


**An Open Door**  
Revelation 3:7-13

**Sooke Baptist Church**  
Sunday, November 15, 2020  
9am and 11am  
7110 West Coast Road

also on Facebook Live Stream and YouTube



**Coffee/Question:**  
Think of an opportunity before you.  
What persuades you to step into it? What is holding you back from acting?



REVELATION  
3:7-13

In Revelation 1:12 when John turned to see the voice which spoke to him, he saw Jesus in all of his glory.

In each message to the seven churches Jesus highlighted an aspect of himself that was pertinent to the situation each church was living and to the encouragement, correction and challenge he gave to them.

### Revelation 1:15-16

... and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.

...coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword.

The church at Philadelphia is reminded that the words of the One who speaks to them are powerful and weighty because Jesus is holy and true.

The church in Philadelphia had experienced great trouble with the local Jewish synagogue because when they spoke of Jesus, they used the same words which Jesus had used when he spoke of himself – **“I and the Father are one,”**  
**“I am the way, and the truth and the life,”** **“To see me is to see the Father.”**

The Jews in Philadelphia were convinced the Christians were absolutely wrong about Jesus, but Jesus purposefully said to his church – I am... the One who is holy and true...

Yet again, Jesus described himself using the words the OT uses when it speaks of God.

**Psalm 99:9**

Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for **the LORD our God is holy.**

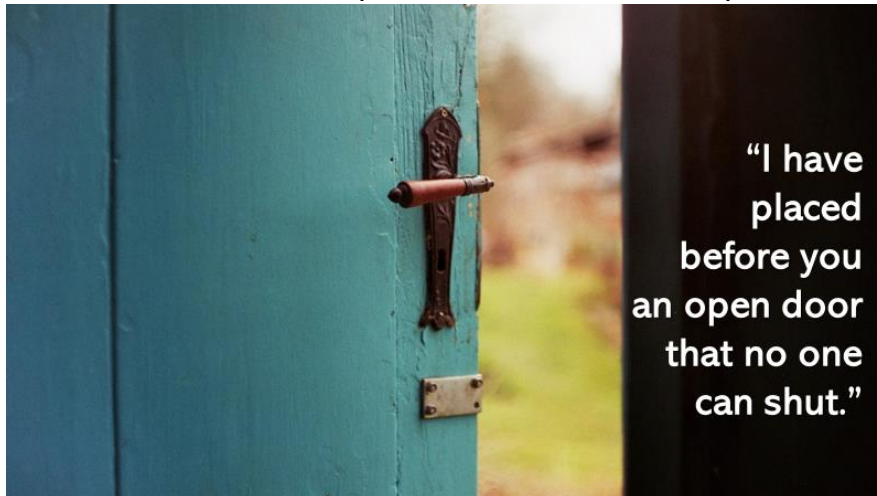
**Isaiah 65:16**

Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by ...**the one true God;** whoever takes an oath in the land will swear by... **the one true God.**

For the past troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes.

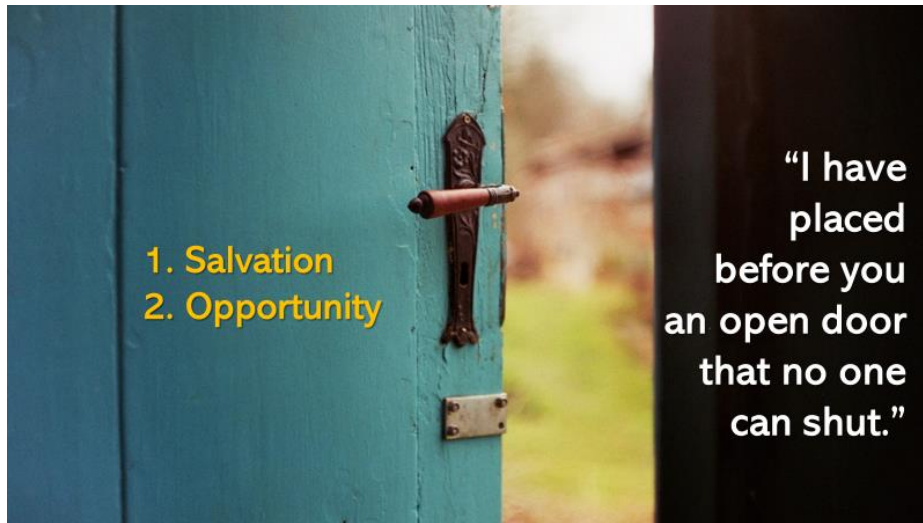
When Jesus spoke with John in chapter 1:18... he told John that he held the keys of death and Hades – meaning he had authority over them.

