

Four Bible Doors

For the next few minutes we are going to discuss four types of Biblical doors. Doors are such a constant part of our daily lives that we probably take them for granted, but they serve a valuable purpose. Doors provide admittance, protection, and obstruction. Biblically speaking, there are four distinct and different doors placed before us. They are: 1) The open door which **no man** can close, (2) the open door which **any man can** close, (3) the closed door which **no man** can open and (4) the closed door which **any man** can open. Let us now study the significance of each.

1. THE OPEN DOOR WHICH NO MAN CAN CLOSE. *Revelation 3:7-8 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; ... (8) I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:* This is the door into the salvation found within the church. We're talking about the church that Jesus promised to build some 2000 years ago. While on the coast near Caesarea of Philippi Jesus said to his disciples, **Matthew 16:18 ... and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** Upon the confession that Peter had just made that Jesus was the Christ, the son of God, Jesus promised to build his church. Satan and his agents could not stop it nor will they ever be able to destroy it. Christ church will prevail forever.

1Timothy 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. From this text it is clear that when Paul wrote young preacher Timothy the church was in existence because he was advising him on how people ought to behave when they come together as the church.

Let me emphasize that the passage describes the church as the **"house of God, which is the church of the living God."** When we come together as the church, we are in the presence of living Almighty God; the One true and all powerful God. In the presence of such majesty, there is a way we are expected to behave. We are expected to be reverent in both our behavior and our dress. We are to have a different attitude when we are in the presence of God than we do when we are attending a Friday night football game or a campout at the lake. Our thinking ought to be different and our dress ought to be different and our behavior ought to be different because we are in the house of God, which is the church of the living God.

The first door was opened on the first Pentecost following the crucifixion of Jesus. We can read about this in Acts 1:36-47. After Peter's first gospel sermon, there were some 3000 people that believed and were baptized (Acts 2:42) and the Lord added them and others daily to the church (Acts 2:47). Entrance into the church was through an open door which was available to all that would obey the gospel instruction given by Peter and the other apostles. Once people obeyed, the LORD added them to the church. Those that were obedient met the Lord's approval for entrance.

Let us understand that we do it the Lord's way or not at all. **John 10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.** When people try to add some other conditions for church entrance that the Lord did not authorize, they are like a thief and a robber in that they steal your soul and jeopardize your eternity. **John 14:6 Jesus**

saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. While Jesus' way is strait and narrow, it is available to all mankind.

No man has the power to shut this door. **Matthew 23:13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.** When people try to enforce as requirements their traditions and customs that scripture does not authorize, then they are like the Pharisees and are trying to close the door to the church; which brings us to the second door..

2 THE OPEN DOOR WHICH ANY MAN CAN CLOSE. 1Cor 16:8-9 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. (9) For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries. This great door is the door of opportunity. It's been said that opportunity only knocks once, and many times that is true. **Gal 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.** "As you have opportunity" implies that the opportunity is not always there. Sometimes things happen that prevents the door of opportunity being opened. So this door that Paul says in 1 Corinthians 16 that is open can be closed. He alludes to this when he added that there are many adversaries.

This door of opportunity may be a business opportunity, a career opportunity, maybe a friendship opportunity. There are many circumstances in life that lend themselves to opportunity; but I want to focus in on the door of opportunity to the gospel. **2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord.** Paul recognized that this door to preach the gospel was opened to him by the Lord, and the same is true for us today. Opportunity is around us all the time if we would but give heed.

While the Lord may open the door, man can close the door. **He can do this by indifference.** He may simply not be interested in what you have to say. Jesus spoke of this attitude when he said, **Matthew 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.** They are comfortable where they are and their heart is cold toward what you have to offer. They have closed the door.

Sometimes Covetousness will close the door. **Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.** This may be the person that has an abundance of material prosperity and feels no need for the God or the gospel message. His life is in his abundance. This is illustrated a few chapters later in Luke 16 by the story of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus. So prosperity can close the door of opportunity to share the gospel.

A third way man can close the door of opportunity is simply spiritual blindness. This is the person that for whatever reason refuses to accept the message that is presented. Maybe it's pride, maybe it's prejudice, or maybe it's merely stubbornness. Paul says its ignorance. **Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:** If we are not careful, we can have the same attitude in the church. If we get to the point that we feel comfortable and have become what God wants us to be and are no longer open to the teaching of God's word, then we have become spiritually blind. **Revelation 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:**

3 THE CLOSED DOOR WHICH NO MAN CAN OPEN. This is the door of heaven that is closed and man cannot reopen it. *Matthew 25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.* There is a sad commentary given to us by the OT prophet Jeremiah. *Jeremiah 8:20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.* What the prophet is saying is that the door has been closed and will never be opened again. The Hebrew writer echoed the same sentiment. *Hebrews 2:3 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.*

Jesus is the one that closes this door and it is closed at the time of one's death. The door of salvation is open to you until you die, at which time that door is closed. When a person dies without obedience to the gospel, he has neglected the great salvation afforded him and there will be no escaping the consequences of this decision. At the point of death, your eternal destiny is sealed.

The door to life has been closed and no man can reopen it. There may be some that try. Some will argue a defense on how great they were but to no avail. *Matthew 7:21-23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Others may live a life of sinful behavior and somehow think they might slip into the pearly gates; but it doesn't work like that. Notice what Paul writes to the church of God at Corinth. *1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.* People that live the sinful lifestyle mentioned and die in that sinful condition can not open the door of life and received redemption.

The procrastinator cannot open the closed door of life. The person with good intentions that never gets around to doing them cannot open the door either. In the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus said *Matthew 25:10-11 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. (11) Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.* While they were unprepared, the bride-groom came and then it was too late. The five foolish virgins put off doing what they knew needed to be done and on the outside and unable to open the door.

4. THE CLOSED DOOR WHICH ANY MAN CAN OPEN. This door is the human heart. *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.* Note that this door is open to "any man who hears the voice (teachings) of Jesus. As long as a person is on this side of death, he can open his heart to receive the gospel message of salvation. The responsibility to open this closed door is ours and ours alone. Jesus will not force you into obedience.

Now there are a lot of things that keep the door of your heart close.

- For instance there is love for the world. *James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

- Maybe Satan plants the seed of doubt and unbelief. We see this illustrated in the people of Nazareth, Jesus' home town that refused to abide in Jesus' teachings because of their unbelief. ***Mark 6:6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.***
- For some the door of the heart remains closed to the gospel of Christ simply because of ignorance. ***Hos 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.***

But it doesn't have to be that way. The blessing of salvation can be yours. ***Hebrews 5:8-9 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; (9) And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*** Obedience is a matter of choice. Today if you are not a child of God, you can open up the door of your heart to the plan of salvation which will qualify you to enter into the door of heaven.

Salvation is by choice. You choose to obey the gospel or not.

Invitation what is your choice?