

# Revelation 3:20 Reclaimed

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

Revelation 3:20

**Preliminary reading:** Revelation 1-3; I John 1; John 14.

## **Introduction:**

1. Before you read Revelation 2-3 with warnings to seven churches, you need to see Jesus Christ in chapter 1.
2. William Holman Hunt did one picture of a hippie Jesus at a door, and there is another very popular one.
3. By violating the second commandment and using graven images of a “jesus,” men have been bewitched from the true Lord Jesus Christ and their minds perverted by this lasting impression of an effeminate hippie.
4. But the Jesus of Revelation 1:10-20 and 19:11-16 is so different as to make them malicious slanderers, for the entire appearance of their caricature of Jesus Christ is altogether different and contradictory to the Bible view.
5. It is time we took this text back from Arminian, seeker-sensitive, God-denying, man-exalting decisionalists, who have degraded salvation to an act of depraved man’s free will and stolen the true promise from saints.
6. They never did study the Bible, and these heretical Christians have abused this text beyond all recognition.
7. I recently preached to you from the first half of our Lord’s warning to this church about being lukewarm.
8. While we may do a little Arminian and seeker sensitive bashing, the goal is entirely positive and precious.

## **The Context**

- A. A text without its context is a pretext – an excuse, pretence, or specious plea to sell false doctrine.
- B. This verse, used as an invitational text by millions, was never intended to offer eternal life to sinners.
- C. Jesus Christ, in red print, addressed the pastor, as representative, of the church at Laodicea (3:14).
- D. This church was a lukewarm, self-assured, self-satisfied, self-righteous, complacent, confident, religious church like American Christianity in 2004. They had religion, but lacked a relationship.
- E. They had a form of godliness without power, just as the perilous times of our day (II Timothy 3:1-5).
- F. They went through all the motions and rituals of religion with contentment, ignoring the relationship.
- G. The church had a clear spiritual problem, being confident of itself, while God saw them miserable!
- H. The clear object of the address is the pastor, the angel or messenger of the church, not sinners (3:14)!
- I. Jesus knew their works – they had form, ritual, religion – but He did not accept lack of zeal (3:15).
- J. Their lukewarm, superficial, and ritualistic formality of religion was disgusting and revolting (3:16).
- K. They were self-satisfied and self-righteous religiously, and confident and complacent materially; He knew they were very wretched in their religious and spiritual condition (3:17).
- L. They were in desperate need of spiritual improvement, which could only be had from Him (3:18).
- M. The only cure for their horrible situation was to repent, for otherwise He would chasten them (3:19).
- N. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, not the sinners (3:22)!
- O. The Laodiceans did not grasp that He had left them, for they were self-satisfied with their ritualism.
- P. They had fallen into a lukewarm approach to Christ, which is unacceptable in marriage or religion.
- Q. The text was NOT addressed to unregenerate sinners in any way, nor can it be offered to them at all.
- R. The text WAS addressed to the pastor and saved members of a church that needed spiritual growth.

## **The Text**

**Behold.** We are introduced to this text with the inspired word of the Holy Spirit to grab our attention.

1. The issue at hand is of great importance to believers, for the Lord of Glory is at our door! Hallelujah!
2. The attention-grabbing word is to identify the choice we have between spewing and communion.
3. In contrast to the Laodicean problems and his threatening warning, Jesus offered a great alternative.
4. The zeal He demanded should lay hold of this precious invitation and promise to avoid chastening.

**I. We do not have just any use of the first person, singular pronoun. Jesus Christ the Lord is speaking.**

1. If you have a red-letter edition Bible, the printing is in red, which indicates Jesus Christ is speaking.
2. The Jesus at the door is the same one promising to spew this tepid church out of His mouth (3:16).
3. This is the Lord Jesus sitting on His throne, not a hippie begging and scratching at a door (3:21).
4. This glorious Lord and King, described in 1:10-20, is nothing like the pitiful pictures of hippie Jesus.
5. Our Lord wanted us to remember the earlier appearance by repetition (Rev 2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14).
6. Men want an effeminate, hippie Jesus and not the conquering Prince of glory (Rev 1:5; 19:11-16).
7. This particular church was told Jesus was the Amen, the faithful and true witness, and their Creator.
8. This Jesus had demanded their zealous repentance, or He would come with a chastening scourge.
9. This Lord Jesus shocked John into a near-death experience by simply appearing to him (Rev 1:17).
10. The pictures of the longhaired creep at a wooden door is blasphemous, heretical, and slanderous; for it grossly degrades the Son of God and presents a condemned graven image of an imposter.

