

THE OPEN DOOR - Sunday Morning, June 3, 2001

Revelation 3:7-8 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: **behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:** for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

- Philadelphia was located in a strategic place on a trade route; it was called the "Gateway to the East"
- The city was located by a narrow mountain pass; it was literally a "door" through the mountains
- This congregation was small, but they understood how a just little strength in a narrow valley corridor could hold back a large army!
- God said that they had a "door" of opportunity, which they controlled!

DOOR:

- A door is simply a means of ACCESS.
- In the Bible, doors represent OPPORTUNITY!
- Doors provide not only an ENTRANCE, but also an EXIT. God not only has a door that can get you IN, He also has a door that can get you OUT! God has promised that with every temptation there will a "way of escape," a door with a huge red exit sign over it! This is your door out!

DOORS TO SHUT

1. THE DOOR OF DISOBEDIENCE

- Sin is always lurking in the shadows, waiting for an opportunity to destroy us. No matter how good the door of temptation looks on the outside, we must refuse to open it! Destruction waits behind the door marked disobedience!
- **Genesis 4:6-7** And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, **sin lieth at the door.** And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.
- The only way to avoid the trap of the tempter is to plead the blood of Jesus Christ over all the doors of your life!
- **Exodus 12:23** For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and **when he seeth the blood** upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, **the LORD will pass over the door,** and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

2. THE DOOR OF DISTRACTION

- Sometimes God calls His people to lay aside things that distract us from His purpose. These things may not necessarily be SIN, but they are a WEIGHT to us, so God calls us to refocus our attention on Him in certain seasons of our lives.
- **Matthew 6:6** But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and **when thou hast shut thy door,** pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
- **Hebrews 12:1** Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

3. THE DOOR OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- When you shut the door on discouragement, miracles can happen!
- **2 Kings 4:4** And when thou art come in, **thou shalt shut the door** upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.
- **Galatians 6:9** And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

DOORS TO OPEN

1. THE DOOR OF DEDICATION

- Under Old Testament law, a Hebrew slave could only serve for six years; he was to be set free in the seventh year. Many slaves chose their freedom, but some grew to love their Master and chose to stay as servants forever rather than demand their rights.
- They wanted the door of the Master's house to remain open to them, even though such dedication involved discomfort and a mark of distinction. It was a relationship based solely on love!
- **Exodus 21:5-6** And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; **he shall also bring him to the door,** or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.

- The whole point of being a Christian is not to be set free from ANY master, but rather to CHANGE masters! We exchange being a “servant of sin” for being a “servant of righteousness.” There are still responsibilities, but the WAGES are different!
- **Romans 6:22-23** But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

• **Prisoner of Love** (by Dottie Rambo)

I'm a prisoner of love, a slave to the Master
I willingly toil through the heat and the cold
I seek no reward in this life below
For payday will come when the pearly gates unfold.

When I came to Jesus I settled it all
I gave Him my life to control
Neither fear nor persuasion could draw me to Christ
But His love has captured my soul.

He holds me secure with His love strong and true
I'm happy His servant to be
In bondage to Jesus forever I'll stay
My soul doesn't want to be free.

2. THE DOOR OF DELIVERANCE

- For reasons of His own choosing, God sometimes allows His children to walk through trials. Remember that God may choose to deliver you FROM a trial or THROUGH a trial – it's His choice!
- Deliverance comes to those with godly determination – it is our attitude in a trial that makes the difference! PUSH OPEN THE DOOR OF DELIVERANCE WITH YOUR PRAISE!
- **Acts 16:25-26** And **at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God:** and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: **and immediately all the doors were opened**, and every one's bands were loosed.
- Your answer may be waiting just outside – OPEN THE DOOR!
- **Acts 12:16** But Peter continued knocking: and **when they had opened the door**, and saw him, they were astonished.

- **Hosea 2:15** And **I will give her** her vineyards from thence, and **the valley of Achor for a door of hope:** and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.
 - (NLT) *I will ... transform the Valley of Trouble into a gateway of hope ...*

3. THE DOOR OF DESTINY

- God has set before our church a door of destiny. It is open, waiting for us to walk through it. No obstacle or opposition can shut it, but we must make the choice to walk through it!
- **Acts 14:27** And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and **how he had opened the door** of faith unto the Gentiles.
 - (TM) *... they got the church together and reported ... how God had used them to throw the door of faith wide open so people of all nations could come streaming in.*
- **Colossians 4:3** Withal praying also for us, **that God would open unto us a door of utterance**, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:
 - (NIV) *And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message ...*
- **1 Corinthians 16:9** For **a great door and effectual is opened unto me**, and there are many adversaries.
 - (NLT) *... for there is a wide-open door for a great work here, and many people are responding ...*
- **To take advantage of our God-given opportunity, we must have two ingredients ...**
 - **Power to perceive it**
 - **People to achieve it**
- In Romans 16, Paul salutes his team – scores of unknown Christians and unsung heroes who helped to open the door of destiny! (“When The Roll Is Called **Down Here**, I'll Be There!”)
- **Revelation 3:20** Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, **and open the door**, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.