

THE FULLY PREACHED GOSPEL

“Our Manner of Entering In”

Part I – A Word About Doors-

Rev 3:7-8

7 "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.

8 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. NIV

Our Lord Jesus holds the keys. What He opens, no man can shut. What He shuts, no man can open. If we are to enter in, we must look to the key master and gate keeper, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must be able to recognize an "open door" and differentiate it from a closed one.

What does a closed door look like?

That which the Lord commands against is a closed avenue:

Matt 10:5

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. NIV

Acts 16:6-7

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.

7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. NIV

NOTE: Paul and his companions were not passively waiting for a door to open. They were actively pushing the fight and in the process encountered some closed doors. We are to obey first commands first (GO – Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15). More specific direction will come in carrying out the commission given to us.

Even Jesus respected the boundaries of jurisdictional commission-

Matt 15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." NIV

What do open doors look like?

Where the Lord directs us to go, He has opened the door-

Matt 10:6 "Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel." NIV

Acts 11:12

The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house. NIV

Acts 16:9-15

- 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
- 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.
- 11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis.
- 12 From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.
- 13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.
- 14 One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.
- 15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us. NIV

When someone responds to the gospel, e can be assured that the Lord has opened their heart.

Acts 18:9-11

- 9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.
- 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."
- 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God. NIV

When he says "keep on speaking" and that he has "many people," we can be assured of a great harvest and a great and effectual door being open.

We need to keep in mind that it is a walk by the Spirit. We cannot suppose that an open door means easy entry or lack of opposition.

1 Cor 16:8-9 NIV

- 8 But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost,
- 9 because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

By the same token, we cannot judge a door's openness by our emotional state (i.e. I know the Lord wants me to be here, because I have such a peace about it).

2 Cor 2:12-13

- 12 Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me,
- 13 I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia. NIV

Again, we must be led by the Spirit to know where to “walk in.”

Isa 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." NIV

Who opens the door? The Lord!

He opens (among other things):

- Heaven [to minister] (Matt 3:16-17; Luke 3:21; John 1:51)
- Eyes [to see] (Acts 26:18; Matt 9:30; 20:33; John 9-11)
- Ears [to hear] (Mark 7:35)
- Scriptures [to impart wisdom] (Luke 24:25-32)
- Minds [to give understanding] (Luke 24:45)
- Hearts [that they might believe] (Acts 16:14)
- Mouths [that they might praise Him] (Luke 1:64)
- Prisons [to set the captives free] (Acts 5:19; 12; 16:26)
- Graves [to make them alive] (Matt 27:52)
- Heaven [the we might be where He is] (Rev 4:1)

How is a door opened? With the handle of prayer.

Matt 7:7-8

7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. NIV

Luke 11:9-10

9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. NIV

[The above in context has reference to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.]

Luke 11:13

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" NIV

Col 4:3-4

3 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.

4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. NIV

Part II – Entering In

Once the door is open and we recognize it as such, how do we “enter in”?

1 Thess 1:9

For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; KJV

1 Thess 2:1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: KJV

Not only was their manner of entering in so distinctive that it caused the Thessalonians to noise it abroad, but it was also “not in vain.” Once a door is opened up to us, we don’t want to stampede in like a bull in a china shop (unless directed to do so). We are going to examine the first three chapters of 1 Thessalonians to discover what exactly was their “manner of entering in.”

Before we do that, though, let us examine a little of the history and circumstances regarding this event and the writing of this particular epistle. After the Macedonian Call vision, Paul and his friends went to Philippi. There, you will recall, Paul and Silas were arrested, beaten, and thrown into prison. God delivered them with a mighty hand and the jailer and his family received the Lord. But Paul and Silas had to leave town. They went next to Thessalonica, where they stayed at least three weeks (Acts 17:1-3). Jealous Jewish leaders started trouble and Paul was ushered off to Berea, which is about 35 miles away (I figure at least two day’s travel on foot). He stayed in Berea several days at least (17:11) when Jews from Thessalonica incited the Jews from Berea and Paul was on the run again. He goes to Athens, which is about 200 miles away (if he walked, we’re talking about two weeks’ travel). After the little encounter on Mar’s Hill, he goes down to Corinth, which is about forty miles due west of Athens (give him another two days of walking). Weeks go by in Corinth before Silas and Timothy show up (18:1-5). It is at this point that Paul writes what many consider to be his first canonical epistle. He’s been away from the Thessalonians for at least two months (probably longer).

What was their manner of entering in?