**Stand. The Lord Jesus Christ did not make this a one-way proposition. He came to the unfaithful church.**

1. Rather than sitting at the Father's right hand interceding for us, He has come to pursue communion.
2. The Groom seeking His bride is a wonderful picture of our Lord pursuing our affections and zeal.
3. Solomon's Song describes the bridegroom lover standing at the door for entrance to her bed (5:2-6).

**At the door. Here is the Lover of our souls pursuing a selfish bride, who does not know He has left.**

1. Forget the wooden door in the garden, for that is not the door to anything, nor is the hippie, Jesus.
2. The door is not the heart's door of an unregenerate sinner, for the context limits it to a church.
3. The door is where the Holy Spirit had previously described an eager bridegroom (Song 5:2-6).
4. God opened the door of faith to Gentiles without any knocking, begging, or pleading (Acts 14:27).
5. Paul only found opportunities to preach by the Lord opening doors (I Cor 16:9; II Cor 2:12; Col 4:3).
6. Jesus is the door for salvation; no man can come unto the Father but by Him (John 10:1-9; 14:6).
7. When Jesus closes the door, no one opens it, like Noah's Ark (Luke 13:25; Matt 25:10; Gen 7:16).
8. When Jesus approaches an unregenerate heart, He does not knock or ask; He commands (John 5:25)!
9. Does a heart have a door? Yes. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia to Paul's preaching (Acts 16:14).
10. By the following description of a man allowing Him in for fellowship, we know it is the heart door.
11. The Lord can open our hearts by regeneration or at times by convicting power; but at other times He calls on us to open actively and personally by confession and request for fellowship and communion.
12. Do not let anyone tell you Jesus cannot open the door, for the Spirit already wrote otherwise (3:7)!
13. If Jesus did not give us a new heart and open it to the gospel, we would not even see Him (John 3:3).
14. This is just not any sinner's heart door: this is the heart's door of elect and baptized church members.
15. And the intent is not eternal life or regeneration, but rather personal fellowship with Jesus Christ.

**And knock. Today is a day of opportunity for you. Jesus is actively seeking closer fellowship with you.**

1. The knocking is the convicting work of the Lord Jesus Christ, seeking your response to His overture.
2. He is making an effort to pursue you. Will you believe that this morning? Will you respond today?
3. Jesus Christ does not knock on the hearts of the unregenerate; He must give them new hearts, or they would all reject Him forever (Ezek 36:26; Acts 2:37; 5:33; 7:54; John 5:42; I Cor 2:14)!

**If any man. The context clearly limits the any man directly to the church members at Laodicea Church.**

1. To offer this text and these words to any man on the street confuses and perverts the true gospel.
2. Jesus does not defile or degrade Himself by offering Himself to sinners; He saves them (I Tim 1:15)!
3. The context must rule in the interpretation and application of this text. Reject the hippie Jesus now!
4. The "any man" of this verse is clearly the baptized and saved members of the church at Laodicea.
5. If Jesus knocked at the heart of sinners, they would blow Him away with a shotgun (Luke 19:14)!

6. The Lord Jesus must first give a new heart in regeneration before any man will heed His knock.
7. The overall rebuke was directed to the pastor; but the invitation is to any man in that or other church.
8. The previous verse explained that these are the loved ones of Christ, the sheep of His Father (3:19).

**Hear my voice.** This is the convicting voice of the Spirit of Christ operating with the new man of saints.

1. The voice of Jesus Christ in regeneration does not ask – it commands, and men obey (John 5:25-29)!
2. The voice of Christ in communion and fellowship asks and requests by the gospel (Heb 3:7,15; 4:7).

**And open the door.** There is an active response to Jesus Christ that we must give for full fellowship.

1. We can make a new heart in the sense of repentance, confession, and seeking the Lord (Ezek 18:31).
2. We open the door by humbly pursuing a personal relationship with Christ by faith (James 4:8).
3. But repentance is required first, in which we must throw sinful intruders out the back door (3:19).

**I will come in to him.** Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, the King of kings, will respond to our pursuit.

