



OPEN DOORS

The Open Door
Shane Philip
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Discussion Notes

The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This week we are continuing our series called **Open Doors**. The curriculum is based upon a book entitled All the Places to Go, by John Ortberg, who helps us to think about our lives and recognize that we are not products of our circumstances, but of the doors that were opened and closed to us. Our weekend services will introduce the various aspects of the study while small group studies will take us a step deeper as we recognize the open and closed doors in our lives. Those doors will take us in directions that become divine opportunities because we will have laid the foundation for recognizing them.

SCRIPTURE¹

Revelation 3:7-8 To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

Matthew 19:3-4 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female'?"

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Proverbs 12:15 The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.

Proverbs 19:20 Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.

Proverbs 13:20 He who walks with the wise grows wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

John 16:13a But when he, the Spirit of Truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.

Acts 20:22-23 And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.

Isaiah 30:21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

OBSERVATION

At various times we have huge decisions to make in our lives and there are serious consequences if we make the wrong ones. We don't know whom to date, whom we should marry, what school we should attend, which job offer we should accept, where we should live, and on and on. And most of us say, "God, please tell me what to do and I will do it." We learned last week that God's will is more about the people we become than which door we choose to open. Revelation tells us that an open door is a divine opportunity and an invitation to make our lives count. The Bible is full of stories of people who were given divine opportunities from God and their responses shaped their lives. We hear about them for a reason: so we can learn from their experiences and apply them to our lives. If God sets open doors before us, we need the ability to recognize them, and to recognize God's will for us.

Question: How has God spoken to you about open doors and His will for you? Was there a burning bush, an angel, a vision, or a donkey?

¹ All scripture is NIV unless otherwise indicated



APPLICATION

This week there are four questions to ask ourselves that will help us discern God's will:

1) Does it line up with the Bible? God is not going to say one thing in His Word and then say another thing to you. So this means we are responsible for knowing what His word says! When we want to discern what God's will is for our lives, we must start with the Bible because His moral will for us is already written there.

Question: How are you learning what God has written for you in His Word? If you are not a member of a Bible study group, is this an option for you? Are you taking time every day to study the Scriptures?

Some people take the Bible out of context and make it say what they want it to say. They think a single verse will justify their desired behavior. But we must bring everything that God has to say on a subject together; we call this the whole Counsel of God. Remember, all Scripture is useful for us so that we may be equipped to do God's work. His will for us is already there.

Question: How are you making sure that you understand the full context of a verse in the Bible?

2) Does Godly counsel agree? If we want to discern God's will, we need an open door selection committee around us. We need to gather people around us who know the Bible, whose character we trust, who have good judgment, who love us and want God's best for us. Fools are individualists who try to do life alone, but the wise seek other Christians and listen to their advice.

Question: Is discernment one of your Spiritual gifts? How has it demonstrated itself in your life?

Both wisdom and foolishness are experienced in community. What kind of people we become is largely determined by the type of people with whom we associate.

Question: Consider some of your greatest and worst decisions. Who were the people around you who gave you wonderful spiritual advice, and who were the ones who led you astray and into regret?

3) Do the circumstances point to an open door? God guides us toward new opportunities through current circumstances which means that what we are doing now is important. If we are giving our best work today, we may have the chance to learn new skills and be ready for the next open door that God provides.

Question: How are you handling your present responsibilities? If you could be more dedicated and fulfilling them more diligently, what would you do?

4) How is the Holy Spirit guiding you? Christianity is unique in that our God lives within us. His Holy Spirit prompts us to do something, He compels us, speaks to us, and urges us to move in a certain direction just as He did for St. Paul. We need to learn how to listen to the Spirit. He speaks in prayer and peace. He will communicate His ultimate will for us which is that we become like Jesus. He has told us that His will is more about the people we become than which door or opportunity we choose,

Question: Tell us about your experiences in hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit? How does He communicate with you?

Question: Are you becoming more like Jesus? In what ways?

Question: Tell us about a time when you listened to and acted on His urging and were patient in awaiting the outcome. Remember, we would rather wait with God than go ahead without Him.

Question: What is your current huge decision to be made? What new skills do you have for making it?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, show us Your will for our lives. You are the All-in-All to us and we place ourselves humbly before You as we seek answers to our most difficult questions and decisions. We commit ourselves to learning Your Scriptures in order to be equipped to discern Your will in all things. In Jesus' name. Amen.