

Thoughts for a New Year — Part 2

Introductory Consideration: What do we want in a new year?

Some Biblical Imagery for a New Year: _____

An Open Door for the Ministry of the Gospel:

Point of Emphasis — This is _____ a door that we ourselves can open!

The Authority to Open and Close:

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.”—Revelation 3:7

“*the key of David*”— This is probably an allusion to Is. 22:22 and serves to demonstrate the royal authority of Jesus over His Kingdom.

⇒ This is much more than earthly authority, it is the authority of the sovereign God who determines all things.

Only _____ has the authority to open and close doors for the ministry of the Gospel!

Some Examples:

1. The Apostles imprisoned in Acts 5

Acts 5:17-21— ¹⁷ But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy ¹⁸ they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. ¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰ “Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.” ²¹ And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

- Notice that there is a literal opening of a prison door as well as a figurative opening of a door for ministry.

2. Paul and Silas imprisoned in Philippi in Acts 16

Acts 16:25-26, 29-31— ²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, ²⁶ and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened... ²⁹ And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

- Notice once again that there is a literal opening of a prison door as well as a figurative opening of a door for ministry.

Point of Emphasis— Throughout the book of Acts, God alone is recognized as the one who opens doors for the Gospel.

Acts 14:27— And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 16:14-15a— ¹⁴ One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ And after she was baptized, and her household as well...

Application:

1. This should affect how we _____ .

Col. 4:3 — At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison

2. This should make us more _____ for opportunities to share the truth while also being aware of the realities that accompany such opportunities.

1 Cor. 16:7-9— ⁷For I do not want to see you now just in passing. I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. ⁸But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, ⁹for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

2 Cor. 2:12-13— ¹²When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, ¹³my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.

3. This should _____ us when we feel that we are inadequate.

Rev. 3:8— ⁸“I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.”

An Open Door of Fellowship:

Point of Emphasis — This is a door that we are _____ to open!

The Church at Laodicea — Revelation 3:14-22

- Their sin was that they simply assumed the Gospel without continuing to be affected by it.

⇒ When we cease to be affected by the Gospel, we have become disobedient to the Lord.

John 14:18-24— ¹⁸“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

- The remedy for our sin is always the Gospel!

Rev. 3:19-20— ¹⁹Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. ²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Application:

We must _____ ourselves before the Lord and agree with His assessment of us.

2 Cor. 13:5— Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!