

Sharing Our Dinner with Jesus



The Door Only You Can Open (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again sharing with you precious insights out of Scripture that have made the difference between success and failure in my life and can do the same in yours. Our theme for this week is "The Door Only You Can Open." And it's based on a passage in Revelation, chapter 3, verse 20, where Jesus is standing outside the door of a Christian church and He says this:

> "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me."

This verse pictures two alternative possible relationships to Jesus: Jesus may be on the outside or on the inside. The fact that you're part of a church doesn't mean necessarily that Jesus is in the inside in your life.

I've explained that to receive Jesus inside there are two requirements: first, you need to hear His voice; and second, when you hear His voice, you have to open the door. I explained yesterday that, in essence, that's a decision—a very simple, personal decision—opening the door. You can describe it in various ways: yielding your life to Jesus, submitting your will to Jesus, committing yourself to Jesus—there are various different words but they all are different ways of describing that transaction by which you, by decision of your will, open the door of your life and admit Jesus to become Lord of your life. That's the crucial issue.

As a result of that, as I said in my talk yesterday, a new birth takes place. The Holy Spirit brings the life of Jesus into your life and you are born of God. That's the outworking of that decision in your life.

Now, once you have opened the door I've suggested there are three simple ways to respond to make sure that the transaction is complete. First of all, you believe that Jesus has come in. Why do you believe it? Because He always tells the truth and He said, "If you open the door, I will come in." So, you've opened the door, so you can believe, from that moment onwards, He will come in. In fact, He has come in. He's not going to delay. He's been standing there a long

while. He's anxious to come in.

Second, respond by thanking Him. Thank Him, in faith, that He has come in, that He's become your Savior, that you've received Him and that you have been born of God. As you thank Him for it, it becomes real.

And then the third response is: confess your faith. Tell others. You don't have to be a preacher or a Bible-thumper, but just in a quiet, personal way, let it be known to the people round about you—your family, your friends, the people where you work—that you have given your life to Jesus Christ.

Now in my talk today I'm going to share with you what follows after this and it is sharing our dinner with Jesus. That may surprise you a little at first but I'll read His words again:

> "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him [You see, that's very specific. There's no compromise, there's no ambiguity.] ...I will come in to him and will dine with him and he with Me."

There are two further stages to the transaction. Jesus says, "I will dine with him," and then He says, "He will dine with Me." So, in my talk today, I'm going to speak about what it means to share your dinner with Jesus. Tomorrow I'll be speaking about the other side of the coin which is Jesus sharing His dinner with you. But the order is always that: you've got to give Him what you have first, then He gives you what He has.

Jesus actually wants to share all He has with us. He's not stingy. He'll hold nothing back. But first of all, we have to share all we have with Him.

The end purpose is what the Bible calls "fellowship," a life of sharing together. You see, that was the real purpose of God in sending Jesus and in the gospel being proclaimed. This is what the apostle John says in his first epistle, chapter 1, verse 3:

> "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

So the purpose of the gospel message is to bring us into the fellowship of the apostles and the fellowship of the apostles was with Jesus and with God the Father. Fellowship, the Greek word koinonia, means actually "sharing," having things in common. So Jesus says, "Share your dinner with Me."

This is exemplified in the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. Just one simple statement that Jesus makes to the Father in John 17, verse 10. He says to the Father, "...all things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine." Notice the order. First of all, "Mine is Thine," then "Thine is Mine." I'll give that to you in a more modern version. "All I have is yours," Jesus says to the Father, "and all you have is Mine." But notice, it always has to be that order. First of all, we have to say, "All I have is yours." Then the answer comes back from Jesus, "And all I have is yours." "Share your dinner with Me and I'll share My dinner with you." But you see, faith always requires that we share our dinner first. And until we do that, we don't even taste Jesus' dinner.

Now this is illustrated in a beautiful way in a story from the Old Testament in the life of the prophet Elijah. There was a great famine in the land of Israel. Elijah had been living by the brook Kerith, the brook had dried up, there was no more water for him, he had to move. And so the Lord told him to go to a certain widow in the city of Zarephath in Syria. And this is the story. I want you to listen because it illustrates how Jesus asks us to respond to Him. The response of the widow to Elijah illustrates the response that Jesus asks for from us. This is the story:

> "Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. Then the word of the Lord came to [Elijah]: 'Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food.' So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, 'Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?' As she was going to get it, he called, 'And bring me, please, a piece of bread.'"

That's humbling for the great man of God to ask a widow for water and bread, isn't it? Now this is how the widow responded:

> "'As surely as the Lord your God lives,' she replied, 'I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.' Elijah said to her, 'Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself

> and your son. For this is what the Lord, the God is Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day of the Lord gives rain on the land.' [So] she went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

Now I'm going to comment on that story and use it to illustrate our relationship with Jesus. Now, let's consider that incident of Elijah asking for bread and for water from the widow. That was humbling for the great man of God to have to go to a widow and ask her for the very last thing she had and her first response was, "Well, I can't give it to you. It's all I have left. I'm going to make some food for my son and myself and then we're going to die because we have nothing." And Elijah said, "That's fine. Go and make food for your son and yourself but first make me a small cake of bread." That's the test. All you have left is just a little oil in a jug, just enough to make one more little loaf of bread and here's the man of God saying, "Use it for me first." But his promise is: "If you'll do that, the oil will never run dry, the flour will never be used up. You'll have enough for yourself, your son and for me for all the period of this famine." How did the widow respond? In faith, she obeyed. She gave Elijah what she had and what happened? God so blessed her that she never ran out. People were running out all around her, people were short of food, people were dying, but she and her son and the prophet of God lived with enough. Because she'd taken that step of faith, she had given Elijah what she had first.

Now let's look at the picture of Jesus. He says, "I'll come in and I'll dine with you and then you'll dine with Me." For Jesus says, "Whatever you have, it may seem so little, so inadequate. It may look like all you have and you wonder, "Well, I have little enough. Why does the Lord ask for what I have?" That's faith. It's commitment. It's yielding. It's putting into practice the decision you've made. "Lord, I have very, very little. I'm in need. My life is in a mess. But what I have, Lord, it's yours." And when you do that, you experience the same kind of miracle that that widow woman experienced in the city of Zarephath—your resources are multiplied. God puts such a blessing on what you have that you're never in need, you're never in lack any more. You can even entertain the man of God. You see, that's commitment. That's surrender. That's faith. Faith acts before it sees the results. If you wait for the results, that's not faith.

So what Jesus is saying is: "You have so little. It's not going last, anyhow. You're going to run out soon. But if you'll give it to Me, I'll do for you what the Lord did for that widow. You'll have enough. It will be multiplied. It will last." And then there's also sharing His dinner with Him, but that I'll speak about in my talk tomorrow.

Our time is up for today. I will be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll be explaining the opposite side of the transaction—how Jesus shares His dinner with us.

Radio Program

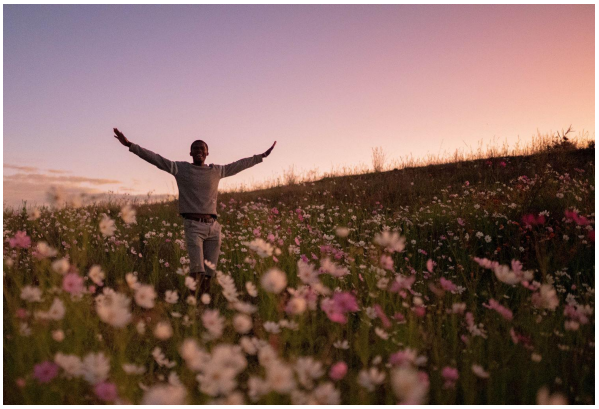
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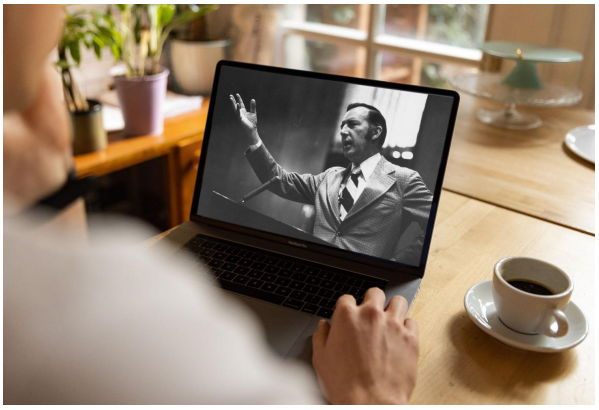
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