

The Open Door



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Introduction

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The Open Door

Revelation 3:8,

"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."

The first phrase of this verse, "I know thy works," is analyzed in the rest of the verse, for their works had to do with 'the open door,' 'little strength,' 'the Word and the Name.'

In order to understand the wealth of meaning involved in "behold I set before you an open door, and no man can shut it," we must now recall what has been said about each age running over into another age. There is an overlapping, a melting or fading into, rather than an abrupt end and a clear cut start. This age particularly flows into the next age. And not only does this age overflow into the last age, but the last age is in many respects simply a carrying on of the sixth age. The seventh age (a very short age) gathers up into itself for one quick work, all the evil of every age, and yet all the reality of Pentecost. Once the Philadelphian Age has about run its course, the Laodicean Age quickly comes in, bringing both the tares and the wheat to harvest,

"First bind the tares to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

Matthew 13:30.

Remember, please, that the Sardisean Age started the reformation that must still go on until the grain that was planted at Pentecost goes through the full cycle of planting, watering, nourishing, etc., until it comes right back to original seed. While this is going on, the tares that were sown will have to go through their cycle and be harvested

also. That is exactly what we see happening. If you can just think of the seasons, you can get a very good picture of this. The plant that you see growing in full strength in summer suddenly appears to be going to seed. You can't tell exactly when summer became autumn—it just faded into it. That is how the ages are, and especially these last two.

It is to this age that Jesus says, 'I come QUICKLY' verse 11. That makes the last age a very short one. Laodicea is the age of the quick work. It is cut short.

Now we will specifically dwell on the OPEN DOOR that no man can shut. First of all I want to dwell on the open door as signifying the tremendous missionary effort of that age. Paul called a new missionary endeavor for the Lord an open door.

II Corinthians 2:12,

"Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord."

So we can see by the comparison of Scriptures that this open door signified the greatest spreading of the Gospel that the world has ever seen.

I want you to see something here. God works in threes, doesn't He? It was in the third or Pergamean Age that the church was married to the state. The deeds of the Nicolaitanes had become the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. That age was the OPEN DOOR for the false vine. Once it was backed up by the power of the state it became actually a world system even though it bore the name, Christian. Thus it spread like wildfire. But now, three ages later, after a long and hard struggle of faith, here comes the OPEN DOOR to the truth. The Word of the Lord now has its day. Of course the fifth age had set the stage for this mighty move, as that age gave us exploration, colonization, the printing of books, etc.

It would have been wonderful if this 'open door' had followed the Divine pattern of Pentecost which was set forth in Hebrews 2:1-4, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the Word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?" Now you know that this is the pattern for Jesus, Himself, said so.

Mark 16:15-20,

"And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen."

He never told them to go into all the world and establish Bible colleges; nor did He tell them to pass out literature. Now those things are fine, but what Jesus told them to do was to PREACH THE GOSPEL—stick with the WORD—and then the signs would follow. The very first introduction we have in the way the Kingdom of God was to be preached was when He sent out the twelve. In Matthew 10:1-8, He commissioned and instructed them on this wise,

"And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received,

freely give."

This ministry that He gave them was actually the sharing of His own ministry with them, for it says in Matthew 9:35-38,

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Now many people have the idea that just the apostles had this ministry given them by our Lord Jesus, and so when they died, the ministry was over. That is not so.

Here in Luke 10:1-9, we find that in the days of His earthly sojourn He had already started to give ministries of power to His own,

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come.

Therefore said He unto them. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.

Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

And if the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

Who would dare deny the mighty ministry of Philip? Who would dare to deny the mighty ministries of Irenaeus, Martin, Columba, Patrick and countless scores of others who have had God's anointing upon them?

South Africa Trip

Yes. The Bible way is the real way of the open door. And I want to add my testimony to that. The reason I have to do that is because I can only speak with assurance concerning what God has done in my own life. So if you'll excuse a personal note here I will tell you how I know for a surety that Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever and that the power of God is still available to those who will believe and receive.

