

A walk with Mr O (45)

How to enter a room

Can you believe this, Mr O? I was in a bookshop the other day and I actually saw a book called 'How to Enter a Room'. Isn't it amazing what people choose to write about?

Well, I know two books with that title and they both have some valuable things to say. The subject, after all, is one which should interest every Christian.

Are you serious Mr O, or are you having me on?

No, I'm not teasing you. Houses have rooms, but factories, offices, shops, schools, hospitals, halls and churches are also basically rooms, aren't they? So are cars, buses, trains and planes, except that they have wheels or wings. And it is in those rooms that nearly all our interactions with other people take place. So, isn't it important how those interactions begin?

Point taken. So, Mr O, how should a Christian enter a room?

First of all, they should remember that there are some rooms they should never enter!

Oh, no! You're not going to give me a long list of forbidden places, are you?

Of course not. The Scriptures don't do that and nor should we. But let's not forget that the principal teaching of the New Testament is that of our union with Christ. This is a massive and glorious doctrine, and it has all sorts of implications for our daily life.

It means, among other things, that wherever we go we take the Lord Jesus Christ with us. So, if you are not entirely comfortable about taking Him into a particular room, you should certainly not be going in there yourself.

I can see that. Now I am trying to imagine the rooms in my life. I am outside the door of one of them. In a moment I shall turn the handle and walk in. I don't know exactly who or what is on the other side. As a Christian, what should be going through my head?

You should call to mind that the Saviour is with you and in you, and that in that room you are going to be His personal representative. This will be true whether you speak about Him or not. It will be true whether the reason for your entry is professional or personal.

His reputation is staked upon how you conduct yourself in that room. If people discover that you are His follower, what impression of Him will you leave in their minds?

Going into a room is quite a responsibility, then, isn't it? Do you know, Mr O, I'm now thinking thoughts that I've never had before!

It's a responsibility, yes, but don't think of it as a burden. If you go into that room filled with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, you will do well enough. Be like Jesus. Set out to be His 'living image', to use the words of the old hymn. Make that your 'every room' ambition.

I can see now why we talk so much about the Christian life. The Christian life isn't going to church twice on Sunday, attending the weekly prayer meeting, and reading the Bible and praying at home. It's what we are 24/7 that counts, isn't it?

Yes, but be careful. Going to church twice on Sunday, attending the prayer meeting and meeting the Lord in private are all essential. In themselves, they are not the Christian life.

But if you neglect them, you will soon not have a Christian life. If you don't eat and drink, you will die. If you don't charge your phone, it won't work. If you don't put fuel in your car, it will break down.

Thanks for being straight with me, Mr O. But before we split up, can I ask you for just one tip that might be especially helpful in entering a room?

When I was a young pastor a very old pastor gave me a good piece of advice. 'Remember, Stuart', he said, 'Every person you meet has a little voice inside them.

It says, "Please notice me". That tip has helped me all my life. Notice people, especially those who nobody else is noticing. Do that, and the Lord will smile.
