:28... *“no Jew or Greek... slave or free... male or female... all one in Christ...”*
Gal 6:14-15... *“never boast about anything other than Jesus... neither circumcision
nor uncircumcision means anything... what matters is a new creation (in Christ)...”*
Col 2:16-19... *“don’t handle, taste, touch... such rules are mere human teachings...
may seem wise... but they provide no help in conquering a person’s evil desires...”*
- f. absolutely love our church... but our church can’t change you... it can strengthen
you, encourage you, love you, support you, pray for you... but can’t change you...
when Christ is at center... church is greatest institution on earth... when people
or traditions become center... church become idol... light turns to darkness...
Luke 9:49-50... *“someone driving out demons in Your name, tried to stop him
because he does not follow us... don’t stop him, if not against you, he’s for you...”*
Rom 1:12... *“when we get together... encourage you... be encouraged by you...”*
1Cor 5:4... *“there is power when you are assembled in the name of Jesus...”*
Eph 4:11-16... *“equipping saints for ministry... grow in every way in Christ...”*

**A healthy church looks to God. We look in dependence on Him for our message...
our method... and our transformation into the image of Christ. Mark Dever**

- g. the resurrection cannot change you... the cross cannot change you... faith cannot
change you... our faith is not in resurrection, but in resurrected Christ... our faith
is not in the cross, but in Jesus who died on it... our faith is not in our faith, but
in His... faith in faith produces frustration, faith in Jesus produces results...
John 11:25... *“I am the resurrection and the life...”*
1Cor 1:17... *“not to baptize, but preach Gospel... so cross of Christ not emptied...”*
Gal 2:20... *“the life I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God...”*
- h. life is lived by Weltanschauung (worldview)... generally any changes we make
have to fit into that philosophy... gives meaning and purpose to all we do...
Matt 6:25-34... *“seek first His righteousness... all these things will be added...”*
John 14:6-14... *“whatever you ask in My name, this I will do... that the Father
may be glorified in the Son... if you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it...”*
Rev 3:20... *“I stand at the door and knock... if you hear My voice and open it...
I will come in and we will share together as friends...”*
- i. church at Laodicea believed they had everything... actually had nothing... world
was center... Jesus was circumference... change not possible until they opened
door... if life change is what you seek... we’ll point you in right direction... pray...
Rom 2:29... *“change of heart is produced by HS...”*
Rev 3:17... *“you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...”*

Love Christ supremely... hold all else in relationship to that... then all else is yours.

The Way of Grace

Rom 5:1-6... *obtained access thru Him by faith into this grace...*

We have been insisting conversion is necessary equally for those whose sins of the flesh and for those who sins of the disposition disclose the **center of life is unchanged**. A minister told me... *I see clearly, I see the cross, and I don't like it*. The cross confronted his essential self-centeredness, and he reacted in opposition to it. It challenged the basis on which he was living. He was religious, but not Christian, for **Christ did not control the center**.

A great many have introduced **just enough Christianity** into their lives to set up a conflict. There isn't enough to produce control, but just enough to produce conflict. It then becomes an irritant. It upsets instead of sets up. A man told me, *I'm trying to live a Christian life, and I'm having a hell of a time at it*. How is that possible? He said, *twenty times a day the self will be ready to do anything as a compromise, provided it be allowed to stay at the center, on the throne*.

The Way was operative in the minor issues of life, but the way of self was operative in the major issue, the issue as to who makes the decisions. The self made them, in the interests of the self. Result? A hell of a time! The **center needed conversion**. Christ needed to take over at the center, instead of being on the edge.

It was said of Joseph of Arimathea that he was a *disciple of Jesus but a secret disciple for fear of the Jews*. **John 19:38**. Fear held the center. Result? He found a dead Christ instead of a living one.

The Christian Way is not a patchwork. It is not a lot of truths brought together from everywhere. The **Christian Way is Christ**, and Christ is the Truth. The Way is the way of Grace. Grace is shorthand for God's redeeming love. The gospel starts with grace. It is God's initiative that redeems us. All other religions begin with man's searching for God. In Christianity, God searched for us. God initiates and **we decide whether to respond**. We do not find God... we put ourselves in the way of being found by God.

But the **first thing is grace**. The gospel is not good advice but **good news**. It is not primarily teaching us how to live, but an **offer of life**. Jesus did not come to show us the Way, but to show Himself as the Way. He did not come to preach the gospel... but that there might be a gospel to be preached.

E. Stanley Jones
The Way Devotional - Week 28

Sermon Study

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1. What **life changes** do you need to make? Are they possible? Read **2Cor 5:17... 2Cor 6:1-2... Phil 3:12-18**.
2. Is the world or Jesus your **center**? Read **Jer 9:6... Matt 21:9... John 15:19... Rev 7:7**. What **happens** when Jesus is not?
3. Read **Luk 2:28-35... Joh 5:39... 2Cor 3:18... Gal 1:12... 1Pet 1:13**. Explain why **Jesus is** the revelation of God and how life is found in Him... not necessarily in the pages of Scripture.
4. Why is **change not found** in the law? Read **Rom 7:4-6... Phil 2:5... 1Tim 1:8-11**. What works... **imposed or inspired** morality? Why?
5. Read **1Cor 11:27-34... Gal 3:28... Gal 6:14-15... Col 2:16-19**. How can baptism and communion **become idols**? Can they **change** us?
6. Read **Luke 9:49-50**. **Rewrite** that for today's church. Does the **power to change** come from the church? List some things the church can do. Read **Rom 1:12... 1Cor 5:4... Eph 4:11-16**.
7. Do you need **life change**? Where does your **focus** need to be to make it happen? Read **Matt 6:25-34... John 14:6-14... Rom 2:29... Rev 3:17-20**. What is keeping you from **opening the door**?