



The New Year is Full of Opportunity

“Behold, I have put before you an open door” –Revelation 3:8

We are, by nature, creatures of habit, easily lulled into complacency. However, God wants more from us so He nudges us forward, compelling us to change and to see the world through His eyes.

As He does this, He reveals new opportunities to grow in Jesus Christ and share Him with others. He brings people and situations to our awareness, opening doors for the ministry of the Gospel. These are open doors of obedience to God’s plan.

In the first three chapters of Revelation, Jesus, speaking through the Apostle John, exhorts and rebukes the seven churches in Asia. Of these, the church in Philadelphia receives a commendation: “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” (Revelation 3:8).

Jesus knew that this church was weakened by continual attacks from unbelieving and hostile Jews. Even so, they were faithful to God. Jesus could have said, “Take a breather. Strengthen yourselves for the fight.” Instead, He pointed them to an open door of opportunity that only He could open and shut. He challenged them to stand firm and to seize opportunities provided by the open door.

Today, Jesus presents open doors of opportunity for His faithful saints to walk through. No matter how tired, weak, or overwhelmed we may be, we must walk through them. Jesus could have said that the sufferings of this church were enough. Instead, He indicated that His grace was sufficient to meet the opportunity He had given to them.

Each of us has been given an open door. How faithful are we to do the work that God has entrusted to us? God has given us many points of contact with others—through our jobs, our family, in our community, our neighborhood, or even our church—to make Him known. We each have special talents and experiences that God has allowed us to have—so that we can reach those people He intends us to influence for the good.

Every one of us we were each made for a purpose in God’s kingdom. If this purpose does not come immediately to your mind, begin by looking at the

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spiritual gifts described in Romans 12:6-8. These gifts are listed as prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to the needs of others, leadership, and showing mercy.

God will give us opportunities to serve Him through the spiritual gift or gifts He has given us. Respond first to general opportunities that are in keeping with your gift, and God will soon reveal specific situations for your involvement.

No matter what you do, don't ignore your open door of opportunity. Don't let procrastination or indifference steal your time. Instead, seek God's strength as you step forward. When you embrace your God-given opportunities in obedience, you will see God's glory in your life—and in the lives of others this New Year.