

THE THREE DOORS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

- *The Bible is filled with analogies using doors, gates, and entranceways to speak about spiritual truths.*
- *A door or a gate can signify opportunities that are waiting to be opened and entered into.*
- *A door or a gate can signify things that ought to be closed or need to remain closed to protect us from harm or loss.*

Genesis 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.”

- *The first time a door or entrance way is mentioned in the Bible deals with a warning to Cain who was envious of his brother Abel, because Abel’s sacrifice of faith was acceptable to God, while his own sacrifice was unacceptable because it was the product of his own self-effort.*
- *“If you do well, will you not be accepted” – God’s ways are always just. God was reaching out to Cain, reasoning with him, showing Cain that He loved him as much as he loved his brother Abel.*
- *God was encouraging Cain not to be self-willed, but to submit to the will of God, to put God first, and to put his faith in God’s ways instead of his own.*
- *“And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door” – God warned Cain that sin was waiting at the door of his heart and life to ensnare and destroy him.*
- *The Hebrew word translated as “lies” means “to lurk, to lie down and rest, to stretch out.” It conveys the idea that sin was patiently waiting to pounce on him, hiding in such a way as to appear harmless or veiled, so as not to be seen.*
- *This word “lies” paints a picture of an animal of prey lurking in the shadows waiting to pounce on its unsuspecting victim as it walks past.*
- *How is the door to sin and temptation opened so that it is able to devour us and cause us much harm? “If you do not well, sin lies at the door.” When we are*

not submitted to God's ways it opens the door for temptation and sin to enter into our lives.

- *When we ignore what God has spoken it opens the door for loss and sorrow to enter our lives.*
- *“And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.” – God warned Cain that sin wanted to control him, but in His grace and mercy, God provided the solution.*
- *We must learn to rule over sin.*
- *How can we rule over sin so it no longer has dominion over our lives? How can we close the door of temptation?*

James 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- *How do we overcome sin which is always lurking at the door of our lives?*
- *First, we must “submit to God.” The Greek word for submit means, “to submit to the orders or direction of someone” and so we fully obey God in everything.*
- *Second, we must “resist the devil.” The Greek word for “resist” is the complete opposite of submit and it means “to resist by actively opposing pressure or power.” We do not allow temptation to gain a foothold in our thoughts or in our heart.*
- *Our ability to resist the devil is directly linked to the first step of totally submitting to the will of God. Our ability to resist the devil is empowered by our submission to God's will. No submission = no power to resist.*
- *The result of taking these two steps is that “he will flee from you.” The devil is unable to overcome a person who is fully submitted to the will of God, because the life of Jesus Christ is being manifested through them.*

1 John 4:4 (NKJV)

⁴You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Romans 6:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

- *The same word that God had for Cain, He speaks to each believer, “sin shall not have dominion over you.” However, we must learn to rule over those sinful impulses that reside in our fleshly man.*
- *The solution is not to try to overcome sin in our own strength and self-effort, but to put our faith in the Lamb of God, and allow the grace of God to empower and transform us.*

Genesis 4:8 (NKJV)

⁸Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

- *Tragically, not only did Cain fail to heed God’s counsel, he thought he knew better than God. When Cain opened the door to sin, he murdered his brother Abel, and brought a curse upon himself.*
- *Cain thought the root of his deep unhappiness was his brother Abel, but the truth was that his own heart was filled with selfishness, envy, and stubbornness. In his misguided thinking, he opened the door to sin thinking if he murdered his brother Abel he would be happy and content.*
- *Our happiness and contentment is never dependent upon others or even our circumstances, but on our relationship with God, accepting His love for us, and expressing our love for Him.*

Matthew 7:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

¹⁴Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

- *The concept of a gate is something that can either bar one’s entrance if closed, or invite one to enter in if it is open.*

- *A gate can open the way to a city, a town, a palace, a temple, a prison—even into Heaven or Hell.*
- *The Bible says that there are many gates or doors which are open to men, but the two primary and most important ones are the narrow gate and the wide gate.*
- *Because of the choice Adam and Eve made, the wide gate which leads to destruction has opened wide to all mankind. Because of original sin, every person ever born has found him or herself on the broad way which leads to destruction.*
- *Because of sin the narrow gate leading to life was closed to mankind. Then Jesus came, died for our sins, and rose from the dead. As a result, the narrow gate which leads to life was opened to all, and those who choose to put their faith in Jesus Christ can enter in.*
- *The Greek word “narrow” denotes something which is restrictive and comes from the root word “to be squeezed or pressed” and “to confine.”*
- *The carnal person sees anything that restricts his or her freedom as something that is bad. They fail to see the protective nature of God’s commandments. God’s Word is not restrictive, but protective.*
- *The idea of the Greek word for “narrow” used to describe the narrow gate speaks to the idea that the sides of the opening are firm, immovable, and do not waiver.*
- *For someone to enter the narrow gate, the person must be willing to conform to the shape of the opening and not to expect the opening of the gate to conform to their image, shape, or how they want things to be.*
- *The narrow gate leads to the difficult way and the Greek word translated as “difficult” literally means “to squeeze, to press, to squash, to hem in.”*
- *The narrow gate and the straight way are places of squeezing, shaping and have the effect of changing us as we go through the narrow gate and follow the straight way.*
- *As opposed to the path that leads to life, the gate that leads to destruction is described as wide and the path is described as broad.*

- *The word translated as “wide” in the Greek means, “spacious, broad” and comes from the root word meaning, “to shape or form.” It describes something that is easily molded as opposed to the narrow gate which is firm and immovable.*
- *The wide gate is not only spacious; it is very accommodating to everyone’s lifestyle and choices.*
- *Another very telling feature about the gates that stand before each person is that both “lead” somewhere, implying that the final destination may not be easily visible and the outcome may not be apparent to the casual observer.*
- *A person who chooses the “wide gate and the broad way” may mockingly brush aside warnings about the path they have chosen with the logic, “I am having a great time!” not realizing that their final destination is destruction.*
- *Similarly, when a person puts their faith in Christ, to the carnal mind their life of faith, obedience, and submission may appear restrictive and boring, when in fact the Christian life well lived leads to great joy, peace, and victory.*
- *The only way to truly discern that the narrow gate leads to life is to be able to see the destination through eyes of faith. Once a Christian begins to walk on that path, the fruit of peace, joy, and love begin to be realized.*

Romans 8:28–29 (NKJV)

²⁸And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- *“He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son” - The narrow gate and difficult way puts pressure on those attitudes and actions in our hearts and lives that need to be changed, just as a piece of clay pressed into a mold is shaped and conformed to the image of the die.*
- *Once we have received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour and are born again, we still must decide daily which path we will choose.*

- *Sometimes our fleshly selfish ways rise up and tempt us to choose the broad way that will temporally satisfy the flesh. In such times, we must focus our eyes on Jesus to keep us on the narrow path that will produce good fruit in our lives.*
- *The devil cannot rob us of our justification, but he certainly wants us to neglect our sanctification and forfeit God's purposes and rewards for our lives. The devil wants believers who are indistinguishable from non-believers, who will have little or no impact on God's kingdom.*

Hebrews 12:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

¹⁷For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

- *Just as Esau sold his birthright and his inheritance, choosing momentary fleshly passions instead of eternal rewards, the devil wants Christians to forfeit God's purposes for their lives.*
- *Esau walked through the wrong door and followed the wrong path. At the end of his journey he suffered loss and although he wept bitterly, his losses could not be restored.*
- *The wonderful news for every believer here is that we can begin today to make consistent choices for Jesus Christ and the life that He has for each one of us.*

Luke 13:24 (NKJV)

²⁴Strive to enter through the narrow gate,

- *The word “strive” comes from the Greek word “agonizomai” which means “to struggle, to contend, fight, to labour fervently.” These definitions indicate effort is required on our part to enter through the narrow gate.*
- *The problem is not that our desires are too strong. The opposite is true—they are too weak. We are too easily satisfied with a worldly lifestyle. Some believers conform to the world because it's easier than conforming to the image of Jesus Christ.*

