

and houses of correction. But none of these can convey a lively impression of the grace and condescension of God, in coming to the doors of the soul-houses of men, and knocking to be admitted into their darkness, squalidness and misery! For it is not because they are beautiful that God comes, or because he is mistaken about their condition, or thinks them better than they are. It is because He knows the darkness and the emptiness of some; the abuses and misery in others; the rioting and desecration in others. And to all he comes to bring light for darkness, cleansing for foulness, furniture for emptiness, and order for confusion! He comes to turn the rusted locks, and to open the closed doors of every chamber—to let men up into every part of themselves—and to fill the whole dwelling of the soul, from foundation to dome, with light and gladness, with music and singing, with joy and rejoicing!

"Behold I stand at the door and knock." Christ comes to the soul-house, and stands there and knocks. On getting no answer, he goes away only to come and knock again. He waits at the door, and listens for a voice within, and goes away!—He comes again, and waits, and goes away!—He knocks, not at one door, but goes round to every door, and waits for an answer. As one who returns to his dwelling in the night, after a journey, and finding it locked, knocks at the accustomed door of entrance in the front, and getting no answer goes to the door in the rear, then to the side door—if there be one—and then to every other door, in order, if possible, to get into his house; so Christ, who longs to enter into the soul, goes to every door in succession, and knocks, and listens for an invitation to come in, and leaves not one chamber in the soul-house unsought, or one door untried! He knocks at the door of Reason; at the door of Fear; at the door of Hope; at the door of Imagination and Taste, of Benevolence and Love, of Conscience, of memory and Gratitude! He does not neglect a single one!

Beginning at the upper and the noblest, where he ought to come in as a King of Glory, through gates of triumph, he comes round and down to the last and lowest, and retreats wistfully and reluctantly, return-

ing often—morning, noon and night—continually seeking entrance, with marvellous patience, accepting no refusal, repulsed by no indifference to his presence, and no neglect of his message!

If he be admitted, joy unspeakable is in the house, and shall be henceforth. The dreary dwelling is filled with light from the brightness of his countenance, and every chamber is perfumed from the fragrance of his garments. Peace and hope, love and joy, abide together in the house—for Christ himself takes up his abode therein. But if, after his long knocking at the door and patient waiting for entrance, his solicitation be refused or neglected, by and by there shall come a time when you who have denied him, shall be denied of him. For when you shall knock at the gate of heaven for admittance into the mansions which he has prepared from the foundation of the world, he will say unto you, as you said unto him, Depart! But that dreadful day has not yet come, and he still stands at the door—his locks wet with the dews of the morning—and waits to be invited into the chamber of your soul. Hear his voice once more, and yield to its gentle persuasion: *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me!"*

A Caution

If You would not fall short of the kingdom of heaven, take heed of inordinate passion. Some care not what they say in their passion; they will censure, slander, wish evil to others; but how can Christ be in the heart, when the devil hath taken possession of the tongue? Water, when it is hot, soon boils over; so, when the heart is heated with anger, it soon boils over in fiery passionate speeches. Some curse others in their passion; they whose tongues are set on fire, let them take heed that they do not one day in hell desire a drop of water to cool their tongues. O, if you would not miss of the heavenly kingdom, beware of giving way to your unbridled passions!—*Rev. Thos. Watson,*