

I was just putting dinner on the table when the doorbell rang. Sunday 6:30 pm not the usual time for salespeople to come by or the neighbor. My heart started racing the moment I opened the door. I knew immediately who they were and what they wanted. The nametags and nice dresses gave them away. They were female Mormon missionaries. After explaining that we'd like to invite them in otherwise we agreed to a better meeting time. That following Saturday Jennifer and I did welcome them. We gave them water and a small snack. We were respectful and discussed openly the differences between Mormonism and Christianity.

Four weeks we met with them. Each week we worked at sharing God's Word. We shared Bible passages that said God demanded perfection from them and us and that we couldn't achieve that alone. We told them that because of Christ we were already perfect in God's eyes and asked them if they could say the same. We told them how that was free, that God paid the price by sending Jesus to the cross. Mostly because they were Mormons and Mormons change the definition of Christian words we had to concentrate on defining and being as clear as possible. Precision was important.

Jesus illustrates that precision is so important in this first week of our new sermon series, Love Speaks. Today as we examine the gospel we learn that love speaks precisely. The picture Jesus uses helps us get at this ultimate truth of God.

**Precision required to get through the door**  
**It's a narrow door**  
**It's an open door**

The often scary thing about Mormons is how they randomly show up at your doorstep. They ring the doorbell and you're knees start knocking. I think that's probably why so many people try to shut the door just as quickly as they open it. It's not lack of belief in Jesus. I think the biggest fear is the unknown question. Jesus was asked what seemed like a random question. **"Lord are only a few people going to be saved?"** Did Jesus' knees start knocking? Did he want to get away as fast as possible? Of course not. The question asked was too theoretical. The answer wouldn't lead anyone to repent of their sins. Knowing the number of people saved wouldn't lead to faith. Many didn't care but Jesus cared a great deal about the truth. Precision was important and more important was the question that should've been asked. Rather than crunching the numbers knowing how one gets to heaven was more important. Jesus was saying strive to make sure you'll get in.

It was surprising sitting with real Mormons at how much they talk about Jesus. Plenty of people too make at least passing reference to the Bible. TV preachers, doomsday predictors, and even some casual Christians all can use the Bible at times and say they know Jesus. The Mormon sisters even used Jesus and his name to validate what they believed. What Jesus says may come as a surprise. **"But he will answer I don't know you or where you come from. Then you will say We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets."** Precision is required. Jesus is surely taught here, in worship and in Bible studies, in Sunday school and Vacation Bible School. Are there times though where you're here, but not engaged. The Bible might still be mostly a foreign book. Religion might just be something you feel is the right thing to do. When Jesus is taught, you might not be listening. You might be trying to enter heaven through the door marked "tried to be good enough" or "feels saved." Precision is required to get through the door because the door is narrow. Those with no time for Jesus or who are looking into any other door are in trouble.

That there's even a door provided for us to get to heaven is only by God's grace. The door is narrow because the door is Christ alone. That's as exclusive as it gets and we just sang about it. *"In Christ alone my hope is found . . . In Christ alone—who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe. This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones he came to save. Till on that cross, as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied."* With a world full of choice doors to go through we'd never find the right one alone. God provides the narrow door and provides the knowledge to come through. We need not be left outside the door. God brings you to the right door with precision. He guides you to hear and read that Christ Jesus is the Savior and the narrow door. God points him out over and over here in the Word. God in love reveals it to us, here at the font. Precision is required to get through the narrow doorway to heaven because Jesus is the narrow door.

Once through it's time to listen to Christ's command and strive to stay. **"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door."** No way this could be your own strength or ability. It's got to be God's work in you. It happens when Christ is central in your heart and life. When the law strikes your conscience and you're brought to understand your sinful condition. When the gospel good news that he forgives your sins overflows into your life. It will be seen in how you urge others to find the narrow door marked Jesus. Love speaks precisely. One side of the narrow door means eternal life and salvation and the other side means eternal death. In or out, there's no other option. Precision is required to get through this door because it's a narrow door, its Christ Jesus alone. And for now it's an open door.

Those Mormon sisters kept coming and we kept opening the door. The conversation was pleasant and respectful all around. Talking with them as much as we did we grew to care for them. More and more we wanted to shake them awake to the truth about Jesus. We took seriously Jesus' warning of the time growing short. **"Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, Sir, open the door for us."** First recognize there will be some outside when the narrow door is shut. They'll plead for a way in. But their chances were when the door was open. They didn't care, figured they'd always have more time, thought they'd talk their way inside. Suddenly God closes the door as he said he would and has every right to do. Also recognize there will be a time when the door is shut. Those outside will have no excuses, they'll realize how bad it is, and they'll hurt because of the joy they missed out on. On the inside there will be those from all over, every culture, every denomination, every people all over the world. All believing in Jesus and all led through the door that now stands open.

Kids love excuses. Adults love excuses too. But no excuse works with God. There is no second chance. If that's what you're counting on, some second chance right before the end or some death bed opportunity to take care of religious matters, be careful. There's no guarantee of the door being open tomorrow, much less when you think those moments will come. God isn't messing around. Hell is real and it is dreadful. Those experiencing hell realize they're outside of God's love. They realize the joy of heaven they're missing out on. They realize they were wrong to think they'd be able to take care of it later.

That's why it's so important to hear that God has the narrow door open right now. Jesus stands as your Savior. The free forgiveness he won for you by his death is credited to you. He lovingly says your guilt is gone. He tells you the cost is nothing. He did it because he loves you. He urges you to come through the door of believing in him now. **"Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."** First and last have nothing to do with time. It has everything to do with the favor of God. God can make anyone who seems last in the world to be first by faith alone. And it has everything to do with the narrow door which is open to salvation right now.

The Mormon sisters have stopped coming. They realized we weren't going to join their church and we weren't budging and neither were they. That's not to say the visits weren't successful. We shared God's truth about sin and how Jesus takes that sin away. We parted friendly. If you have friends who are staring at a door to get to heaven marked "try harder" or "who cares it's all foolish", here's the reality. You have the opportunity now to speak precisely. That's what love does. God's love spoke to you about the narrow door of Jesus. Don't think you have to be a pastor and his wife to open the door to Mormon missionaries or even to your friends and family. You can speak in love to someone about Jesus. Precision is needed now because the door is narrow. Precision is needed because God is bringing this world to a close quickly. Today the door is open but tomorrow it might not be. Christ's love for us is our calling. Because of that, love speaks precisely.