

Coach House Church BEACONS

DOORWAYS!

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DOORWAYS: AN ENTRANCE OR A BARRIER

You have heard the term- kerb appeal – the importance of presenting your house well so that others have an immediate and positive impression. Maybe it's because you want to sell and the better it looks the better the chance of a good sale. Maybe it's because you like to create a welcoming entrance to visitors. At the moment, there are lots of interesting decorations on houses: rainbows and toys, messages of hope written in chalk outside and even chalk- coloured bricks that brighten up your daily walk as you pass your neighbours' houses.

The doorway is an important part of any house. It's the place you stand on a Thursday evening to clap and show appreciation of those working so hard in difficult circumstances. The doorway is the entrance and the welcome area. It is the boundary between outside from inside and defines what belongs to us. It controls access and also provides security. It is essential for our privacy and can create a safe place beyond it. The closed door can reflect our need for peace, for shutting out the world. It can also be a sign of isolation, forming an unwanted barrier, stopping us from interacting with those around us. So, sometimes the doorway is a protection and sometimes a barrier.

Here are two examples of doors as barriers in the bible.

When Jesus was crucified, his disciples were scared and confused by what had just happened. They feared for their own lives and went and hid behind a firmly closed door. The mighty Romans had just killed the man they trusted and hoped would be their rescuer. The door to the upper room in which they nervously waited was their

protection against being found, their safe place where they could avoid the same fate coming to them. Would we have acted any differently? I don't think so.

In Acts 16 there is the story of Paul and Silas who had been falsely accused and unjustly imprisoned. They were securely detained behind a prison door. At midnight, having been beaten and flogged, they began to sing hymns to God and started to pray. In both cases, however, the miraculous happened. In the first one, Jesus suddenly and unexpectedly appeared to the disciples, proving to them that he had risen and was alive, confirming what he had already prophesied and declared, that he was the Messiah, the Saviour, Emmanuel, God with us.

And in the case of the prisoners, Paul and Silas... Acts 16

26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" 29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptised. 34 The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household

Even the strongest doors are not a barrier to Almighty God. In both instances, they were in hopeless situations with the future unknown, with the next steps blocked by fear and uncertainty or by the physical prison doors and guards.

Don't let that closed door be your barrier, your sign of isolation. Ask God's Holy Spirit, the comforter, to be with you and strengthen you and give you peace in difficult times. Genesis 3 describes an entrance blocked by God- the way to the Tree of Life. Following the breaking of the rules set by God, Adam and Eve are banned from the garden and

the way is guarded by an angel with a flashing sword – definitely no entry there. They had lost their right to eternal life, had broken their agreement with God and more pointedly, lost their close relationship with Him.

Yet in John 14:6 Jesus was speaking to Thomas who had lots of searching questions.

6 Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.”

Jesus was in fact saying he was the doorway, the entrance back to God, to restoring the relationship that had been broken way back in Genesis.

At his crucifixion something amazing happened. Mark 15 says:

As Jesus released his Spirit and died on the cross ... the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

The curtain had been the singular and exclusive entrance to the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the very presence of God and now it was no longer blocking the way. This was no longer an exclusive entrance to be used once a year by the high priest, offering sacrifices on everyone else’s behalf. The entrance was now open to everyone who believed. This was a safe place, a sanctuary for everyone- the doorway to the presence of Almighty God.

When Jesus ascended back to heaven, He took his rightful place seated at the right hand side of God, in the place of authority and intercession on our behalf. The door to life was no longer barred as it was in the garden of Eden. Jesus is now the high priest speaking on our behalf, directly to God the Father. How amazing is that.

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus reminds us that he is standing at the door. As we read before, the doorway is open, it’s no longer blocked by our imperfections and failings. Jesus took the punishment and wrath of God that we deserved, and now God sees us through Jesus. Jesus stands in the gap, leading us to the entrance of heaven. He stands at the door waiting for us to open it.

He opens the door if we believe and ask, no matter who we are, as it says in Romans 10:9

9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”[e] 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

So, when we’re locked behind our doors and feeling isolated or generally just a bit fed up, maybe we should take a leaf out of Paul and Silas’ book and begin to pray and sing. You never know what will happen! One thing is for sure, thanking and praising God for the good things we have will change our perspective on life and remove the focus from ourselves and our circumstances. We will look towards Jesus who is our door way to forgiveness, peace and eternal life with God.

Let’s finish with Psalm 100 - a psalm for giving grateful praise.

- 1 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Worship the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.
- 3 Know that the Lord is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;[a]
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.
- 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.
- 5 For the Lord is good and his love endures for ever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.



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