

Dear FPC Family,

I have been reflecting on those in need who frequent our church. In my short time here in Ocala I could not count the number of times I have been asked by someone in need for a basic necessity that I often take for granted. Whether poor or wealthy, abundant life happens when we live life with God. What an important thing it is we do in ministry! I discovered this well known poem written by the Rev. Samuel Moor Shoemaker. His words say it perfectly. He writes,

“I stay near the door. I neither go too far in, nor stay too far out. The door is the most important door in the world—It is the door through which men walk when they find God. There’s no use my going way inside, and staying there, when so many are still outside, and they, as much as I, crave to know where the door is. And all that so many ever find is only the wall where a door ought to be. They creep along the wall like blind men, with outstretched, groping hands, feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door. Yet they never find it . . . So I stay near the door.”

“The most tremendous thing in the world is for men to find that door—the door to God. The most important thing any man can do is to take hold of one of those blind, groping hands, and put it on the latch—the latch that only clicks and opens to the man’s own touch. Men die outside that door, as starving beggars die on cold nights in cruel cities in the dead of winter— Die for want of what is within their grasp. They live, on the other side of it—live because they have found it. Nothing else matters compared to helping them find it, and open it, and walk in, and find Him . . . So I stay near the door.”

“Go in, great saints, go all the way in— Go way down into the cavernous cellars, and way up into the spacious attics— in a vast, roomy house, this house where God is. Go into the deepest of hidden casements, of withdrawal, of silence, of sainthood. Some must inhabit those inner rooms, And know the depths and heights of God, and call outside to the rest of us how wonderful it is. Sometimes I take a deeper look in. Sometimes I venture a little farther; but my place seems closer to the opening . . . So I stay near the door.”

“The people too far in do not see how near these are to leaving—preoccupied with the wonder of it all. Somebody must watch for those who have entered the door, but would like to run away. So for them, too, I stay near the door. I admire the people who go way in. But I wish they would not forget how it was before they got in. Then they would be able to help the people who have not even found the door, or the people who want to run away again from God. You can go in too deeply, and stay in too long, and forget the people outside the door. As for me, I shall take my old accustomed place, near enough to God to hear, and know God is there, but not so far from men as not to hear them, and remember they are there too. Where? Outside the door—”

“Thousands of them, millions of them. But—more important for me—one of them, two of them, ten of them, whose hands I am intended to put on the latch, so I shall stay by the door and wait for those who seek it. ‘I had rather be a door-keeper . . .’ So I stay near the door.”

Grace and Peace, Natasha

This Week’s Daily Bible Readings					
<i>Sustained by God’s Word of Love</i>			Wednesday	February 27	2 John
Sunday	February 24	1 John 3:1-24	Thursday	February 28	3 John
Monday	February 25	1 John 4:1-21	Friday	March 1	Psalm 85
Tuesday	February 26	1 John 5:1-21	Saturday	March 2	Psalm 89:1-18