Jesus told his church in Philadelphia that he held another key...**the key of David...** which he had used to open the door which he spoke of in v.8...



**What was this door?**

John Stott says there are two possibilities, and both are right and both are to be embraced.



### **A Door of Salvation.**

In the OT the key of David referred to the authority entrusted by the king of Jerusalem to an individual who could either grant or deny access to the king, to his house, to the royal treasury.

The one who held the key of David was a gatekeeper.

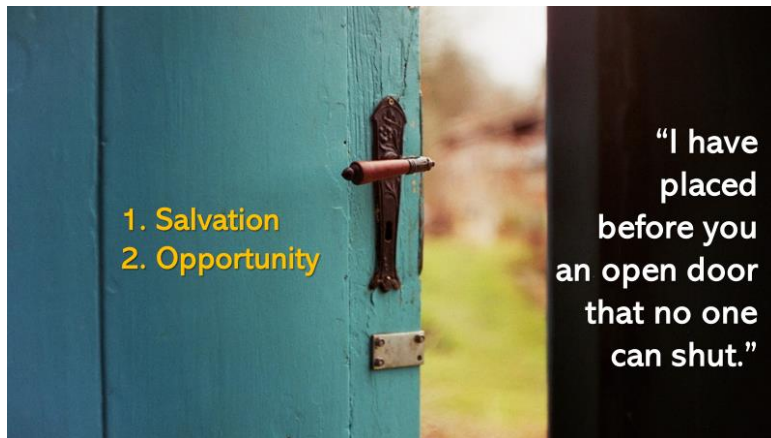
The OT passage.

#### Isaiah 22:20-22

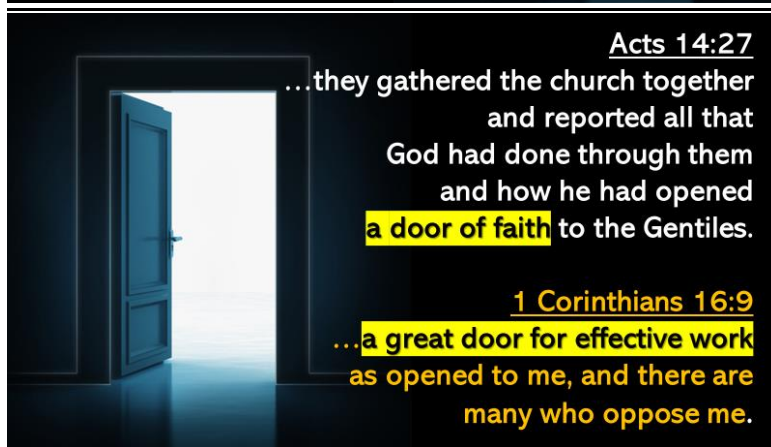
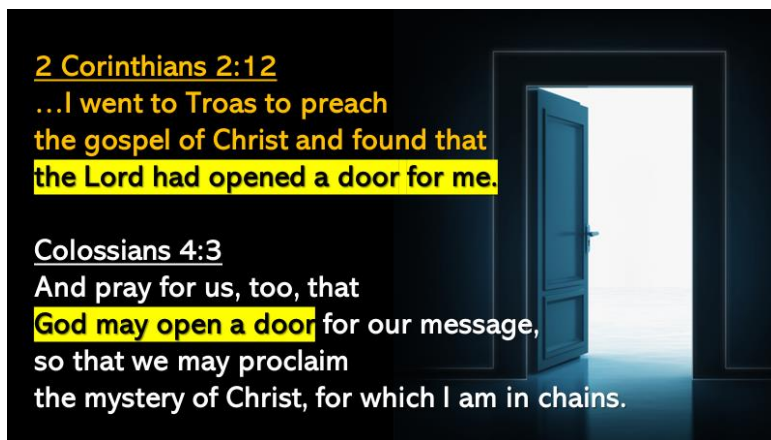
"In that day I will summon my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiah. <sup>21</sup> I will clothe him with your robe and fasten your sash around him and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the people of Judah.

