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**Series:** God's Love in Action!

**Sermon:** 5 of 5

**Date:** May 31, 2009

## AN INVITATION

Hello! God always loves. His love is always in action. We know God reaches people in the world through His Son, Jesus. Jesus died on a cross and rose from the dead. Now we have the Holy Spirit to help us understand. The Holy Spirit helps us teach others and learn.

We will discuss how to open our hearts and invite Jesus in. The theme of this sermon is, "An Invitation." The Bible tells us in Revelation 3:20, *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."* This verse is very clear. When someone knocks on the door, the other person has to decide to open it and welcome the person in. This is an invitation.

Now, look at your own heart. Have you invited Jesus in? God loves you. He has given you His Son, Jesus. You open your heart by believing in Jesus.

I remember a long time ago when I was learning how to accept Jesus Christ as my Savior. In the process of becoming a Christian, I went to different meetings to learn more about Jesus. I went to a Billy Graham revival meeting. I listened to his sermon, and then bought a very good book explaining the book of John in the Bible. The foreword in the book had an excellent explanation of how to become a Christian. I will explain what I learned to you in ASL now.

Imagine yourself living in a nice house. It is your own house. You are sitting in the living room, watching football and other programs on your television. You are relaxing, as Jesus comes and knocks on your door. He rings your doorbell that also flashes your lights. Nobody answers the door. Maybe you didn't see the lights flashing. Jesus continues to ring your doorbell. He looks through the blinds of your window, and He sees you sitting in your living room watching television. He rings the doorbell again. He waves his arms outside your window. You see him waving his arms. You get up and walk to the door.

You open the door and greet Jesus. Jesus asks to enter your house. You tell Him you are busy, yet invite Him in. You and Jesus walk into the living room, and you both sit down. You pick up the remote and continue watching television. Jesus asks, "Are you watching a good program?" You say, "Well, there's football. It's the Super Bowl. I'm just clicking through the channels." Jesus says, "Who do you think will win?" You answer, "Oh, I don't really care. I'm a bit bored."

Jesus says, "Oh, you're bored. Do you want to have a discussion?" You reply, "Maybe later. I need to go to the kitchen and get something to eat."

You leave the room and go into the kitchen. Jesus looks around, and then follows you into the kitchen. He sees you have a beautiful kitchen with an island. You find some leftover pizza and warm it up in the microwave. You also pour a drink for yourself. Jesus gets your attention. He says, "You have a nice kitchen with beautiful lights." You tell him you have recently expanded your kitchen and spent thousands of dollars to make the improvements. Jesus ponders the amount of money you've invested in your kitchen. He asks you if you have any plan to grow your heart. You have a hard time answering Him. Instead of answering, you go ahead and eat your pizza. Your pizza isn't very good so you throw it on your plate.

"I'm late for a meeting with a friend," you say. You excuse yourself to go upstairs to change clothes. Jesus follows you up the stairs and waits for you in the hallway, while you are in your bedroom. He glances around your nice hallway and notices your nice bathroom and bedrooms. He sees you have a nice house. And He waits.

You come out of your bedroom, walk down to the bathroom and comb your hair. You straighten your clothes and add a touch of cologne. Jesus asks, "Where are you going and who are you meeting?" You say, "I'm going to the Deaf club to play pool and other games." Jesus asks, "Do you ever talk about Me with your friends?" You admit you do not. Jesus tries to tell you something, but you are more focused on getting your hair combed and worried that you will be late for your meeting.

Jesus stops you and asks you to wait. "I can't go any further," He says. "There is something hindering my relationship with you. I can't open the door in the hallway. You have to open it."

You go ahead and open the door. Inside this closet are different magazines, some with pornographic pictures in them, and others with astrology stuff. Jesus challenges you to clean out the closet. He tells you if you clean it, you will be free. The truth will set you free.

You quickly gather the magazines and throw them into a bag. You remind Jesus you are in a hurry to leave. Jesus tells you, "Wait! I want you to take the magazines outside, wrap them up, and burn them." You tell Him, "I don't have time. All right. I'll make time."

You take the bag, hurry down the stairs, run out the door, and throw the bag out. You are frustrated. You light a match and toss it in, and then watch the magazines burn.

Jesus is standing beside you, smiling. You watch as the mess is being destroyed. You look at Jesus. He says, "Okay, you may leave now." You respond, "No, wait. Come here. I want you to join me. I want you to stay." Jesus says, "Are you still planning to go to the Deaf club?" "No! I've changed my plans," you respond. Jesus is excited that you want to spend time with Him.

Jesus says, "Let's go back to your kitchen." Instead, you lead Him to the living room to visit

while you sit on fancy chairs. You offer coffee to Jesus. Jesus tells you water is better, and He offers you the living water so that you will never thirst. You praise God for Jesus. You ask Jesus to teach you more and that you are sorry for being busy, and for lying and making excuses. You tell Jesus you will pay attention to Him now and open your heart to Him.

Jesus says, "You have already invited Me in, and I'm very happy to eat with you. You will experience a spiritual feast. You can feast on God's Word, the Bible. You will have eternal life with Me."

You are now more eager to learn and walk with Jesus. This is the story of "An Invitation." You need to open your heart. Your heart is like a door. But your mind can be an obstacle. Obstacles are the world's temptations you face and the things your own flesh wants to do. Jesus wants you to love Him and to follow His perfect will for your life. We can live forever with Him. His blood forgives your sins.

Open your heart and let Him in. If you feel an impression or conviction on your heart, open it right away.

When I was lost, He convicted me. I opened my heart and accepted Him as my Savior. Then I became a pastor. I have enjoyed tremendous blessings of His love in my life. I don't let the world and what they think of me bother me. I know God's plan is better for me. God has better ideas and ways because He knows me more than the world does.

Praise God. He is so good! Now, let us pray. You have a choice now. Jesus is knocking on your heart. Will you open the door and let Him in? Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your faithfulness and Your love. You care for us. You stand at the door of our hearts. You long for people all around the world to know You. You are very patient with us. We know Your love is still in action. Your love flows through us, through our whole bodies. Purify us from our sins. Make us holy like You, as we walk with Jesus. Father, we thank You. We love You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the precious name of Jesus I pray. Amen.

Don't forget to invite Jesus into your heart now. God bless you. I love you.



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