

Week 2: A Power We Must Receive - The Comfort of the Holy Spirit

Day 13: Doors

The Passage: Colossians 4:2-6

The Focus: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains." (Colossians 4:2-3)

The Meditation: "Pray . . . that God may open a door for our message."

Empowering Truths: The church was trying to keep their doors open. They had no pastor, little money left, the neighborhood no longer looked like them, and no one had come to Christ in a long time. In a last-ditch effort, they called the remaining adults to a season of prayer, which culminated in an entire evening of prayer at the altar at the front of their small church.

As they earnestly cried out to God that he would keep their doors open and use them to win souls again, the back doors suddenly opened. A large man came walking down the center aisle. He called out, "Is this a church?"

The prayer leader, unsure of the man's motives, hesitantly replied, "Yes, it is."

To which the man responded, "Can anyone here tell me how to become a Christian?"

Tony Cook, a truck driver who had been driving by, had suddenly felt compelled to pull his truck over and give his life to Christ. Tony received Christ and his conversion was the first of which would become several thousand salvation stories through that church. I know this story well because it happened just before I arrived at the church I lead.

Prayer opens doors. Paul asked the church at Colossae to devote themselves to prayer for the sake of opening doors for the gospel. Doors are the way to get through walls. Open doors are where the gospel moves past walls that have been erected by culture, sin, deception, pain, false religions, and bondage.

It is interesting that in Acts 5, 12, and 16 you find prison doors being opened and the gospel flourishing each time it happens. In Acts 12:5 we find Peter securely locked in prison, "but the church was earnestly praying." The next thing we read is angels are sent, doors are opened, and Peter is freed. What would have happened if the church had not been praying?

Prayer opens doors . . . doors that seem locked and impossible to open. In Ethiopia one of our churches had been praying that doors would open in a very gospel-resistant village. Then the witch doctor of that village grew seriously ill and called for the Christians to come pray for him. He was healed and the entire village came to Christ. Global gospel movements have story after story of doors opening miraculously. They expect locked doors to open via prayer.

Sometimes open doors are disguised. Open doors do not mean absence of opposition. Significant open doors often come with much resistance. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 16:9 "A great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me."

Empowerment is a two-way street. We need God to supernaturally open doors of opportunity to take the message past the walls of resistance and we need power to proclaim the message courageously. Pray for, believe for, watch for open doors, and then move through them with boldness. Look for open doors of all sizes today.

Power Truth: Earnest prayer can supernaturally open doors for the gospel.

Our Prayer: Lord, forgive us when instead of focusing on you, we have bemoaned how our culture, our city, and our area seem to be closed to the gospel. Forgive us for not devoting ourselves to prayer, and for not believing you use our prayers to open closed doors. Today we choose to believe your power can unlock hearts and open opportunities for salvation to come to others through us.