<sup>22</sup> I will place on his shoulder **the key to the house of David**; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

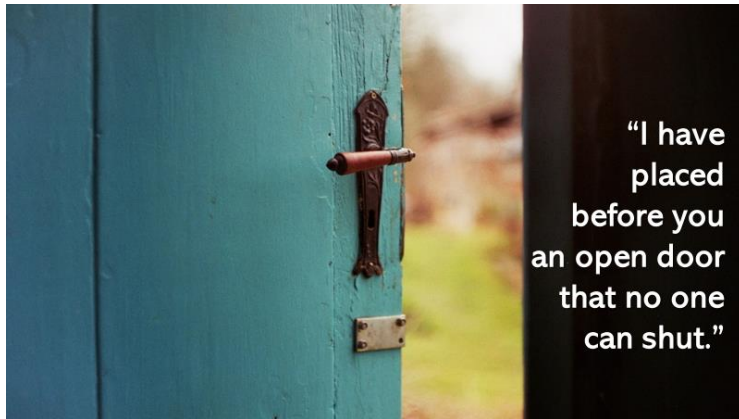
This position had functioned like a signpost that had pointed ahead to the Messiah; it had provided a picture of what the Messiah would do when he came – he would be a gatekeeper; through him one would be given access to the presence of God and to the resources of heaven.



The New Testament speaks often of opportunity as being a door that God opens. Consider these four instances.



We learn from what Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, that an open door of opportunity does not mean **“no obstacles, no difficulties, no challenges.”**



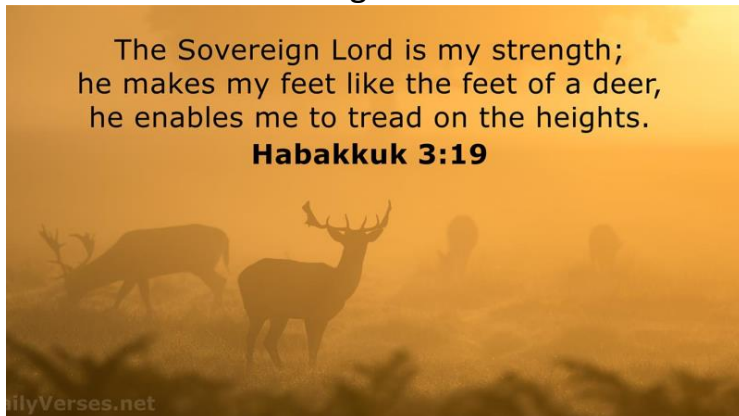
Here's what we know.

Jesus often chooses to place his church in situations where they are in over their head... where they are faced with difficulties and challenges... where they have little strength... where without him and the resources of heaven... there is no hope that they can do what he leads them to do.

Why does Jesus do this?

Not to cause his people to melt in a puddle of inadequacy... to draw back... to lay low... to be paralyzed and do nothing.

He does so in order to grow in them a confidence in his sufficiency.



Who is our strength?

It is the Sovereign Lord.

What does he enable us to do?

To go to places – the heights - that are beyond our ability.

**Not that we are competent  
in ourselves to claim  
anything for ourselves, but  
our competence comes  
from God.  
2 Corinthians 3:5**

Where does our competency come from?

