

THE DOOR IN AND THE DOOR OUT  
Jno. 10:9

The 23rd Psalm and the tenth chapter of John seem to have a connection. In the Death Valley of the twenty third Psalm the Psalmist cries out, "The Lord is my Shepherd", and in John Jesus answers back, "I am the Good Shepherd."

In the ninth verse of the tenth chapter Jesus said, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture."

Jesus saw the sheep in the evening entering the sheepfold where they had protection and felt secure back behind the protection of the Shepherd. In the mornings He saw them restless to come out of the fold and go out into the green pastures. The ALTERNATION of being in at night and out in the day struck Jesus as typical of man. This going in and going out was necessary to make the lambs grow and to keep the adult sheep healthy and strong.

If you exercise one muscle in your arm altogether the alternate muscle becomes flabby and weak. If you stayed in the house all the time you might grow pounds but little muscle. Rest is needed and sleep has to be had but you also need the out of doors. They say that if a man and wife stay in too much they become fussy...any of you know any thing about that? I heard of one man who went to his pastor and reported that he and the misses were not doing too well. The pastor asked what the trouble was and the man said we are fussing too much. The pastor told him that when they got cross for him just to take a walk in the fresh air. A few days later the preacher saw the man and asked how he was getting along. He said, "I am just feeling fine but I have been taking lots of walks in the fresh air."

Jesus pictured the Prodigal Son. You know the story. He got his portion of the estate that fell to him and went into the Far country and wasted his living. When he realized that he had acted the fool he began to think things over and found that he needed a DOOR IN.

The Elder brother was a home boy. The good room at the home and a table loaded with good country ham, and a horse to ride when he desired it, his part of the estate increasing

all the time was good enough for him. He stayed there and ate and slept and worked some. He grew fat and self centered and had no desire to get out from the security and protection of such surroundings. When we take a scrutinizing view of this boy we naturally conclude that he needed a door OUT. Do not misunderstand me. He did not need a door out into the sins of the world but out into the pasture lands of the free sons of God where one may feed his mind on fresh ideas, see large visions, and grow into BIG-BESS of soul.

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It is a blessed thing that when a Prodigal gets enough of wasting himself that Jesus offers him a door in to the comforts and security of the Divine Household. It is ALSO a blessed thing that, when short sighted, narrow minded, self centered, and small souled Elder brothers are about to dry up, Jesus has a door out for them to become acquainted with broader world visions.

Neither of these boys was an ideal person. The ideal person is one, who habitually, makes proper use of the Christ Door.

We get some lessons from this I think. We see faith going into the shelter to meditate and receive strength from the Divine household. Then we see it go out to be exposed to the world and its needs.

The healthy Christian must know the shelter of his religion. It is a protection against the anxieties of life. Some over emphasize staying in it away from the world. We are not to hide there from the cries of the world but gather spiritual food there that will give strength to go out into the midst of the fight for God. In Biloxi the ministers could have just stayed in their studies and prayer rooms of their churches and never raised a voice..the meditation should send us out to relieve corruption WHEREVER it is.

Joseph Pulitzer, in New York, built the Tower of Silence, in the heart of New York City so that he would not hear the tumult of the streets. As a Christian I must have a front door opening on to the world, but as Walter Rauschenbusch said,

"In the castle of my soul  
Is a little back gate  
Whereat, when I enter  
I am in the presence of God."

You know what it is...there are times when we need the door IN. The Marine likes the harbor...and then he is ready again for the open even stormy sea. We all like it is why one of the most popular hymns we have is "Rock of Ages Cleft for me." and "Jeus Lover Of My Soul let me to Thy bosom fly."

But religion can not always be flowing inward but must be coursing outward, crusading for God. It must alternate between going in to restraints and out to the liberties of the same. JESUS WOULD GIVE THIS LIBERTY OF GOING OUT ONLY AFTER THEY HAVE LEARNED THE DISCIPLINE THROUGH GOING IN.

SO FRIENDS , TO DAY, LET US GO IN TO A CLOSE UP VIEW OF THE SHELTER AND THEN OUT TO THE LONG VISTAS OF THE PASTURE.

" I AM THE DOOR, BY ME IF ANY MAN ENTER IN, HE SHALL BE SAVED, AND SHALL GO IN AND OUT, AND FIND PASTURE."

