

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" (ἐγερθῇ...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 ἐστέ, 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'	οὗ	ἂν	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	ἄρξησθε	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	εἰρεῖ	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: