

## Christ The Door Into The Church

**Robert Murray M'Cheyne:**

**CHRIST IS THE KINDEST OF ALL teachers.** He was speaking to a crowd of ignorant and prejudiced Jews, and yet how kindly he deals with them. He told them one parable, but they understood not. 'This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were he spake unto them.' And yet, we are told, Christ spake unto them again. He hath given them a description of the true and false shepherd, and the door into the sheepfold; but they seem to have been at loss to know what the door meant; therefore he says, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.' You see how kindly he tries to instruct them. My brethren, Christ is the same kind of teacher still. Are there not many stupid, and prejudiced persons here? And yet has not he given you 'precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little' (Isaiah 13:28). He has broken down the bread for you.

Let us now examine this explanatory parable: (1) Christ is the door into the Church. (2) The invitation here is given to enter in. (3) The promise to those that enter in.

**Christ is the door into the Church.**

'I am the door.' The only way into the Church of God, either for ministers or members is by Christ, and through faith in Him. Many enter in by learning; learning is not to be despised. But yet it is not the door. There are many that enter into the ministry, by having eminent gifts, but these are not the door. And those that enter in such a way are thieves and robbers, for they enter not in by the door. Again, many enter in by the door of worldly favour, some by the favour of the rich, some by the life of the common people, some by the favour of patron; but still they are still thieves and robbers, for they enter not in by the door. Remember then, and never forget it, that the right way into the ministry is through Jesus Christ. None can tell of sin, but those who have felt its burden. None can tell of pardon, but those who have tasted of it. None can tell of Christ's power to sanctify, but those who have holiness in their hearts. Brethren, hold such in reverence, flee from all others, they may have learning, they may have gifts, they may have the flattery of the common people, but they are thieves and robbers.

But further, there are many members who enter into the fold another way; they also are thieves and robbers. There are many who enter in by the door of knowledge— they have got acquainted with Bible knowledge, they can tell of a way of sinner's acceptance with God; but if you have not come into the fold by being washed in the blood of Christ, you are a thief and a robber.

Some enter into the fold by a good life. As touching the law they are like Paul, blameless. You are not a thief, you are not a swearer, you are not a drunkard, you think you have a right to enter in — a right to sit at the Lord's table; but Christ says it over and over again, you are a thief and a robber. Ah, brethren, remember if you are admitted into the fold on account of your morality, your outward decency, your good life, you are a thief and a robber. Brethren, there is a day coming when those who have entered into the sheepfold, not by the door, but some other way, will look back and see their guilt when they shall enter an undone eternity.

Observe, brethren, before I leave this part of the subject, that Christ is a present entrance. Brethren, there is a time in each of your lives — or rather I should say, history — that the door of the sheepfold is open for to you. 'I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved'; but time will pass away. It is but a moment compared with eternity. This is a solemn truth. Brethren, if I could promise you that the door will stand open for a hundred years, yet it would still be your wisdom to enter in now; but I cannot answer for a year, I cannot answer for a month, I cannot answer for a day, I cannot answer for an hour; all that I can answer for is, it is open now—tomorrow it may be shut forever.

I come now to the second thing proposed, and that is, to show you Christ's invitation.

'I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved.' There are many sweet invitations to sinners in the Bible; I have often felt these words to be the sweetest. There are some invitations addressed to those who are thirsty. It is said in Isaiah, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters' (Isaiah 55:1f.) Christ said on the last day, that great day of the feast, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink' (John 7:37). And he says, near the end of the Book of Revelation, 'I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely' (21:6). Again, there are some invitations that are addressed to those that have a burden: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' (Matthew 11:28). Again, there are some that are addressed to those who are prisoners: 'Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope' (Zechariah 9:12).

But this appears to me the sweetest of all, for it is said, 'If any man'. It is not said, if any man thirsty man, if any weary man, if any burden man, but is any man enter in he shall be saved. I have seen some rich man's doors,

where none could enter but the rich; and where the beggar must lie at the gate. But Christ's door is open to any man, whatever your life, what ever your character may be. Christ is not like the door of some Churches, where none can enter in except the rich, Christ's door is open ti the poor, 'To the poor the gospel is preached' (Matthew 11:5). Some, perhaps, can say, 'I am the most vile one in this congregation', yet Christ says, 'Enter in.' Some, perhaps, can say, 'I have sinned more than all; I have sinned against a father, I have sinned against a mother, I have sinned against mercies and against judgments, against the invitations of the gospel, and against light,' yet Christ says, 'Enter in.'

Observe still farther that the invitation is not to look at the door, but to enter in. There are many that hear about the door, but that is not enough; it is to enter in at it. And there are many that like to hear about the door, but yet they do not enter in. Ah, my brethren, that is a great cheat of the devil. I am persuaded many of you will go away this day well pleased because you heard about the door, but you do not enter in. There are many that go a step farther, they look at the door, but yet they do not enter in. I believe that many of you are often brought there; but when it comes to the point, that you must leave your idols, that you must leave your sins, you do not enter in. 'By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.'

Again, there are some who see other people enter in, but they do not enter in themselves. You, perhaps, have seen a father, or mother, or a neighbour enter in; you have seen a change come over them, and a peace possess their minds, and you say, 'I wish I were them'; but you do not enter in. Ah! if you would be saved, you must enter in at the door; convictions will not do, tears will not do, etc., And this is the reason who so many of you are not happy; you do not enter in.

I now come to the third point, and the last point, and that is, the promise:

'If any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture'; 'I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.'

The first part of the promise is, 'They shall be saved'. Christ pledges his word on it, that those who enter in shall be saved. Those who do not enter in shall be damned. If you are not Christ's, you are without, and 'without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murders, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie' (Revelation 22:15). But those who enter in shall be saved.

It is immediate pardon. There will be even now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. O my brethren, it is immediate pardon we offer you from the Father: 'If any man enter in, he shall be saved.' And then, 'He shall go in and out, and find pasture.' That is to say, you will have all the privileges of a sheep; it goes out to the well; it goes out to the pasture. So, if you are his, you can go in and out to find pasture. My dear brethren, there may come a time in Scotland, when there is little pasture, when there will be no undershepherd, when the witnesses will be slain. Yet the Lord will be your shepherd, he will feed you. You shall 'go in and out, and find pasture.'