During my missionary trip to South Africa, God so blessed that when I came to Durban the only place that could begin to accommodate the people was the huge race track which is the second largest in the world. The crowd was well over 100,000. In order to keep law and order they had to put up fences to separate the various tribes. They posted hundreds of policemen to keep the throngs quieted down. Those hungry souls had come for many miles. A queen from Rhodesia had come with a train of 27 coaches loaded with African natives. They struggled in across the fields and mountains bearing on their backs for many and many a mile some loved one that needed help. The whole country was stirred by the mighty works that had been manifested by the Holy Spirit.

One afternoon as I began to minister, one of thousands of the Mohammedans came up on the platform. As she stood before me, a missionary to the Mohammedans began to softly implore the Lord, "Oh, for that precious soul. Oh, for that precious soul." He had been over there for years and years, and according to his own testimony, he had seen only ONE Mohammedan come to receive Jesus Christ as Saviour. They were originally the Medo-Persians whose laws change not. They are so hard to win. It seems that "once a Mohammedan always a Mohammedan" is a law amongst them.

Well, as she stood before me, I began to speak to her and to all those thousands through the interpreters. I said, "Is it not so that the missionaries have told you of a JESUS Who came to save you?" You should have seen the people look at each other when I said that. Then when they had answered that was correct I went on and said, "But did the missionaries read to you out of this Book (I held my Bible aloft for them to see) that this same Jesus was a mighty healer, and that He would live in His people down through the ages until He came again to receive them unto Himself? Did they tell you that because of that same Spirit in them

that was in Jesus that they would be able to do mighty works even as Jesus did? Did they tell you that you can be healed, even as you can be saved? How many of you would like to see this same Jesus come down amongst us and do the same things that He did when He was here on earth long ago?" They all wanted that. That is one thing they surely agreed on.

I then went on, "If Jesus by His Spirit will do what He did when upon earth, will you believe His Word, then?" And here was that Mohammedan woman in front of me. The Spirit began to move through me.

I said to her, "Now, you know that I don't know you. I can't even speak your language." She admitted that. I said, "As for healing you, you know I cannot. But you heard the message this afternoon and understood me." Her Indian interpreter answered back for her that she understood, for she had read the New Testament.

Now the Mohammedans are descendants of Abraham. They believe in One God. But they reject Jesus as the Son of God and instead they take Mohammed as His prophet. They say that Jesus never died and rose again. They are taught that by their priests and they believe it.

I said, "But Jesus did die and rise again. He sent His Spirit back upon the church. That Spirit that was in Him is the very same Spirit in the church now and It can and will produce what Jesus produced.

He said in John 5:19,

"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

Now then, if Jesus will come and reveal to me what your trouble is or what you are here for—if He can tell me what your past is, surely you can believe for the future?"

She said through her interpreter, "Yes, I can."

I said, "All right, may He do it."

Those Mohammedans were watching intently. They were all leaning forward to see what would happen.

Then the Holy Spirit spoke, "Your husband is a short, heavy-set man, with a black mustache. You have two children. You were at the doctors about three days ago and he gave you an examination. You have a cyst on the womb."

She bowed her head and said, "That is true."

I asked her, "How is it you came to me, a Christian? Why didn't you go to your Mohammedan prophet?"

She said, "I think you can help me."

I said, "I can't help you, but if you receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, He Who is here now, and knows all about you, He'll help you."

She said, "I accept Jesus as my Saviour." That did it. She was healed and about ten thousand Mohammedans came to Christ that day because the Gospel was preached in both Word and power. God never told a man to labor thirty years and harvest nothing. He gave us the open door of Word and power and that is what we are supposed to use. That is what gave Paul his great and effective ministry. I Corinthians 2:4, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Listen to me now. It was while on this same trip that as I was boarding a plane at New Salisbury, Rhodesia, that I saw a party of four with American passports. I went over to them and said, "Hello there, I see you have American passports. Are you traveling somewhere?"