- *In the Book of Revelation we find three types of doors. Each door requires the appropriate response for us to be able to enter in.*
- *The Tabernacle of Moses had three doorways or entrances, and we find these same three doors in Revelation.*
- *The first door in Revelation corresponds to the entranceway into the Outer Court where the sacrifices were slain at the Brass Altar and the priests washed at the Brass Laver to prepare themselves to serve God.*
- *This speaks about our response to God as He invites us to enter into the opportunities, purposes, and calling He has for our lives.*
- *The second door in Revelation corresponds to the entranceway into the Holy Place where the priests ministered to God daily. This is the place of fellowship.*
- *There were three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place where the priests were required to minister before the Lord. Each one represents a different aspect of the intimacy and fellowship we are to cultivate with God.*
- *The priests ministered at the Table of Showbread with unleavened bread and this represents our fellowship with God in terms of the Word of God and deals with our intellect.*
- *The priests ministered at Altar of Incense representing our fellowship with God in terms of worship, praise, and prayer and deals with our emotions.*
- *The priests ministered at the Menorah, the seven branched candlestick. He trimmed the wicks and replenished the pure olive oil so the flames burned brightly. This represents our fellowship with God in terms of the Holy Spirit and in the area of our wills as we submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit to enlighten our hearts and lives.*

Revelation 3:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”:

⁸“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

- *The first door in Revelation is found in Jesus' message to the church in Philadelphia, the church of brotherly love.*
- *This church is characterized as a church "having little strength," but also one who "kept My word and have not denied My name."*
- *There may be times in our lives in the midst of struggles and trials when we feel weak and think we are failing God, but He provides words of encouragement and comfort, not words of rebuke.*
- *In the midst of our struggles He reveals something about Himself to us, "These things says He who is holy, He who is true."*
- *Jesus is holy and because He is holy we also are holy, because He has redeemed us by His own precious blood on the cross.*
- *Second, Jesus is true, so we can trust Him even when we don't feel we can trust our own hearts.*
- *Not only does Jesus reveal something about Who He is, He also reveals something about what He has for us, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens."*
- *The Greek word for "key" comes from the Greek root word meaning, "to shut, to lock, to obstruct the entrance." A key has the power to lock things, and it has the power to open things. Jesus comforts us because He has the power to do both. He can close doors no man can open, and open doors no man can shut.*
- *Sometimes people who are struggling with life say, "I am looking for the key to happiness" or "I am looking for the key to end this bondage to sin."*
- *The key of David that Jesus possesses has the power to open the door of God's blessings in our lives. It also has the power to close the door to our past failures and bondages, so we can be free and no longer live under the bondage of the past, but in the light of a bright future in Christ.*
- *"He who opens and no one shuts"- The wonderful thing is that when Jesus opens a door for us, no one can close that door. Neither other people nor Satan can close a door that God has opened for us. We should never believe the lie*

that others can prevent God's will from being done in our lives if we truly submit to Him.

- *“and shuts and no one opens” – Not only does Jesus open doors that no one can shut but when He closes a door no one can open it again. When He closes the door to our past failures and forgives us, we do not have to continually revisit it. We don't have to live under the shadow of our past failures, shame, or hurts.*
- *“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it” – The wonderful thing is that Jesus has set an open door before us. In spite of our weaknesses and even our past failures, He never leaves us nor forsakes us, there is always a door of opportunity where we can serve God.*
- *“See, I have set before you an open door – Jesus is saying, “Don't look at your own weaknesses. Look up and SEE that I have set before you an open door that no one can shut. Stand up and walk through it!”*
- *This is an open door of God's opportunity for our lives. All we must do to walk through that open door is look to Jesus, believe His Word, and fully submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Then no one can stop us or close that door of ministry.*

Genesis 41:50–52 (NKJV)

⁵⁰And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.

⁵¹Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: “For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house.”

⁵²And the name of the second he called Ephraim: “For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

- *Joseph understood this principle of God closing old doors and opening new doors.*
- *After all the heartbreak and betrayal he experienced God exalted Joseph to the place He always intended for Joseph.*
- *Joseph chose not to live with his past hurts and the wrongs he had experienced. He named his first-born son Manasseh which in the Hebrew means “causing to*

forget.” Because Joseph forgave his brothers, God caused Joseph to forget all the past trials, hurts, and betrayals. God closed that door.

