

THE CHURCH WITH THE OPEN DOOR

TEXT:1 Corinthians 16:5-9

It's an open door of ministry that was set before the church at Ephesus. And I believe is set before our church and before every church that seeks to do a great work for Jesus. So I want to charge you today, let's be the church of the open door.

1. THE AMAZING OPPORTUNITY OF THE DOOR (5-9)

There's no doubt that Paul is overwhelmed by the opportunity set before him. We don't know everything that was going on in Ephesus, but it's clear that Paul thought it was an incredible opportunity.

A. THE DOOR COULD BE BRIEF (5-8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.)

There are some things you can never get back:

- A word that is spoken
- An arrow that is shot
- A life that is wasted
- An opportunity that is missed

I don't know exactly WHAT was happening in Ephesus that Paul is referencing. But I know THAT something incredible was happening and he knew it wasn't a guarantee for the future.

Because just like there is a season for dove, deer, and duck, there is a season for OPEN doors. He said he wanted to go to Corinth now but he knew if he did, the door could be closed when he returned to Ephesus.

Why do some opportunities vanish? Why do doors close for some churches The Sovereignty of God.

A. THE DOOR COULD BE BRIEF

B. THE DOOR COULD BE BIG (9.. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries..

The word "**great**" or "wide" is the Greek word, "MEGA."

The word for "**effectual**" or "effective" is '
Like Paul, I see an incredible opportunity in front of our church. It's huge but we must march through it by faith. And like Abraham leaving Ur, we don't know exactly what it will look like or where it will lead. But we will walk forward under the Lord's guidance.

1. THE AMAZING OPPORTUNITY OF THE DOOR

II. THE ALL POWERFUL OPENER OF THE DOOR V9 is opened unto me,

He does not say, "We opened the door," or "I opened the door."

He says the door IS opened. The question is, "Who opened it?"

Revelation 3:7 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;

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.

A. HOW POWERFUL HE IS! (He holds the Key of David)

Construction on the Gold Depository at Fort Knox was completed in December 1936, and the known building materials include 16,000 cubic feet of granite, 4,200 cubic yards of concrete, 750 tons of reinforced steel, and 670 tons of structural steel.

The doors to the depository weigh 22 tons each. There is a massive and powerful hydraulic system to open them.

But nothing in comparison to the power of Jesus open and shut doors.

If God opens the door, it will stay open.

If God shuts the door, it will close. PERIOD.

A. HOW POWERFUL HE IS!

B. HOW PERCEPTIVE HE IS! (He says, "I know thy works.")

He knows which churches should have a door and which ones should not.

There is a church experienced great growth in the early 90's. The day came they needed to cut down some trees to make room for parking. A divisive business meeting determined to keep the trees. A man familiar with that church said, "The church chose the trees. God chose another church. And the door closed."

There's nothing we have that's more important than an open door from heaven. There's no building, no sidewalk, no tree, no shrub, no sacrifice more important than an open door from God.

A. HOW POWERFUL HE IS! (He holds the Key of David)?

B. HOW PERCEPTIVE HE IS! (He says, "I know thy works.")

C. HOW PREEMINENT HE IS! (a little strength, and hast My word, and hast not denied My name)

God is looking for a people to bless who will be quick to give HIM the glory alone for what He has done.

LET ME URGE YOU TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS:

Don't talk about me.

Don't talk about the buildings.

Don't even talk about our church.

Be sure every word points to Jesus.

1. THE AMAZING OPPORTUNITY OF THE DOOR

II. THE ALL POWERFUL OPENER OF THE DOOR

III. THE ADVERSARY'S OPPOSITION TO THE DOOR (and there are many adversaries)

The Devil will NOT take this open door laying down. His schemes are as old as the Garden of Eden. Paul later told the Corinthians, "**We are not ignorant of Satan's devices.**"

We know from at least two other passages of Scripture, the dangers that the Ephesian church faced.

From Paul's address in Acts 20 and the letter of Jesus, about 40 years later, in Revelation 2.

A. HE WILL CAUSE DISINTEREST IN THE PURSUIT OF GOD

This church received a letter from Jesus about a generation later. Their doctrine was sound and their calendar was full. But their love for the Lord had grown cold.

Revelation 2:4 - But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

A. DISINTEREST IN THE PURSUIT OF GOD

B. DIVISION AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Psalms 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

A. DISINTEREST IN THE PURSUIT OF GOD

B. DIVISION AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD

C. DOUBT ABOUT THE POWER OF GOD

Hebrews 11:6 - "Without faith it is impossible to please Him."

I want to do something so BOLD, so AGGRESSIVE, and so FAITH-FILLED that it is destined to utterly and miserably fail unless God shows up.

God, I want a vision that will make me look like the poorest leader and the biggest fool...if you don't move.

