



Josh Miller
The Missional Church

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Series: What's Wrong With the Church?
Revelation 3:7-13

Good morning, Two Cities Church. Like Kyle said, my name is Josh Miller. I feel like I need to be really energetic now, because he just said I have all this energy. I am so grateful to be here. I'm a lead pastor of Center Church up in Charlottesville, Virginia. It's really fun, because in God's providence, we have this back and forth between our churches.

I've already seen maybe four or five of you who used to be a part of our church who are now a part of *this* church down here, and there are now several couples a part of our church up there that used to be a part of *this* church down here. In fact, a couple of weeks ago, one of those couples came up to me after the service and said, "Josh, you talk fast. You don't talk as fast as Kyle does." I didn't know if that was supposed to be a compliment or a challenge. I was like, "Which way will we walk through this?"

I have been married to my sweet wife Meredith for 12-1/2 years. We have four kids, ages 10 down to 2-1/2. So when Kyle called me up and said, "Hey, we want to bring you down for two nights so you and your wife can have a weekend away," guys, I'm going to be honest with you. I didn't pray about it. It was so obviously the will of the Lord that I just said, "Man, we would love to do that."

So, we've been kind of doing the tourist thing this weekend. We went over and saw the Reynolda House, which was really neat, and learned more about the history of the city. We walked around Wake Forest campus. We've eaten at some really great restaurants, but I'm going to be totally honest with you. The highlight of the weekend was Hobby Lobby. It was the absolute highlight of the weekend.

We walked around there with no kids and a budget. Gosh, you know you're in your mid-30s when Hobby Lobby is the highlight of your weekend away. But we had a great time. Speaking of my family, this past fall, we had the hardest time getting our daughter's soccer jersey. Have you ever been there? We just wanted our daughter to

have the same jersey as everybody else. We didn't want her to have to show up on Saturday morning wearing a gray Nike shirt and everybody else is in orange.

So, we're trying to get this soccer jersey. At first they say, "Hey, we're so sorry. We don't have enough. Your daughter doesn't have one right now, but we're working on getting replacements." We're like, "Okay." Then they email us and say, "Hey, we got the replacements in," but you know how it is. They give you these ridiculous times you can come and pick up the jersey. Like, "You can pick it up between 3:00 and 3:30 in the morning." It's like, "I've got four kids. That's not going to work."

So, we're emailing the soccer league. We're trying to get this jersey figured out, and they're not responding. They're not getting back to us, and it's Thursday. The game is on Saturday. We're like, "We've got to make something happen." My wife is like, "That's it. I'm driving over to the soccer headquarters. I'm just going to drive over there and see if I can get this thing figured out."

So, she's on her way to the soccer warehouse, and she's praying. She's literally praying, "God, I need you to open a door for me. I need you to give me favor with the soccer league. We just want our daughter to have a jersey." Well, she gets to the soccer headquarters, and it's this huge warehouse, this huge field house, and it does not look promising. I mean, the parking lot is empty. The lights are all off. It's like, "Oh, this is not going to go well."

Meredith goes up. She pulls on the front door, and it's locked. It's like, "Oh! We're not going to get this jersey." She's walking back to the car, and she notices a side door. Like, obviously not a door you're supposed to use. There are no windows in it, and it's made out of steel, but she's like, "I'm already here. I might as well try." So she goes up, and sure enough, the side door is unlocked.

She opens the door and looks in. It's this giant, ominous, empty, dark building. She's like, "We're sending it." She goes and gets our four kids out of the van and goes Jason Bourne-style into this warehouse. She's sneaking around. My wife is amazing, so she manages to find the equipment closet in this giant facility.

She gets into the equipment closet. She finds my daughter's age group. Then within the age group she finds my daughter's team. In my daughter's team she finds my daughter's jersey. She grabs it, and she gets out of Dodge. Let's go! Round of applause for my wife. The whole time, my kids are freaking out. They're like, "Mom, you're going to get arrested!"

