

Knocking at the door

Fats Domino's song, "Who's that knockin' on my door" kept coming to mind in recent days. I began to think about the words of the song:

Who's that knockin' on my door. old man trouble.
I know you've been here before. Old man trouble
I can tell it's you by the way you knocked
So my door gonna stay locked.
You're just biddin' your time
'cause you aint no friend of mine.
Trouble go away from my door. old man trouble
And don't you never come back no more.

I am fascinated by the kinds of door knocks and their implications. Some doors have doorbells that emit a certain chime that is often modeled after a few bars of a popular song. Some have shrill sound that can be both loud and upsetting. Of course, some doors have a door knocker which emits a series of dull thuds depending on how many times you knock it.

Probably the most fascinating part of a door is a peephole. The invention of the peephole is a real blessing. Before its invention, a person inside the house had to pull aside the window blind or curtains to get a better glance at the person standing outside. It gives them a chance to find out if the visitor is either friend or foe.

Peepholes give the insider a larger than life perspective of the person who stands on the outside. It also provides a source of security and safety that allows the person inside to decide if they wish to open the door or not.

Another advantage of a peephole is that it gives the person on the inside an opportunity to view the person on the outside. It is interesting to observe the person on the outside. Very often, the person on the outside arrives at a door; either knocks or rings the bell, and then steps back from the door. Invariably, the person on the outside will turn their back to the door. This shows one of two things – either they don't want the person inside to know who they are or they are preparing themselves for rejection by the fact that no one may be home or if there is someone home, they may not want to see them.

Sometimes, people have a coded knock. They will either tap with one knuckle a few times or with three knuckles in rapid succession or there may be variations depending on the unspoken agreement of all involved. A certain approved Morse code may be used.

I am fascinated by Warner Sallman's painting of Jesus standing at the door and knocking. You notice that the door does not have a doorknob. When asked why no doorknob, Sallman replied that the door to one's heart for God has to be opened from the inside.

Doors are doorways to the mind and heart of God. We have to open that door from the inside. Sometimes, the noise inside our house heart is so loud and distracting that we cannot hear God knocking. Other times, we have shut out the outside world and hung a sign on the outside of our heart door that says: "Do not disturb." Sometimes, the sign we hang out says, "Moved: left no forwarding address." This may indicate that we have lost out appetite for a personal relationship with God.

Sometimes, we don't want to open the door because we don't want to make the investment and change that the Lord may be calling us to make.

Other times, we place more security on our heart door because we don't want to be vulnerable. Maybe we have prayed for God to take away some cross we had to carry or ask him to help us to carry it and we seemed to get no response from God. So we barricade our door to make sure God doesn't intrude into our angry space.

Sometimes, if politicians out canvassing for votes arrive at our door and finds no response, they usually pass a flyer under the door inviting us to vote for them. I wonder if God does the same with us when he doesn't find us home. He slips a thought, a scripture passage, an ah ha moment under our door when we are least expecting. Maybe it is an invitation to something that seems too good to be true and is in fact good and true.

Oh! There goes my doorbell. All the staff have gone for the evening so I must answer it. I might be surprised.