The young man answered me, "No, we are all

missionaries here.”

“How nice,” I replied. “Are you on your own or do you work with some organization?”

“We are Methodists. We come from Wilmore, Kentucky,” he said.

“Well, that is almost in my back yard,” I replied.

“You wouldn't be that Brother Branham that comes from up that way would you?”

I said, “Yes, that's right.” That cured him. He wouldn't say another thing—and the way he and those three girls just looked back and forth at each other. So I said, “Just a minute son, I'd like to speak to all of you about some principles, seeing we are all Christians and here for a great purpose. Now you say you have all four been here two years. Can you say in the Name of Jesus that you can put your finger on one soul that you know you have won to the Lord?” They could not do it.

“I don't want to hurt your feelings, girls,” I said, “but you all ought to be home helping your mothers with the dishes. You haven't any business out on the field unless you are filled with the Holy Ghost and preaching the true Gospel in the demonstration of the power of the Holy Ghost. If you are not seeing the results that Jesus said you would see, it's because you are not preaching the true Gospel.”

Let me go a step further and show you just how things can be on the mission field. I don't say it is all this way, but I am afraid too much of it is. It was while I was on this same trip and touring around Durban with the mayor that I saw a native with a tag around his neck and he was packing an idol. I asked my friend what that tag was for and he said that when a native embraced Christianity they put a tag on him. That sure surprised me, for here was a man calling himself a Christian and carrying that idol, so I asked how

that could be.

He said, "I can speak his language. Let us go over and talk to him."

So we went over and the mayor acted as my interpreter. I asked the native if he was a Christian. He affirmed that he surely was a Christian. I then asked why he carried the idol if he was a Christian. He answered that it was an idol his father had carried and he left it to him. When I told him that no Christian ought to carry idols he replied that this idol had been of great use to his father. I was curious to know how, and he said that one day his father was being stalked by a lion, so he built a fire and spoke to the idol the way he had been taught by the witch doctor. The lion left. I informed him that it was the fire that sent the lion off as fire scares all wild animals. I will never forget his reply. He said, "Well, it is this way, if Amoyah (the Spirit) fails, then this idol won't."

(A detailed account of the African campaign may be found in the book, "A Prophet Visits Africa.")

That is just about all the strength the Christian multitudes have because the Word was not brought to them by the original open door of Pentecost.

Open Mission Door

Now getting back to the open mission door of the Philadelphian Age. It did not have the open door of power it ought to have had. Notice in the same verse He mentions this open door. He says, "Thou hast little strength". That is right. The POWER of the Spirit was missing in that age. The Word was well preached. It was well able to make souls wise unto salvation. But the great power of God that showed forth His mighty works, that made bare His arm in behalf of His own was missing except amongst the scattered groups. Yet, praise God, it was growing and had increased over what they had in the Reformation.

It was in this age that the man we often call the father of missions went out. William Carey, a village shoemaker, who pastored the Particular Baptist Church at Moulton, England, mightily aroused the people by preaching on, "whether the command given to the Apostles to teach all nations was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent." He was fought by the Calvinists who had gone to the extreme of the doctrine of election believing that all who will be saved WILL be saved and missionary work would be against the work of the Spirit. But Andrew Fuller helped Mr. Carey by his preaching and fund raising. Such was their effect that a society was formed to spread the Gospel to all nations, in 1792. This society sent out Carey who was signally blessed of God in winning souls in India. In 1795 an aroused Christianity formed the London Missionary Society which we well know raised millions of pounds, and sent thousands of missionaries over the years to accomplish the desires of the Lord. The Spirit of God was moving and "Other Sheep" might well have been the cry of the heart of those earnest believers.

