

## Get in the Game – Week 1

One day a pastor went out to visit his church members. Things were going well until he came to this one house. It was obvious someone was home because he could hear the TV and he recognized the car in the driveway, but no one answered. He knocked several times but still no answer. So, not wanting to linger, he pulled out a business card and on the back he wrote Revelations 3:20 ESV:

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.*

The following Sunday the card showed up in the collection plate. Below the Pastors message someone had written Genesis 3:10 ESV:

*"I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."*

Yep, you guessed it. One of these verses is part of our scripture for this week. And seeing how we are starting a new sermon series called. "Get in the Game", if you had guessed Revelations 3:20 you would have been right. While 3:20 is the main text, Revelations 3:14-20 ESV may be useful for context. It reads:

*"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.*

*"I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing,' not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

Jesus doesn't pull any punches here, does He? He normally has something good to say, but not about the Laodiceans. He basically calls them a lifeless, backslidden church. And the worst part, they don't even realize it. But He offers them a way in verse 20 when He says, *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.*

Seeing how these verses are addressed to the church in Laodicea, I don't think it's a stretch to assume that verse 20 as well. In other words, the door that Jesus is knocking on isn't a private residence, it's a church. It's His church. He is making a universal offer not only to the church in Laodicea, but to all churches and churches to come, to *"anyone [that] hears his voice and opens the door"*. But in the same sentence that universal offer becomes very personal. It goes from *"anyone"* to *"I"*, and *"him"*, and *"me"*. The offer can go out to everyone, but it can't come back that way. No, the acceptance of the offer must come from me, it must come from you.

I know this is a bit of an aside, but doesn't it seem more than a little ironic that Jesus is knocking on the door of His church? Maybe at first, but this is the same church about which Jesus had nothing good to say. This is a church that was probably once growing and dynamic but is now lifeless and backslidden. This has become a church where Jesus isn't so comfortable or even

welcome. This is a church where He would probably rather not be. BUT HE IS! He is to offer us a better way. *"He is"* to offer us a renewed and deeper relationship. *"He is"* because He wants to sit down and share a meal with you, and me.

Do you hear Him knocking? You have two choices. Like the person in the story, you can hide in fear, or you can open the door. My prayer is that you will open the door to a new life and a better way.