She calls me after this, because it was such a significant thing. She tells me about it, and I thought to myself, "I think that's the first time I've ever heard of someone praying for an open door and getting one literally." Like, an actual, physical door that was unlocked.

I tell you that story because our text today is all about open doors. Not literal ones but spiritual ones. You see, in the Bible, an open door is a kingdom opportunity. It represents gospel potential that Jesus wants you to realize. In our text today, Jesus says to the church in Philadelphia, "I have opened a door for you in your city. There is kingdom work I've prepared for you, and I want you to walk in it."

I believe no matter where you're coming from this morning, Jesus has an open door for you, that he has gospel potential he has prepared in your life that he wants you to walk through as well. Guys, this is significant, because what we do with the open doors in our lives determines the trajectory of our lives, our families, and this church.

Jesus has given us opportunities, he has presented them in front of us, and he wants us to walk through them to see the kingdom of God advance. So, what we're going to do is we're going to walk through this text. I'm just going to draw out three principles for identifying and walking through the open doors Jesus has provided in your life.

Look at verse 7 with me. ***"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write..."*** I know, as a church, you've been walking through these seven letters Jesus wrote to seven different churches in the book of Revelation. Pastor Kyle has done a great job explaining the context of each of these churches. So, what do we know about the city of Philadelphia?

Well, the city of Philadelphia wasn't the biggest city in the book of Revelation, but it was the best situated city. It was located along a very important Roman road and, as a result, was a hub of both education and commerce. As I thought about the church at Philadelphia, and as I visited Winston this weekend, I thought, "Man! Philadelphia reminds me a lot of Winston."

Winston isn't the biggest city in North Carolina, but you're probably the best situated. You're right next to I-40, which is a major thoroughfare for the entire state. You're a center of education. You're a center of commerce. Ideas, influence, power, and money flow through this city. So, whatever Jesus said to Philadelphia then, I think it's going to be relevant to Winston-Salem today.

Look back at verse 7. ***"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."*** In each letter, Jesus introduces himself in a way that is relevant to the people he's speaking to.

Every attribute of Jesus is significant. Every attribute of Jesus matters, but certain attributes of Jesus resonate with us more in some seasons than others.

Maybe last night you went back to that website you said you weren't going to go back to. What you need to remember about Jesus today is that he's the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Maybe on Friday you got a pink slip at work, and you're looking into the future, and you don't know how you're going to provide for your needs. You don't know how you're going to take care of your family. You're looking into the future, and it looks really uncertain and really scary.

You need to remember that Jesus is the great provider for his people who said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Or maybe you're a Carolina Panthers fan, and you need to remember that Jesus works miracles and can raise the dead to life. (I'm a Commanders fan, so I can say that.) Every attribute of Jesus is significant, but some attributes resonate more in some seasons than others.

So, what are the attributes he focuses on in this text? First, he says he's the holy one. That means he's set apart, that he's distinct, that there is no one else in all of creation like your Lord, that he is unique in every way. Then he says he's the true one. That means everything Jesus says is true. You can take it to the bank. As we just sang, he is a firm foundation that will never fail.

Then he said a third thing, and this is what I want us to focus on. He said, "I am the one with the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens." That's kind of an interesting reference. What does that mean? It's actually a reference to King David in the Old Testament.

As king, David possessed a set of keys that were exclusive to him that opened special doors in the kingdom. There were literally doors in the kingdom that only David could open. Maybe think of it like your phone. If you're an iPhone person, you have the facial ID and the passcode. If you're a Samsung person, you draw that weird shape on the screen. You're the only person who can get into your phone because you have the passcode. You have the key.

In a similar way, there are doors in your life, there are spiritual opportunities in your life, which only Jesus can open, and if Jesus opens it, no one can shut it. Now, this was very, very relevant for the church in Philadelphia, and here's why. Following Jesus had led to some closed doors.

By following Jesus, the believers in Philadelphia couldn't do business, participate in government, or network like everyone else in the city because they wouldn't hail

Caesar as lord. They wouldn't say, "Caesar is lord." They said, "No, only Christ is Lord," and that meant doors got slammed in their faces. *Slam! Slam! Slam!* Opportunities their friends had, that their peers had, they didn't have.

If you are going to follow Jesus, increasingly in our culture today you are going to have doors slammed in your face. You might get passed over for a promotion. You might be ostracized by your family. You might be excluded from a friend group. I have a member in my church who came to faith in Christ at our church, and he has grown a ton. He's in wealth management.

I had lunch with him a few weeks ago, and he said, "Josh, I'm public with my faith at work. I'm not obnoxious, but I'm public about the most important things to me, and it has cost me business." You see, sometimes following Jesus has a dollar sign on it. Following Jesus will lead to some doors being slammed in your face. It did for the believers in Philadelphia. Increasingly, it will for us today.

When that happens, it is so comforting to know that our Lord is in charge of the doors that matter the most. Jesus Christ is the one who opens the most important doors in our lives, and if he opens that door, no one can shut it. In verse 8 he says, ***"I know your works."*** That's not just what you do; that's your whole life. That phrase refers to everything that's going on.

"Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut." Jesus said, "I know your works." What a comforting statement that is. The same God who hung the Milky Way in the sky knows the number of hairs on your head, knows the amount of tears you've cried, knows the relationships that are a challenge for you right now, knows the things that keep you up at night.

Agnosticism says, "There might be a God. You can't know for sure, and you definitely can't have a personal relationship with him." Deism says, "God is kind of like a clockmaker who set this world up but then stepped away and is no longer interested in what you've got going on." Secularism says, "Well, there is no God. You're a product of random chance, and the reason you feel alone is because you are alone."

But the Bible comes along with the most incredible news. God Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth, created you, knows you, and cares about you. "I know your works, not just generally but particularly. I know what kept you up last night. I know what is on your mind right now. I know your works. I'm not some distant, cold judge, but I'm an engaged, loving Father."

So, what did Jesus know about this church in Philadelphia? Look back at verse 8. ***"I know that you have but little power..."*** That means they didn't have a whole lot of worldly strength.

"...and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie— behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth."

So, what did Jesus know? Jesus knew their faithfulness. He knew they hadn't given up and they hadn't given in. They had kept his Word. They had not denied his name. Jesus knew their struggles. He knew they had been kicked out of the synagogue by this group Jesus called the *synagogue of Satan*, a group of people who were saying they were worshipers of God but actually weren't and were going around town slandering the Christians and spreading rumors about them.

Jesus also knew what they needed. He said, "I'm going to make your enemies bow down at your feet. I'm going to vindicate you in the eyes of those who have slandered you, and I'm going to sustain you in the hour of trial that is coming on the world." So, Jesus told the church in Philadelphia, "I know. I know your faithfulness. I know your opposition. I know what you need."

If that's all he said, this would be a text about the comforting presence of God in the midst of tribulation, but that's not all he said. That's only half of the conversation. Do you see what he said next? He said, ***"I know your works. Behold..."*** That word means "Don't miss this." That word means, "Hey, if you're asleep, hello! Wake up. Welcome back." ***"Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut."***

In the Bible, the phrase *open door* refers either to personal salvation, like in John 10:9, or to a kingdom opportunity, like in 2 Corinthians 2:12. Since the people in the church of Philadelphia were already believers, were already Christians, we can assume Jesus is referring to a kingdom opportunity.

Jesus told the church, "I know what you're going through, I know things have been hard, and I have work for you to do." This is really important. He comforted the church, and he commissioned the church. He said, "I know your situation. I know things are challenging. I still have a hill for you to take. I still have a job for you to accomplish. I have a dragon for you to slay. I have a mission for you to pursue."

Guys, this is really important. If we only have half of the conversation, we get in trouble. If we're all commission with no comfort, we will burn out, but if we're all comfort with no commission, we will not play the part in the gospel story that God created us to play. God has created you to play a special role in his story, and if you don't play it, no one can.

Ephesians 2:10 says, *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* That means if you are a follower of Jesus here this morning, in eternity past God prepared good works, open doors, kingdom opportunities, for you to walk through. Not me, not her, not the church generally...*you*.