1 Thess 1:5

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. KJV

vs. 5 Gospel came not in word only BUT

-in power

-in Holy Spirit

-in much assurance (full confidence)

- ◆ <4136> πληροφορια ☞ Full assurance of understanding the mystery of God (Col 2:2).
- ☞ Full assurance of hope (Heb 6:11).
- ☞ Full assurance of faith (Heb 10:22).

vs. 5b “what manner of men we were”

2 Cor 10:11

Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present. KJV

vs. 5b “for your sake”

The gospel is OTHER oriented.

1 Thess 1:6-10

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. KJV

NOTE: NIV reference note for vs. 9, 10:

The three signs of true conversion:

- 1) turning from idols
- 2) serving God
- 3) waiting for Christ to return

1 Thess 2:1-6

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. KJV

vs. 1 – Their entering in was not in vain (2756 – κενος – empty).

-grace not in vain (1 Cor 15:10); it produced labor (2 Cor 6:1).

-preaching and faith not in vain because Christ arose (1 Cor 15:14).

-labor not in vain because through the Lord Jesus Christ there is victory (57-58).

vs. 2 – They were bold in God to speak. [We need to pray for it.]

Eph 6:18-20

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. KJV

vs. 3 – They gave exhortation (παράκλησις).

BUT not of -deceit (they were true and right).

-uncleanness (they were pure in motive).

-guile (they were honest and transparent)

1 Peter 2:22

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: KJV

1 Peter 3:10

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: KJV

vs. 4 – They sought to please God.

Vs. 5a – They used no flattery.

-A flattering mouth works ruin (Prov 26:28).

-Flattering spreads a net (Prov 29:5).

-Flattery is done for personal gain (Jude 1:16).

Webster's definitions:

Flattery: to compliment excessively and often insincerely, especially in order to win favor.

Compliment: an expression of praise, admiration, or congratulations (Prov 27:21 man is tested by the praise he receives).

Commend: to represent as worthy, qualified, or desirable; recommend. 2. To express approval of; praise.

-commendation is of the Lord (2 Cor 10:18).

-it is shown by life (2 Cor 6:4-10).

Comments by Larum:

- ◆ Flattery is excessive complementation, generally centering on things over which the one receiving it had no actual input (such as physical appearance) to the end that it fuels their vanity and in an attempt to ingratiate ourselves to them.
- ◆ Compliments can be for character as well as appearance or performance. The test is whether we become puffed up by it or we defer it to another source. The main difference between a compliment and flattery is the heart and motive of the one offering it.
- ◆ Commendation is recognition for concrete and tangible accomplishments achieved.

vs. 5b – They did not use a cloak to cover greedy motives (they had no greedy motives!).

vs. 6 – They sought no glory from men.

*Verses 1-6 enumerate what I call the Prohibited Qualities, the “how NOT to enter in”:
deceitfully, with uncleanness, beguilingly, with flattery, with covetousness, with self-glorification.*

2 Thess 2:7-12

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. KJV

vs. 7 – They were GENTLE (child-like).

Jesus is gentle and forces no man to believe.

Rev 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. KJV

vs. 8 – They were affectionately desirous of them and imparted the gospel and their own souls.

vs. 9 – They labored so as not to be chargeable.

vs. 10 – They behaved

- holily
- justly (righteously)
- unblameably (in spirit, soul, and body – 1 Thes 5:23)

vs. 11 – They

- exhorted (a call to a more worthy endeavor).
- comforted (encouraged in the endeavor).
- charged (commanded involvement in the endeavor).

That: vs. 12 – They would walk worthy of God who called them into His kingdom and glory.

Verses 7-12 enumerate what I call the Productive Qualities, “how TO enter in”:

How they were:

- gentle [as a nursing MOTHER – MILK]
- affectionately desirous
- giving (gospel + self at no charge)
- holy
- just
- blameless

What they did:

- labored (night and day)
- exhorted

-comforted
-charged them [as a FATHER his children – MEAT]

The Thessalonian Response-

1 Thess 2:13-16

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. KJV

vs. 13 – They received their word as God’s Word and mixed it with faith to effectual working.

vs. 14-16 They became followers of the churches in Judea by being persecuted by their own countrymen (following the pattern of “first the Jew, then the Gentile”).

The Opposition-

1 Thess 2:17-18 KJV

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Vs. 18 – hinder – εγκοπτο – to cut into, to impede one’s course by cutting off his way.

Gal 5:7

You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?
NIV

Gal 3:1

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? KJV

1 Peter 3:7

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. NIV

The Solution

1 Thess 3:10-11

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. KJV

In the face of opposition (Satan standing in the way denying us access to those we love and need to minister to) we need to pray that the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ might open a way for us.

The Goal

1 Thess 3:12-13

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. KJV

The Lord opens the door of utterance and the ears and hearts of the hearers. But we need to “enter in” in His prescribed manner that people not fall away on our account. The great commission is to disciple the nations, not just convert them. We want to see people established in unblameable holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!