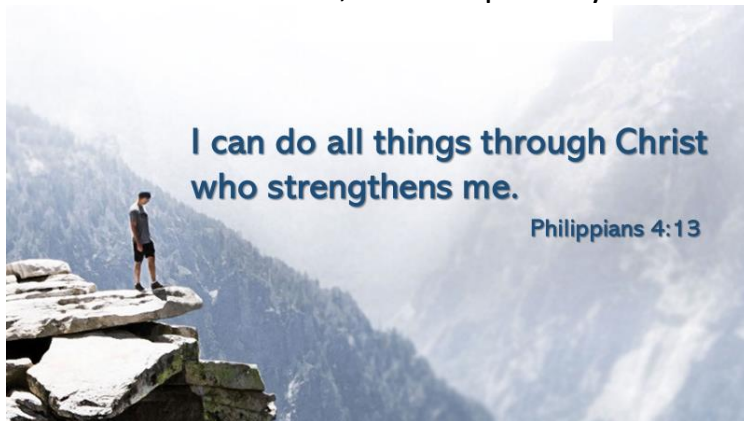
Our training?

Our natural skills?

Our life experiences?

These things do matter.

But first and foremost, our competency comes from...the triune God!



Follower of Jesus, we are bold...in him.

We act...in his name and in dependence upon his strength.

**<sup>9</sup> I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.**

In spite of the fact that the church in Philadelphia had little strength, referring to their numbers and natural skills, they had been obedient to Jesus.

They had faithfully lived for him and spoken his gospel...in spite of difficulties and little results.

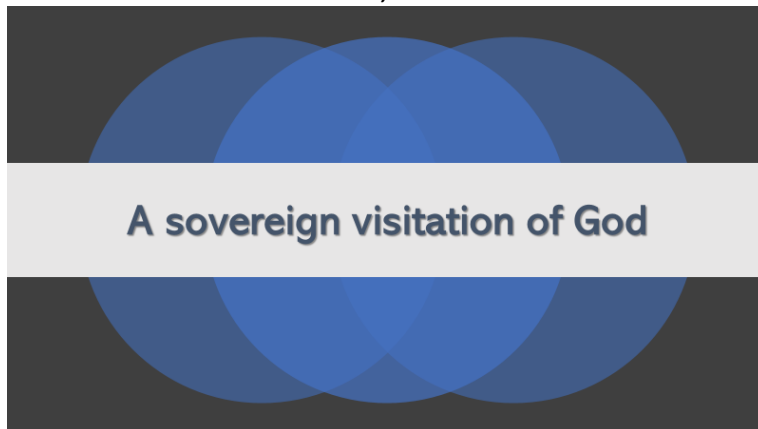
During his years of public teaching Jesus often used analogies from everyday life.



One of his favorites... had to do with the growing of seeds.  
Everyone knows that you never harvest in the same season in which you sow.

The church in Philadelphia had sown gospel seeds... most likely for years...with little to show for their effort.  
But remarkably, Jesus told his church in Philadelphia that those seeds would soon bear fruit.

In the words of GK Beale, there was about to be...in Philadelphia...



p.84

Unbelieving Jews, to whom the gospel had been preached, were about to place their faith in Jesus and be saved.

How do we know this?

Look again at v.9.

**Falling down is an act of repentance.**

It involves an acknowledgement to God and others that one's thinking and living has been wrong.



- “I was wrong about Jesus.”
- “I was wrong about my need of a Savior.”
- “I was wrong about my sin.”

Repentance goes hand in hand with a turning towards God in order to center one’s life in him.

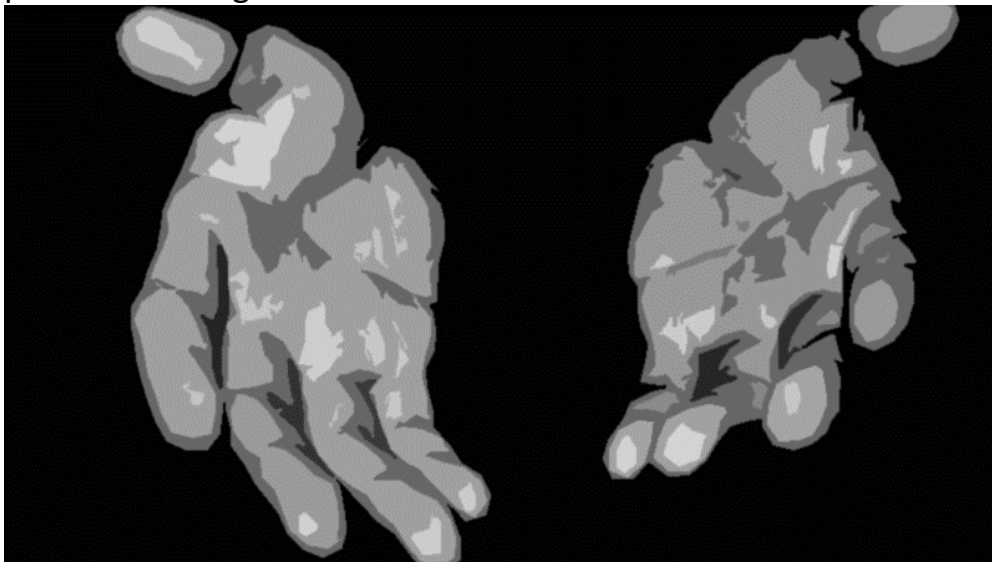
For the Jews in Philadelphia who were about to be saved...they would acknowledge to Jesus’ followers in Philadelphia:

“I was wrong in how I responded to you.”

“The good news you told me... I now believe...I believe God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, Jesus Christ.”

**<sup>10</sup> Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.**

As a believer holds on to Jesus, they are assured that Jesus is holding on to them. The follower of Jesus lives with the confidence that the things that touch our lives pass first through the hands of our triune God...



...which means our circumstances, the things that happen to us... are intended to reveal God’s glory and bring about his good and perfect will.

Regarding the circumstances of his followers, the last night of his life Jesus said...



What a promise!

We all experience sweet, joy-filled, soul-satisfying moments...and trouble. Jesus assures his followers... in times of trouble we will experience peace. A peace that enables us to take heart; to not be overwhelmed!

Our peace is found in the person of Jesus...who has overcome.

In his second letter to them, Paul reminded the church at Corinth, 1:8-10, that in addition to peace of heart, the believer also experiences hope in the midst of trouble.

2 Corinthians 1:8-10

We do not want you to be uninformed...about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia.

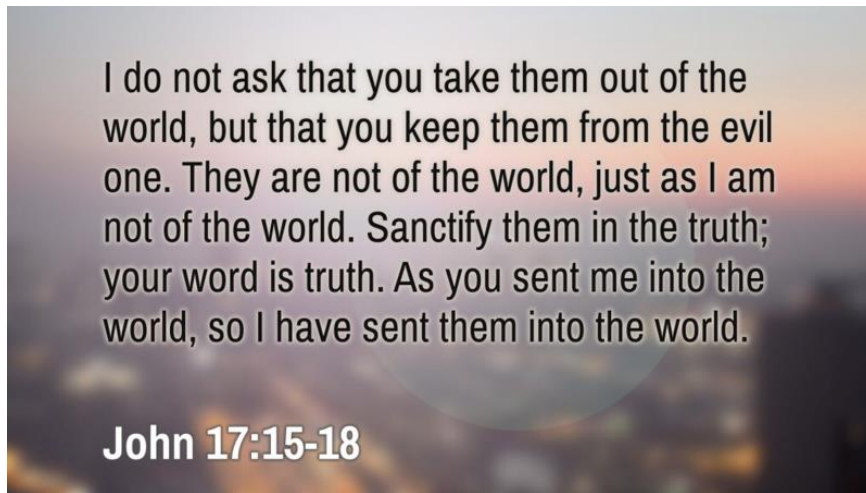
**We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. <sup>9</sup> Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death.**

But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

**<sup>10</sup> He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us...**

The believer's hope is in God.... who raises the dead.  
The triune God is the God of the impossible.  
There is nothing he cannot do.

After he shared the Passover meal with his disciples for the last time, in their presence Jesus prayed...he spoke with his Father.  
Look at what he said:



What did Jesus ask the Father to do?

**To keep** them **from** the evil one...even as he sent them into the world like he had been sent.

The promise of Jesus to the church in Philadelphia was similar – he would keep them from...the hour of trial...even as they live in this world to which he has sent them.

What was this hour of trial?

The second part of the Revelation, from chapter 4 to the end, will speak of this trial from different perspectives...even as it testifies to the keeping power of God in regard to his own.

it is important that our understanding of what Jesus meant in verse 10 be shaped by what he would yet say to his people in this letter.