If you walk through them, the kingdom will move forward, and if you don't, it will not. What you do with those kingdom opportunities, what you do with those open doors will have a major impact on the trajectory of your life and the spiritual legacy you leave. So, what I want to do is walk back through this text and draw out three principles that will help us identify and walk through open doors.

01 ONE OPEN DOOR LEADS TO ANOTHER

In this section of Revelation, there are seven churches. There are only two of those churches that Jesus has nothing negative to say about, and Philadelphia is one of those churches. They were a good church. They had kept Jesus' Word. They had not denied his name. They had been faithful, so Jesus entrusted them with more. Here's a biblical principle: he who is faithful with little will be entrusted with much.

The more doors you walk through, the more doors you get. God gives big kingdom opportunities to those who are good stewards of small ones. So, if you're here and you want to make an impact for the kingdom of God, if you want your neighborhood to be different because you live there, if you want to be a new link in generational faithfulness in your family, start by walking through the open door that's currently in front of you.

Here's what that means practically: don't be afraid to dream small. That's not what you thought I was going to say, is it? I mean, every motivational speaker, every self-help book is like, "Dream big!" But can we be honest? You're not ready for your big dreams. I'm not ready for my big dreams. We would probably hurt ourselves and other people.

Here's what sociologists have found. The sweet spot for personal growth and personal fulfillment is when you are operating at 102 percent of your personal competence. Now, how do you discover what 102 percent...? I don't know how you do that, but that's what they say. If you're more than that, you're going to get overwhelmed and are probably going to hurt people. If you're less than that, you're going to get bored, but the sweet spot is 102 percent of your personal competence.

Here's why I tell you that. Your next open door is probably at just about 102 percent of your personal competence. It's enough to make you sweat. It's enough to give you butterflies in your stomach. It's going to drive you to your knees in prayer. It's going to require risky faith, but it's not utterly overwhelming. It's not going to hurt you or other people. I hope you have big kingdom dreams. I do. But realize that your big dream is on the other side of five or six open doors.

I want to be a man of integrity, a man who leads my family well. I want my grandkids and great-grandkids to point back at me and say, "That is the spiritual rock of our lineage, and our family is what it is today because of my grandad and my great-grandad." That's what I want. Maybe that's what *you* want. Do you know how that starts? Apologize to your wife this afternoon. Say, "I'm sorry for being selfish. I'm sorry for not being attentive. I'm sorry for not being engaged with the kids." That's how you get there.

Or how about this one? "Our society is going to hell in a handbasket. 'Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.' I want to see our culture return to Christ." Amen. Do you know where the future of our country is? Down the hall in the middle school ministry. You want to change the future? Go invest in a seventh grader.

Or how about this? "'Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.' I'm going to go overseas and start Christ-centered medical clinics so I bring not just spiritual healing but physical healing to the nations of the earth." Amen. Have you ever been on a mission trip? The first step to that future is taking seven days of PTO this year and going overseas on a short-term trip.

We tend to be good at dreaming big dreams; we tend to be bad at small steps of obedience, but you don't get to the big dream until you walk through the door that's in front of you. I know a couple that when they got married were passionate about prioritizing their marriage. They had this burden, because they didn't feel like young people were doing that.

So they talked about starting a ministry where they would inspire other couples to invest in their marriage. They had a name for this ministry. They even bought a URL for this ministry. I mean, they were going to do it. That couple is divorced today. You

see, they had a big kingdom dream, but they didn't walk through the door that was right in front of them to invest in their own marriage.

Here's what this means. The spiritual influence we end up possessing and spiritual impact we end up making depends on our willingness to walk through the door that's currently open. So, what door is open in front of you that you haven't walked through yet? One open door leads to another.

02 OPEN DOORS COME WITH OPPOSITION

In verse 8, Jesus said, "Behold, I've opened you a door." Then what does he start talking about in verse 9? The synagogue of Satan. He starts talking about all of the people who had opposed them and would continue to oppose them. You see, when Jesus opens a door, opposition quickly follows.