1. Jehovah promised that those seeking for Him with all their heart would surely find Him (Jer 29:13).
2. This is a promise you should lay hold of with all your might and believe with all your heart. Glory!
3. Jesus by His Spirit dwells in the hearts of the regenerate and communicates with them (Gal 4:6).
4. The Lord Jesus Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, with the potential of God's fulness (Eph 3:17).
5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts in a very real way by the Holy Spirit of God (Rom 5:5).
6. God dwells in us, and we dwell in God, when we lay hold of Him by faith in Jesus (I John 4:15).
7. Jesus promised the real presence of God and Himself by the Spirit to believers (John 14:15-24).
8. The Holy Spirit cannot bless us with unconfessed sin destroying fellowship (Eph 4:30; I Thess 5:19).
9. The LORD was the exceeding great reward of Abraham, and He should be of you (Genesis 15:1).

**And will sup with him.** The presence of Jesus Christ in our lives is not merely locational, but relational.

1. Jesus did not say he would only enter our hearts, but rather that he would sup with us in fellowship.
2. To sup with anyone is to share a meal with them, which is a wonderful way of intimate fellowship.
3. Abraham and Melchizedec shared bread and wine after the victory over the kings (Genesis 14:18).
4. Our brother John wrote so we might have the joy of apostolic fellowship with Christ (I John 1:1-10).

**And he with me.** What a privilege to have the fellowship and intimacy of acceptance with Jesus Christ.

1. Jesus Christ allowing us to sup with Him means our total acceptance in His sight and His brethren.
2. There is a small but important difference between Christ supping with us and we supping with Him.
3. Rather than our Prince merely visiting us at our tent, He has invited us to join Him in His pavilion!

## **The Application**

- A. The happiest people are always those closest to the Lord Jesus Christ and enjoying His fellowship.
- B. When God is your personal God by relationship, you can have marrow and fatness of soul (Ps 63).
- C. Neither your spouse nor any other problem can harm you or disappoint you, when you have Jesus Christ in your heart by faith. Oh reader, why even think about the matter? Fly to Jesus Christ, now!
- D. Why are some Christians happy in horrible circumstances, and others are miserable in good ones?
- E. We live in a very materialistic society where the emphasis is on the five senses and their pleasures.
- F. The most important aspect of this text is to answer the question how we open the door to our Lord.
  1. By observing the immediate preceding context, we must repent of our self-satisfaction (3:19).
  2. It is the humble and contrite heart that the high and lofty One will dwell with (Isaiah 57:15).
  3. By remembering the exhortation of John in his epistle, we must confess our sins (I John 1:7-9).
  4. By remembering David's holy commitment and request, we must ask for it, as he did (Ps 101:2).
  5. By reading our Lord's description of dwelling with us, we must love and obey (John 14:15-23).
  6. By recalling the incredible prayer of Paul for the Ephesians, we must pray for it (Eph 3:14-19).

7. We go to Christ and believe with commitment all this written of Him (John 6:56; I John 4:15).
8. And we love the brethren, for we recognize that God is love and hath loved us (I John 4:16).
9. We search for Him with a single heart of drawing near: He will respond (Jer 29:13; James 4:8).
10. We remember carnal living and sins will grieve and quench the Spirit (Eph 4:30; I Thess 5:19).

**Conclusion:**

1. Our goal for hearing the gospel this morning is for a relationship, not just a religion. We want Jesus Christ.
2. This text will be used thousands of times today with no understanding, no fruit, and totally miss the purpose.
3. We must thank God for the understanding of the text, but we must beg the Lord for the fulfilled promise of it!
4. Let us take a few minutes right now to humble ourselves and ask for much more in our relationship with Him.
5. Fly to Jesus Christ and do not let Him go until He comes in and sups with you, and you with Him. Today!

**For further study:**

1. The sermon outline, "[Hot, Cold, or Lukewarm](#)," which deals primarily with the first half of the warning to this church.
2. The sermon outline, "[Salvation by Works](#)," points the utter folly and heresy of offering eternal life for mere decisions.
3. The sermon outline, "[Why No Invitation](#)," corrects the modern invention and heresy of invitations at the end of services.
4. The sermon outline, "[Why Preach the Gospel](#)," explains the true purpose of the gospel in educating/converting the elect.
5. The sermon outline, "[Walking with God](#)," stresses the importance and nature of a personal relationship with God.
6. The sermon outline, "[Spiritual Adultery](#)," which pointedly condemns carnal living as spiritual adultery against God.
7. The sermon outline, "[Eating and Drinking Christ](#)," where carnal believers are separated from spiritual believers.