What we know with absolute certainty is that Jesus is faithful and capable; that he is good and his will is perfect.

**<sup>11</sup> I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.**

The return of Jesus is imminent.

The believer lives with the expectation that it could be today!

But verse 11 is also a promise that applied to the immediate situation of the church in Philadelphia.

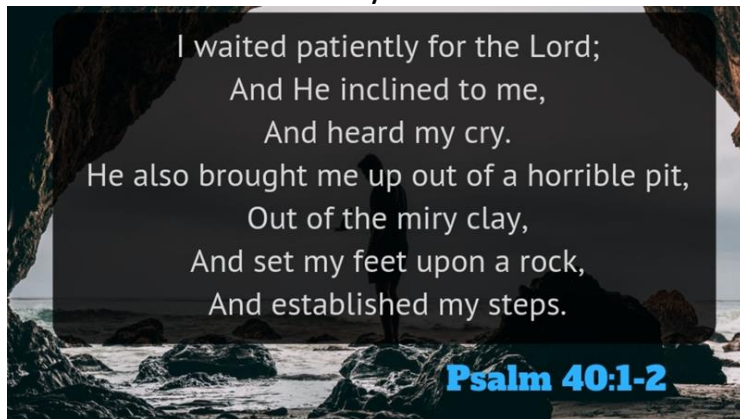
The church had little strength.

Jesus promised he would come to them...soon... and when he did he would strengthen them... so that they might continue to hold on; that they might persevere.

This reminds us that God's help will reach us; it will come at the right moment.

The triune God is never late.

So, follower of Jesus take a deep breath.... breathe out a prayer to him... and continue as Psalm 40 says...

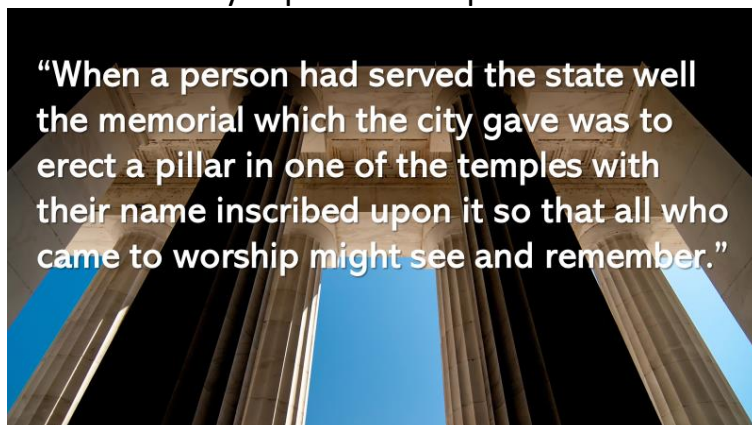


... to "wait patiently for the Lord."

At the right time, he will lift you out...and set your feet upon a firm place.

**<sup>12</sup> The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it.**

William Barclay explains what pillar meant...



DJ, p.108

Jesus promises to honor the one who overcomes; to acknowledge them before his Father – see Matthew 10:32.

**Never again will they leave it.**

The city of Philadelphia was situated on the edge of an active volcano. Along with rich soil and hot springs, tremors were frequent.



Whenever the earth would quake, the people would flee the city. Again, I quote from William Barclay who wrote, “This frightened rhythm of flight and return had become a part of life in Philadelphia.” DJ, p.107.



Jesus promises the one who overcomes, the one who is faithful to the end, that they will be welcomed into a kingdom that cannot be shaken – see Hebrews 12:28.

**I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.**

This writing on the follower of...

- ...the name of God
- ...the name of God’s city
- ...the new name of Jesus

...signifies to **whom**... the overcomer... belongs.

Those who overcome are the people of God, citizens of the new Jerusalem, co-heirs and regents with Christ, whose new name, unknown today, they will bear.

Gerhard Krodel

p.140

How incredible is the grace of God!  
How great is our salvation!

**<sup>13</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**

What is the Spirit saying to us?

For each of us individually, there are several connection points in this passage.