- *Joseph named his second son Ephraim which in the Hebrew means, “double fruitfulness.” God opened the door of blessings and ministry that would be recorded in God’s Word forever, and would impact not only the nation of Israel, but all of mankind.*

Revelation 3:11 (NKJV)

¹¹Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

- *Here is God’s Word to those who consider themselves weak: “I have a crown of victory for you. Don’t allow the enemy to discourage you, but in faith step through that open door to all that I have for your life.”*
- *This first door is the door of opportunity to prepare us to enter into all God has for us, just as the priests had to enter into the Outer Court in order to perform the sacrifices and wash at the Laver so they would be ready for the next step of ministry.*

Revelation 3:14–20 (NKJV)

¹⁴“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

¹⁵“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

¹⁶So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

¹⁷Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’— and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

¹⁸I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore 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 dine with him, and he with Me.

- *The second door is the door of fellowship.*

- *The second door is found in Jesus' message to the church of Laodicea, which was a church characterized by lukewarmness, content with worldly pleasures and a shallow relationship with the Lord.*
- *Unlike the church of Philadelphia that desired to serve God but felt weak, this church considered itself rich, having no need of anything.*
- *The Laodicean Church characterizes Christians who are content with a shallow or superficial relationship with Christ.*
- *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” – Unlike the first door that Jesus opened and invited us to enter in, Jesus is knocking at this second door and asking for us to open so that He can enter in.*
- *Many times preachers have used this verse to describe a call to salvation to the lost, but the true context is a call from our Lord to His people to hear Him knocking at the door of their hearts.*
- *This door speaks about fellowship. Jesus says if anyone hears His voice and opens the door of his or her heart, “I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.” Jesus wasn't speaking about salvation, justification, but about sanctification, and a deeper and more intimate walk with Him. We must invite Him in, He will not enter unless we respond to His call.*
- *Christians can become so busy with the success or luxuries of Western society that they neglect their fellowship with God. They leave Him out in the cold, allowing Him to knock on the door of our hearts and visit Him briefly only during a Sunday morning service.*
- *This second door deals with maturing our relationship with God.*
- *Notice that Jesus says if we respond to His calling then He will come in and He will dine with us and we will dine with Him. This signifies that this fellowship is to be enjoyable not only for us, but it is also to be very enjoyable to the Lord.*
- *Can you imagine that the God of the Universe wants to dine and fellowship with us personally!*

- *When we are lukewarm, Jesus' relationship with us does not bring Him any pleasure. In fact, He compares it to lukewarm water that does not refresh, but is more like stagnant water that He spews out.*

Matthew 7:7 (NKJV)

⁷“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

- *At the first door, as pictured by the church of Philadelphia, we are to be the ones who ask, seek, and knock and He opens to us.*
- *When we find ourselves in difficult situations or times when we require direction or guidance or a clear open door then we begin to ask, seek, and knock. He will be faithful to open that door of opportunity or deliverance.*
- *Even more, when we ask, seek, or knock we can be confident that He will close the doors we are not to enter into, protecting us from making wrong and painful choices.*
- *However, if we are not asking, seeking, or knocking we will find that we will enter doors that should have been closed, and we will not be able to enter through doors that should have been open.*
- *With the first door we are the ones knocking and the second door it is Jesus who is knocking.*
- *Sometimes Christians respond to the first door and enter into ministry, but fail to open the second door. This results in their relationship with Jesus being very shallow and weak, and their ministries will ultimately be unfruitful.*

Revelation 4:1–4 (NKJV)

¹After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

²Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

³And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

⁴Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

- *The third door is the door of revelation.*
- *“Behold, a door standing open in heaven” – There is a door of revelation open into the heavens for those that have eyes to see and ears to hear.*
- *“And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”” – However, even more remarkable and wonderful is that John the apostle was invited to enter through that door and come up and see the Heavenly realm and the secrets God had for him.*
- *Why was John given the privilege to not only see the door into Heaven standing open, but even be invited to enter in and to hear and see mysteries?*
- *Simply because John was one of those who had entered into the first door and submitted to the call of God in his life. Second, he was one who had opened his heart to the Lord and was continually fellowshiping with Him.*
- *John had become a friend of God!*

John 15:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

- *When we become God’s friend He shares His heart and His secrets with us.*

Amos 3:7 (NKJV)

⁷Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

- *God reveals His secrets to His closest friends!*

John 15:7 (NKJV)

⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

- *We become a friend of God by yielding to Him and entering into the open doors He provides for us. We continually have the door of our hearts open to Him.*
- *The Three Doors in the Book of Revelation – the Door of Opportunity; the Door of Fellowship and the Door of Revelation*