The apostle Paul expressed the same thing in 1 Corinthians 16:8-9. He said, ***"But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective [ministry] has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."*** Here's what you have to understand. The Bible generally, and Revelation specifically, is set in the context of cosmic conflict...truth versus lies, light versus darkness, good versus evil, Jesus versus Satan.

Satan can't close a door Jesus has opened, so he tries to stop you from walking through it, because if the door is open but you don't walk through it, it makes no difference. If you're going to live your life for comfort, convenience, and ease, Satan will leave you alone, because you're not dangerous to him, but the minute you get in the game, the minute you start pushing back, the minute you start advancing the kingdom of God, get ready, because you're dangerous to hell, so all hell is going to break loose.

I mean, you start trying to lead your family spiritually, and your kids will probably rebel. You get serious about honoring the Lord with your finances, and you're going to have to make some tough budget adjustments. You decide to be public with your faith at work, and get ready to be labeled overly religious. When you walk through an open door, opposition comes with it.

Every day, we make a choice between two things, comfort and impact. You can have comfort or you can have impact, but you can't have both. Our cumulative choices between comfort and impact determine our spiritual legacy. Open doors require

sacrifice to walk through them. Are you willing to sacrifice? This church is here today because a group of people chose kingdom impact over comfort.

The first group was your launch team, about 100 people who said, "Hey, we're going to do the hard work of trying to start a new gospel church for Winston-Salem." A couple of years later, you needed to raise several hundred thousand dollars to move into the warehouses, and a group of people through the Deep & Wide Initiative came together and said, "We're going to sacrifice. We're going to give. We're going to believe. We're going to raise this money."

A few years later, you came together and said, "We need to build a new facility to be a home and hub of ministry here in Winston," so you raised several million dollars to build this facility. The past of your church is defined by people choosing sacrifice over comfort. Praise God for that. Here's the question...*What will the future of your church be defined by?*

Can I have an honest moment with you? You're in a vulnerable position as a church, because you're very successful. Historically speaking, God's people have been the least faithful when they're the most successful. Do you know who the worst churches in Revelation are? The ones that have the most worldly power. The ones that have the most worldly influence. The ones that have the most worldly wealth. They're the least spiritually healthy of all of the churches in the book of Revelation.

This is actually not the first time I've been to Two Cities Church. The first time I was at Two Cities Church was seven years ago when you were worshiping at Goler AME Zion Church. Anybody who was at Goler? Anybody out there? Okay. A couple of us. I came. I listened to Pastor Kyle preach. I went down into the basement of Goler. Do you remember the basement of Goler? I saw where the volunteers met.

I've also been to your volunteer headquarters here. Let me tell you, the basement of Goler and that volunteer headquarters are very different, guys. They're very different. You see, at Goler you had very little that impressed the world, but you had a whole lot that pleased God...dependent prayer, all-in commitment, risky faith. Is that what will characterize you into the future?

What a tragedy it would be if you had less spiritual power in this incredible facility than you did when you were meeting in the evenings of a rented facility. How do you ensure you continue to have spiritual power in this beautiful place? Choose sacrifice over comfort. Choose the open door of kingdom impact over the easy step of comfort in your life.

03 YOUR OPEN DOOR IS PERSONAL

Jesus gave this open door to the church in Philadelphia, not to the church in Sardis, not to the church in Ephesus. Every open door is personal. You see this with the apostles. The apostle Peter was called to reach the Jews. That was *his* door. The apostle Paul was called to reach the Gentiles. That was *his* door. Paul made this same point in Colossians 4:17. ***"And say to Archippus, 'See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.'"*** Every open door is personal.

The Bible teaches that God is sovereign over all things. Do you know what that means at the practical street level? It means your life is not random; your life is appointed. God has situated you. He situated your family of origin and your hometown. He situated your ethnicity and your culture. He situated your upbringing and education, your hobbies, your interests, your career, and neighborhood. Why? Because he has prepared good works for you to walk in.