- Who Jesus is.
- The weight of his words.
- The access to God which he gives to us.
- His sufficiency.
- His care and keeping of his followers.
- His help of us that is never late.
- His salvation.

But as a church we've been reminded of one thing... that it is Jesus who opens a door of opportunity for us.

The NT examples we looked at all describe a door of opportunity in similar ways - the announcing to people of the good news of Jesus.

We don't force a door open.  
It is something God does.

But it is our responsibility to walk into opportunities and announce....

# Jesus' better story

- The beginning
- The choice
- The decision
- The plan
- The good news

Followers of Jesus... we know what God purposed to do before he created.

We know the story of how this world came to be.

We know the purpose for which women and men were created.

We know what went wrong.

We know the value of a human soul as evidenced by the great lengths to which our God and Savior went in order to rescue us.

We know a person is saved by grace through faith in Christ alone.

Right now, the people of this world are being shaken.

The things that they considered solid are being proven to be unreliable.

More than ever, they need to hear the better story of Jesus – the story of grace.

Jesus has opened a door for you and me to tell his better story.

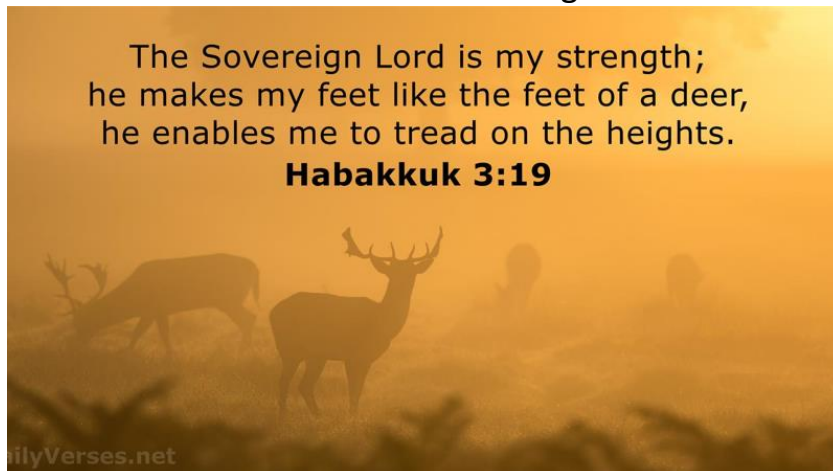


The word “see” in verse 8 is a command.  
Jesus wants you to see the opportunity he has put before you.  
And in seeing it, to walk into it... with him.

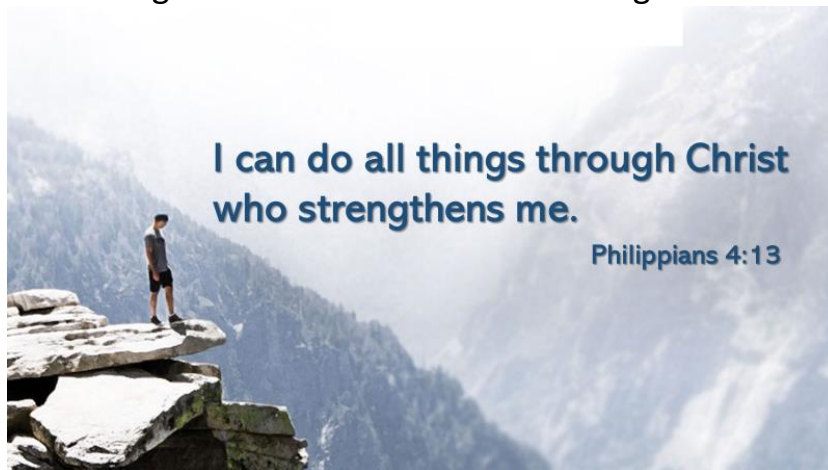
Before we sing our last song, let’s quietly speak with our God.  
There are people you and I know who are dear to us.

Will you in prayer quietly speak their names to God and ask him to open a door of opportunity for you to speak the good news to them?

You may need to put your fears into God’s hands, claiming his promise of help – as Habakkuk did... to walk on the heights...



...believing as Paul did that with the strength of Jesus Christ you can do all things



Quiet prayer....