

Somebody's Knockin' at Your Door

Words & Music by an unknown, enslaved person

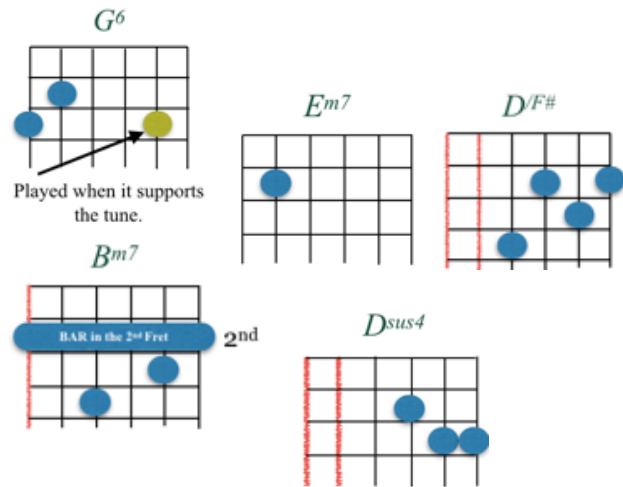
REFRAIN

D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door,
D *Em*⁷ *D/F#* *A*
Somebody's knocking at your door,
D *G* *D* *Bm*⁷ *G*⁶
O sinner, why don't you answer?
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.

D *A* *G*⁶
Knocks like Jesus,
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.
D *A* *G*⁶
Knocks like Jesus,
D *Em*⁷ *D/F#* *A*
Somebody's knocking at your door,
D *G* *D* *Bm*⁷ *G*⁶
O sinner, why don't you answer?
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.

D *A* *G*⁶
Can't you hear Him?
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.
D *A* *G*⁶
Can't you hear Him?
D *Em*⁷ *D/F#* *A*
Somebody's knocking at your door,
D *G* *D* *Bm*⁷ *G*⁶
O sinner, why don't you answer?
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.

REFRAIN



D *A* *G*⁶
Can't you trust Him?
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.
D *A* *G*⁶
Can't you trust Him?
D *Em*⁷ *D/F#* *A*
Somebody's knocking at your door,
D *G* *D* *Bm*⁷ *G*⁶
O sinner, why don't you answer?
D *G*⁶ *D*
Somebody's knocking at your door.

REFRAIN

Scripture and History

Revelation 3:20 [*Jesus says*] ““Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me.”

When enslaved Americans in the U.S. sang, “**Somebody’s Knocking at Your Door**,” they sang, “Knocks like Jesus! Can’t you hear him?”

Jesus’ **Revelation 3** quote is clearly a call to unbelievers to open the door and invite him in. It’s a matter of life and death. Jesus also talks in **Matthew 25** about what He expects of believers in caring for the least of us who knock on our doors. The someone who’s knocking could be an undocumented immigrant, a drug addict, a chain-smoking prostitute, a person suffering dementia - the original identity theft.

When Did We See You Jesus?

It is easy to romanticize the outcasts of Jesus’ day: the despised Samaritans, the wanton woman at the well, the ubiquitous lepers, the grasping tax collectors.

Our outcasts are hard to glamorize. We trip over them in the streets, dodge their curses, pay for them with our taxes.

But then we hear Jesus say, you did this to me. What? With the baffled biblical crowd described in **Matthew 25:31-46**, we plead, “Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?” The answer Jesus gave has not gotten any easier to hear.

“Homeless Jesus” by Timothy P. Schmalz

Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz has learned that many of us are uncomfortable when confronted with images of the stranger-Jesus. His bronze sculpture, “Homeless Jesus,” depicts a frail figure wrapped in a blanket and curled up on a park bench, crucifixion wounds visible on his bare feet.

Far from the virile, broad-shouldered Jesus often depicted preaching on a hillside or striding confidently over the water, this vulnerable figure was inspired by what Jesus said in **Matthew 25:35-36**: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me...”



“Homeless Jesus” by Timothy P. Schmalz

Reclaiming Christian Hospitality

According to historian Diana Butler Bass, early Christians understood the Great Commandment of Jesus — to love God and to love one another — as a call to radical welcome. Early church father John Chrysostom (347-407) instructed Christians to put their hearts into welcoming the stranger, “as if one were receiving Christ himself.” Bass put it more bluntly for today’s faithful: “Hospitality is the practice that keeps the church from becoming a club, a members only society.”

How do we keep our hearts open to the marginalized Jesus who looks threatening or smells bad or needs too much or doesn’t speak our language? Do we have to?

We have promised to recognize him in the face of the hungry, imprisoned, broken, sick, needy, the outcast, the refugee. We have promised to see his face in the stranger.

Who’s knocking at the door? Better check the hands and feet.

January 25, 2017 by Pam McAllister, find it at <http://askheraboutthymn.com>