He has prepared open doors for you to go through. Again, not me, not Pastor Kyle, not the staff, not the church generally...*you*. There are things God wants to do in your neighborhood that are not going to get done if you don't do it. There are things God wants to do in your dorm that are not going to get done if you don't do it. Don't comfort yourself with the idea that someone else will come along and do it. They won't. They're not their good works. They're yours.

Feel the kingdom responsibility of being a follower of Jesus. Let the kingdom responsibility of being a follower of Jesus infuse every moment of your life with significance. You've never had a mundane day in your life. God has provided divine opportunities every single day for you to be salt and light in this world. He wants to do something great in Winston-Salem for the sake of his glory, and do you know who he wants to use? You. Every open door is personal.

We're trying to get our kids into puzzles. I don't know why. You know, trying to be good parents, less screen time, all that stuff. So, we bought a set of puzzles that make the outside of cereal boxes. I'm not sure why again. You know, Frosted Flakes and Golden Grahams and Lucky Charms. Honestly, guys, every time we do it, I get so hungry. I do. I'm like, "Man, I want to have a bowl of cereal."

As we've been teaching our kids how to puzzle, they're always trying to force pieces to fit. They're trying to take a piece that kind of fits, and they're trying to slam it in there and make it fit. As adults, we know you can't force a puzzle piece. Right? That piece was specially designed to fit in one place.

So, imagine I had a box up here, a puzzle of 1,200 pieces, and each one of you had a piece of that puzzle. If we wanted to create that puzzle, what would we have to do? Well, every single one of us would have to contribute. It would be impossible for us to finish that puzzle unless every single person contributed. No one would do the same thing, but everyone would have to do something for that puzzle to be completed.

Friends, that's you in the kingdom of God. You are a piece of the gospel puzzle. God has shaped you and designed you and situated you to play a particular role, and if you don't play that role, no one else can. The puzzle is bigger than you, but the puzzle is incomplete without you. There are things God wants to do in Winston, on Wake's campus, in your family, and in this church that only you can do. The question is...*Are you playing your part?*

The kingdom of God advances as we're willing to sacrifice and walk through open doors, but if I'm honest, it's hard. It's hard, because it requires sacrifice, because there is opposition, and some days I just don't feel like doing it. Some days I'm like, "Can someone else just raise my kids today?" Apparently, you guys agree with that statement.

Some days I'm like, "Man, can somebody else pursue and cherish and love my wife? Can somebody else preach this sermon? Can somebody else have this conversation with my neighbor? It's too hard. It's too awkward. I'm too uncomfortable. I'm too sinful. I'm too broken. There's too much suffering in my life. I'm just tired."

You might have walked in here today, and you might feel like, "Josh, I'm just barely keeping my head above water. You're talking about kingdom opportunities and open doors, and that's all great, but I'm just barely keeping it together." Friends, that's why we need each other. That's why we need to come into this place and worship.

We need to come together and remember what is true, that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us; that in this world we will have tribulation, but we can take heart because Christ has overcome the world. Pause for a minute. If you're a Christian who believes the Bible, what I'm about to say is true and you believe it; you just need to start living that way.

Ready? The same God who split the sea, who brought down the walls, who healed the sick, who commanded the storm, and who conquered the grave is the same God who is in you and for you. Does anybody care about that? It's amazing. If you believe the Bible, you believe that's true, but we often live like it's not true.

We often live like we're defeated forces when, in fact, we are conquering, victorious forces in the world. Sure, the Enemy we face is strong, but the God we serve is

stronger. The God we serve has made us an incredible promise. Look back at verse 11.

"I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Friends, Jesus is coming back, and his second coming is not going to be like his first coming. He came the first time in humility; he's coming the second time in glory. He came the first time on a colt; he's coming the second time on a warhorse. He came the first time to die for sin; he's coming the second time to win a war. What Jesus is saying is "If you hold fast until the end, I will reward you."

If you are a light for Christ in your school, you may get shamed and jeered at by your friends, but Jesus is going to come, and he's going to crown you with glory and honor. If you hold on to your convictions in the midst of a relativistic culture, you're going to face some headwinds. Your circumstances are going to get shaky, but if you hold fast, Jesus says, "I will make you a pillar in the presence of my God."

