

Luke 13:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Analysis

When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are. This sobering warning follows the question "Are there few that be saved?" (v. 23). Jesus shifts from abstract speculation to urgent personal application. The "master of the house" (ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης, ho oikodespotēs) represents Christ as judge, and the "door" (θύραν, thyran) symbolizes entrance to the kingdom.

The phrase "is risen up, and hath shut to the door" (έγερθη...καὶ ἀποκλείσῃ τὴν θύραν, egerthē...kai apokleisē tēn thyran) uses aorist subjunctive verbs indicating definite future action—a fixed moment when opportunity ends. Once the door shuts, no amount of knocking avails. The desperate cry "Lord, Lord" (Κύριε, κύριε, Kyrie, kyrie) echoes Matthew 7:21-23, where Jesus warns that mere verbal profession without obedience proves worthless. Repetition indicates urgency and emotional intensity but not genuine relationship.

The master's response—"I know you not whence ye are" (Οὐκ οἶδα ὑμᾶς πόθεν ἔστε, Ouk oida hymas pothen este)—is devastating. The verb oida (οἶδα) means to know intimately, recognize, acknowledge. Christ's declaration "I do not know you" means "I never had relationship with you." The added phrase "whence ye are"

(where you are from) emphasizes complete unfamiliarity—they are strangers despite claiming connection. Religious activity, church attendance, even miracles done in Jesus' name (Matthew 7:22) don't guarantee salvation. Only those who enter through the narrow door of genuine faith and repentance are known by Christ.

Historical Context

The imagery of shut doors and excluded guests would resonate with Palestinian wedding customs, where late arrivals might be refused entry after the celebration began (Matthew 25:1-13). The "master of the house" language reflects Greco-Roman household structure where the paterfamilias exercised absolute authority over who entered. Jesus appropriates this familiar social reality to illustrate eschatological judgment. The warning targeted first-century Jews who presumed covenant membership guaranteed salvation, but it applies universally: religious heritage, external conformity, and verbal profession without genuine heart transformation will not save.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What is the difference between calling Jesus 'Lord' and truly knowing Him in saving relationship?
2. How does this warning challenge presumptive faith based on religious activity rather than genuine conversion?
3. What does the finality of the shut door teach about the urgency of responding to the gospel today?

Interlinear Text

ἀφ' οὐ ἀν ἐγερθῇ ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης καὶ
When once G3739 G302 is risen up G3588 the master of the house and
G575 G1453 G3617 G2532

ἀποκλείσῃ τὴν θύραν καὶ ἀρξησθε ἔξω ἐστάναι καὶ
hath shut G3588 at the door and ye begin without to stand and
G608 G2374 G2532 G756 G1854 G2476 G2532

κρούειν τὴν θύραν λέγοντες Κύριε, Κύριε, ἄνοιξον
to knock G3588 at the door saying Lord Lord open
G2925 G2374 G3004 G2962 G2962 G455

ἡμῖν καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ἐρεῖ ὑμῖν Οὐκ οἶδα ὑμᾶς
unto us and he shall answer and say unto you not I know you
G2254 G2532 G611 G2046 G5213 G3756 G1492 G5209

πόθεν ἐστέ
whence ye are
G4159 G2075

Additional Cross-References

Luke 13:27 (Parallel theme): But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

Luke 6:46 (References Lord): And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Isaiah 55:6 (References Lord): Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: