

He is not just awaiting our action, but is Himself looking for a home in the hearts of men. He commissioned the proclamation of the gospel and through it He dwells in our hearts by faith (Matt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 3:17; Rom. 10:17). Let us open the door to the Master.

A Door To Enter

Jesus is the door of the sheep (Jn. 10:7, 9). It is through Him and by Him that one may enter the flock of God. Being a part of that flock entitles us to blessings that others in this world do not enjoy. For instance, we can call on God as our Father (Gal. 4:6). The Son of God is the only way to go to the Father; to become His child (Jn. 14:6). There are not many doors—Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Joseph Smith—only One, Christ. “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Will you knock, open, and enter?

- Steven F. Deaton



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Departing From The Faith

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1).

What happens when one departs from the faith? A shipwreck (1 Tim. 2:18-20). That is, the individual destroys his or her faith. The Christian who leaves the Lord breaks fellowship with Him and is ruined.

Some people have the idea that departing from the faith involves blasphemy, going into atheism, or some religion that denies the Christ. Others view it as becoming grossly immoral either through rape, murder, or adultery. Both are right and wrong. It is true that denying Christ or living an immoral life shows your faith is shipwrecked. However, most people depart from the faith in more subtle ways.

When Paul penned 1 Timothy 4:1, he explained the problem in verses 2-5. Those he had in mind as departing from the faith were forbidding certain people to marry and commanding men to abstain from certain kinds of food. The ones who departed from the faith did not deny the Christ, the one true church, or go on a drug crazed killing spree. Rather, they simply taught the doctrines and commandments of men. They taught their religious opinions, seeking to bind them on others. This, Paul said, is an example of “deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.”

The same problem exists today. Christians who listen to the deceiving spirits and follow the doctrines of demons have departed from the faith. Their faith is shipwrecked.

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Examples Of Departing From The Faith

A Church Building Is Sinful. There is a growing movement among brethren that believes buildings purchased by a congregation for the purpose of worship and Bible study is sinful, or at least grossly irresponsible. The movement is commonly referred to as the house-church movement. Among its adherents it is not unusual to hear that the building is a tradition and makes worship less genuine than if it was done in a house. This house-church movement is pushing its beliefs, especially among younger Christians.

The truth is that churches from the beginning utilized buildings, whether borrowed or otherwise, to worship and study God's word. The first church met at the Temple in Jerusalem (Acts 2:46). Paul took the church in Ephesus from the local synagogue to the school of Tyrannus, where they met for two years (Acts 19:8-10). James referred to the assembly of the disciples (Jas. 2:2). The original word for "assembly" is actually synagogue; the idea being they were meeting in a building for worship. Too, the Corinthians were meeting at a specific place which was not a home (1 Cor. 11:22, 34).

Beyond this, churches are authorized under general authority to erect, purchase, rent, or borrow a building in which to meet. The command to assemble carries with it the necessity of a location to assemble (Heb. 10:24, 25; Acts 20:7). Some kind of location must be chosen. It matters not if it is a special building, a borrow classroom, or even a house. The problem is when men come along with their doctrines of demons insisting that a house is the only scriptural place to assemble.

We Must Use Thee, Thou, Thy When Referring To The Lord. One of the more ridiculous things I have heard is people who insist that when we refer to the Lord, especially in prayer, we must use the king's English, King James that is. For some reason there are men who think it is more reverent to use antiquated English and less reverent, or not reverent at all, to use modern English. This is pure foolishness.

If it is true that thee, thou, and thy are more reverent terms and to be used when speaking to God, are we also to refrain from using them when referring to mere

mortals? In other words, the King James Version uses these terms when addressing deity and humanity. It seems we ought to be consistent and use the king's English with the Lord and modern English with men. In fact, I propose that those who have this quibble produce a Bible version that makes the distinction.

By the way, are we to insist that people who speak another language use these terms too?

Don't get me wrong, if someone wants to use thee, thou, and thy to refer to the Lord, that is fine; just don't insist that everyone else must too.

- Steven F. Deaton

Doors

Contained within the New Testament are several references to doors. Let us notice a few.

A Door On Which To Knock

In His Sermon on the Mount, the Savior said, "...knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). The idea is that there is a door on which we must knock to have it opened and receive the blessings on the other side. That is, we must seek the righteousness of God. It requires action on our part. We cannot expect the Lord to enter our lives against our will. Rather, the Bible says, "...the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). We can rejoice in the promise that when we knock, "it will be opened" (Matt. 7:8).

A Door To Open

Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20). What a sweet thought it is that the Lord of Glory is seeking to enter our lives.