In that moment, you won't be afraid anymore. In that moment, you won't be worried anymore. In that moment, you won't be shaken anymore. If you follow Jesus, you might be excluded from some friend groups. You might be ostracized from your family, but Jesus says, "I will give you my name. I will adopt you into my family, and you will be an insider with the group that matters most."

You see, friends, you get the motivation to give up things on earth when you remember what has been laid up for you in heaven. I told you that every open door is personal, and that's why every open door is powerful, because you have no idea what hangs in the balance of your simple obedience.

About 50 years ago, a 17-year-old girl named Noelle walked through an open door to minister to her high school friend Shelley. She prayed for Shelley. They read the Bible together. They went to a Billy Graham crusade. They had their ups and downs until, eventually, the Holy Spirit got ahold of Shelley's life, and she was saved.

A few years later, a young professional named Steve walked through an open door to minister to his tennis partner Benton. They built a friendship, and Steve prayed for Benton and invited Benton to an evangelistic concert at his church. Benton went to that concert, and the Holy Spirit got ahold of Benton's life, and Benton was saved.

Shelley is my mom and Benton is my dad. They're sitting right down here in the front row. I came to Christ when I was 13 years old, largely because of their influence. I now have four children, and I now pastor a church of about 600 people in a very liberal, progressive, dark college town.

I'm here speaking to you today. I'll probably speak to 3,000 people today. All of that hung in the balance of simple obedience. You see, Noelle didn't know it and Steve didn't know it, but thousands of people hung in the balance of their obedience, and thousands of people might hang in the balance of yours.

So, what door do you need to walk through? Maybe you're retired, and you need to start mentoring young adults. Maybe you're in college, and you're the only Christian in your dorm, so you need to reach your dorm. Maybe you're a dad, and it is time to step up and start leading your family spiritually. Maybe you need to do the thing that God has already called you to do. You know what it is. You just haven't done it.

Today is the day we stop making excuses and we make progress. Maybe you've been hurt, and you need to finally forgive. You need to let go of your hurt to the Lord. Maybe you're harboring secret sin, and it's killing you, and you need to confess it. Today needs to be the day you walk through the door of confession into the light of forgiveness. Or maybe you're here, and you need to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

Friends, I have bad news. The Bible says that if you die apart from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you will spend eternity separated from God in hell, but I also have good news. The Bible says that no matter who you are, no matter what you've done, no matter how long it has been, if you will repent of your sin and receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord, do you know what God will do? He'll forgive your sin, he'll remove your shame, and he'll adopt you into his eternal family.

All of that is possible because of the work of Jesus Christ. It's possible because of Jesus' perfect life. It's possible because of Jesus' atoning death, and it's possible because of Jesus' victorious resurrection. Friends, when Jesus rose from the grave, he kicked open the door of salvation to us so that if we will repent and receive him, we can be forgiven.

We're going to have prayer counselors down at the front of the stage. If you're here this morning and have never received Christ as Savior, do it today. The door is open, but, friends, it won't always be. There will be a moment when the door of salvation closes, and as that door is closing, Jesus is in the door frame, saying, "Come on. Come on. Come on. I've done everything that needs to be done."

There's nothing else you can do. You don't get into God's family through moral improvement. You don't get in through your own effort. You don't get in through church attendance. You get in through receiving Jesus Christ. He's inviting you into the door. If you need to do that today, come. We want to pray with you.

If you'd bow your heads with me, I just want to ask you one last time... What is the door you need to walk through? What is the door God has opened and it has your name on it? What is the kingdom opportunity he wants you to realize? What is the difference he wants you to make?

Lord God, thank you for opening the door of salvation to us in Christ. Lord, would you give us wisdom to see the open doors that are in our lives? Would you give us courage to walk through them, and would you give us faith to believe that no matter what it costs us it is worth it? We love you, Lord. We pray these things in Christ's name, amen.