

Lent Midweek 2, 2011

Text: John 10:7-10

Title: "Door"

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"Come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus"

Jesus, the author and perfecter of our Faith, the pioneer, who leads the way, and then brings everything to perfection.

Jesus, the Son of God, who shows us a picture of family life with God as our Father.

Jesus, the bread of life, ordinary, every day, exactly what we need.

Jesus, the Savior, who risks His life to bring us from prison to freedom.

Today, Jesus the door.

Doors do two things.

They offer a way in, but they also keep the bad things out.

On the one hand, Jesus offers a way in, an entry point to approaching God the Father.

In Eden, God and man lived together. Adam and Eve walked and talked with God and enjoyed His presence. But sin ruined all that. Sin shut the door on God. Adam and Eve were forced to leave Eden, and an Angel with a flaming sword guarded the way. There was no way in. The door was shut.

For Israel, God lived with them in the tabernacle and in the temple. But only the priest could enter God's presence. And only once a year, and even then it was in the dark and shrouded with incense. For nearly all of God's people, the door was shut, and there was no way in. There was no way in because they were sinful, and if they tried to approach God it would have destroyed them.

Jesus came to provide a way in. A way through the doors that sin had locked. A way into heaven and the very presence of God.

Jesus' death opens the way to paradise. When Jesus died on the cross and gave up His spirit, the curtain in the temple, that barrier to God's presence, was torn from top to bottom, opening the door to God.

We can now enter the presence of God, still not directly on our own, but only through the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from our sin, making us holy and fit for the presence of God.

Hebrews puts it like this, “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body... let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.”

We come into God’s presence, and we do so in prayer. We draw near to God in prayer, in confidence, because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We know that God will let us in, because we come in the grace given to us through the blood of Jesus.

Apart from Jesus, the door is still closed. Shut, locked, and dead-bolted. Apart from Jesus, we have no hope of entering the God’s presence, because we are sinful.

But through Jesus, through His blood, we have access to the Father in prayer. We pray, “in Jesus Name” because we pray through Jesus and what Jesus has done for us.

As we just sang, “We know one gate is open, One ear will hear our prayer.”

We also enter the presence of God in the Divine Service. Every week in the divine service we are in God’s presence. We enter through the door of our baptism, with the Name of Jesus and the sign of the cross. In God’s presence we sing and pray and confess our sins, and we listen and receive God’s gifts of grace and forgiveness.

When you die, the doors of heaven will stand open for you. Not because of what you have done, but because of what Jesus has done for you. You won’t have to stand there and argue with St. Peter about whether or not he should let you in. The door has been unlocked and opened for you already.

So Jesus provides a gate, a way in, an entry point into the house of God. That’s point number one. Doors are there to let you in.

But there’s a second purpose to doors. Doors also provide protection. They keep those inside safe from their enemies.

Jesus said, “I am the door of the sheep.” In John 10, Jesus talks about being both the shepherd of the sheep as well as their door. The two go together.

In Jesus’ day, sheep pens weren’t anything fancy. Just four brick walls to keep the sheep together and safe at night. Many times they only had an opening for the sheep to come in and go out. There wasn’t always a physical gate or door there that you could close and lock behind you.

So at night, the shepherd would spend the night there in the doorway. He Himself was the door. If anyone or anything wanted to get into the pen and attack or steal the sheep, they had to go through the shepherd first. The shepherd Himself was the door.

Jesus does the same for you. He put His life on the line to protect you from all your enemies- from Satan and from death itself.

The enemies of our Lord could not destroy Him here on earth. Death could not hold him, and He rose triumphant from the grave.

So you do not need to worry about Satan or even death. Death will not be able to destroy you. Like Jesus Christ, you will rise triumphant on the last day.

So you can now sleep and rest in peace. Whether it's at night, when you lie down to sleep, or at the end of your life when you fall asleep in death. Nothing will be able to harm you. Jesus is the door. He is your safety, your protection. He's there to keep the evil out, and to let you in.

Come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the door.