"I have set before thee an open door." I want to look at these words again. This time, though I am not going to disassociate them from missions, I am going to bring you a thought which carries deep into the last age. As I have already stated, this age melts into the last age. It was in this age Jesus said, "I come quickly" (verse 11), and of the last age He was going "to finish the work and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Romans 9:28. Notice how this verse of Revelation 3:8 goes—"open door—little strength, Word, Name." That open door has to do with all three. Now what does the door signify?

In John 10:7, it says,

"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily,

verily, I say unto you, I AM THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP."

That is right: 'I AM' IS the door of the sheep. Now this is not just a quaint expression. This is actually so. Notice in John 10 when Jesus is giving this parable, He calls Himself the shepherd. Then He calls Himself the door. And that is what the shepherd is to the sheep. He is actually their door.

When I was over in the East I saw that at nighttime the shepherd would gather all his sheep together. He would put them into the fold. Then he would count them. When he was sure that they were all in, he would lie down in the open door of the fold and literally become the door to the fold. No one could get in or out except by him. He was the door. The next day as I went riding with a friend in a jeep I noticed that a shepherd began to lead his flock into the city. Right away all traffic came to a stop so that the sheep could go through. Now the cities over in the East aren't like they are here. We keep all our merchandise inside; but there, it is like a big farmers' market with all the produce on the pavement for passers-by to see and buy. I thought, "Oh my, here is where the riot begins. Wait till those sheep see all that food out there." But as the shepherd went ahead, those sheep just followed right along exactly in each step. They would look at all those goodies, but not a sheep touched a thing. Oh, if I could only have known their language, I would have stopped traffic myself and preached them a sermon on what I had just seen.

When you are sheep that belong to the Great Shepherd, you follow right along in each of His steps, just as those sheep did. You won't be tempted to turn aside for some big flower of a church, or listen to the voice of some D.D. or Ph.D. or L.L.D., but you will stay with the Shepherd. The Bible says that the sheep know His voice and they follow HIM, but a stranger's voice will only cause them to flee and run after their true Shepherd. Praise God.

But that was not all I saw and learned over there. One day I got to thinking about having seen men out in the fields herding different kinds of animals. One fellow would be tending some pigs, another some goats, another some camels, another some mules, etc. So I asked a friend who lived there, what they called those men. "Oh," he replied, "they are shepherds."

I couldn't take that. I said, "You don't mean to say they are ALL shepherds. Shepherds only herd sheep, don't they?"

"No," he said, "a shepherd is a herder or grazer, so anyone who grazes animals is a shepherd."

Well, that did surprise me. But I noticed a difference between those herders and the ones that took care of the sheep. Come nighttime all the others but the shepherd of the sheep left his animals in the fields and went on home. The shepherd took his sheep with him, and put them into the fold and then lay down and became the door of the sheep. Oh, praise God, our Shepherd never leaves us or forsakes us. When nighttime comes I want to be in His fold. I want to be in his care.

Jesus Is The Door

Now then, we can see that JESUS IS THE DOOR. He is the door of the sheep. And notice that it speaks now of the DOOR OPENING. What is that but a revelation of Him? And that Revelation is opening up to bring us Strength, to illuminate the Word and glorify His Name. It was in the midst of the two last ages that the Revelation of the Deity of Jesus Christ blossomed out before us. Yes, we knew He was God. How else could He be our Saviour? But to know that He was ONLY GOD, OR GOD ALONE, that He was the Alpha and the Omega, that this "Jesus was BOTH LORD AND CHRIST—MAKING HIM LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER, THE SON AND HOLY GHOST, ALL ONE PERSON—that had been lost since the first church ages, but now we are seeing it again.

The revelation of WHO HE WAS had come back. Indeed Godhead is not a three-person God with one personality, for it takes personality to make a person. If there is ONE personality, there is but one person. But they who believe in three persons have a three god Godhead and are guilty of breaking the first commandment.

But the revelation of Godhead is back. Now the true church can build in strength again. After all this time she finally knows Who her Lord is. Once again we are BAPTIZING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS just as they did at Pentecost.

Let me tell you of a God-given dream I had about triune baptism. This was not a vision, but a dream. You know, I am sure, that one of the blessings of the church ages was to receive dreams by the Holy Ghost, just the same as one can receive visions. It was about 3 a.m. on a Saturday morning. I had just gotten up to get Joseph a drink of water. When I lay down I fell asleep instantly and dreamed this dream. I saw a man that I supposed was my father. He was a great big burly man. I also saw a woman who was supposed to be my mother, but she didn't look like her, even as the man did not look like my father. This man was very mean to his wife. He had a large club with three corners on it. You know when you take a log and set it up on end and hit it with an axe, it makes a three cornered wedge-like piece of fire wood. It was like that. He would take this club and hit her with it, and knock her down. As she would lie there crying, he would walk around with his chest stuck out and on his face was such a proud, boastful look that he appeared to take great pride and satisfaction in beating up a poor little woman. Every time she tried to get up he would hit her. I did not like what he was doing, but as I considered stopping him, I thought, "I can't tackle that man—he is too big. Then he's supposed to be my father." But down inside I knew he wasn't my father, and I knew that no man had the right to treat a woman like that. I went over and grabbed him by the collar

and turned him around and said, "You have no right to strike her." And when I said that my muscles grew and I looked like a giant. The man saw them and then he was scared of me. I said, "You strike her again and you'll deal with me." He hesitated to strike her again, and then the dream left me.

I awoke immediately after the dream. I thought, how strange that was. I wondered why I had dreamed about that woman, when suddenly there He came, and the presence of God became known to me and the interpretation of the dream came from Him. (Now you people know that not only have I interpreted your dreams exactly; but I have many, many times, told you what you dreamed so that you never had to tell me.) The woman represents the church of the world today. I was born right into this mess—the mess that she is in. She was supposed to be a kind of mother (she is the mother of harlots). Her husband is the denominations that rule her. The three cornered block is false triune baptism unto a trinity. Every time she started to rise up (that means the congregations began to accept truth) he would drive her right down again with that false doctrine. He was so big that I was afraid of him at first, but when I came against him I found I had great and powerful muscles. They were FAITH MUSCLES. The outcome of the dream was that, "since God is with me, and can give me such strength, then let me stand up for her against the denominational power of the world and make him quit striking her."

Now I am not trying to build a doctrine upon a dream. Nor am I trying to vindicate any doctrine I stand for by a dream. Oneness of the Godhead is all the way from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. But the people have been blinded by an unscriptural dogma of a trinity, and that dogma is so universally accepted that to try to see a "One God Person" is all but impossible. If people can't see the TRUTH of the Godhead, but fight it; they can't ever see the rest of the truth because the REVELATION IS JESUS CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH AND HIS WORKS IN THE MIDST OF THE CHURCH

FOR THE SEVEN AGES. Did you get that? Now I am sure you understand.

“Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word and not denied My Name.” Now we have already mentioned how the strength was returning. It was. The power of the inquisition had waned. People had left their home lands and demanded a freedom of worship. The yoke of the hierarchy was being broken. The governments were finding it wise not to champion one segment against another. In fact, well meaning but poorly led people were willing to wage war to defend their religious rights. Perhaps the greatest show of strength of religion in this age was the fact, that though France fell in revolution, the great Wesleyan revival kept the revolution away from Great Britain and saved her to be an instrument in the hand of God for many glorious years.

The preaching of the Word was never greater. As Satan raised up his hordes of free thinkers, as the originators of communism rose up, as liberal theologians spread their filthy wares, God raised up mighty warriors of faith, and the greatest works of Christian literature and teaching and preaching came from this era. Never has its preachers and teachers been matched and never will they be. The Spurgeons, Parkers, McClarens, the Edwards, Bunyans, Meullers, Brainards, Barnes, Bishops, all came from this era. They preached, taught and wrote the Word. They glorified His Name.