

The “Path” {Open Door} Principle Pt 3 Rev. 3:7-13

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Palm Sunday, April 2nd

Reflection: God’s word reveals many Principles that He encourages us to build our lives on (Mt 7:24-29), and promises to bless those who chose to do so. Joshua 1:8

So far in this series we’ve discussed the Passion (Open Heart) Principle from Col. 3:16-24 and Purpose (Open Hand) Principle from Ex. 4:2 (also Ro. 12:1,2; Rev. 4:11)

Direction: We’ve been focusing on the Path (Open Door) principle from Rev. 3:7-13

1. **THE PREAMBLE:** Vs 7 *“These things saith he that is holy, he that is true”*

A. Christ Declared His Divinity. *“He that is holy”*

B. Christ Declared His Sincerity. *“He that is true”* (Trustworthy) Jn 1:14

2. **THE PICTURE.** Keys represent Authority!

In Rev 1:18 Jesus presents himself as the one who holds: *“The keys (authority) of hell and of death”*

In Rev. 3:7 he presents himself as *“He that hath the keys of David”*,

Jesus is presented as the one who has the ultimate authority to open and close doors to direct us toward God’s “Expected end”. (See Jer. 29:11)

3. **THE PROBLEMS (God opening doors implies barriers exist!)**

1Cor 16:9 *“For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.”*
(antik’eimai) from anti: opposite or instead and keimai: to lie outstretched {reach after}, wait

A. External Adversaries:

1) Satan: (mentioned 938 x in 666 passages. Gr. Satanas: Accuser (Rev. 12:10)

From the Hebrew śāṭān meaning adversary!

a) He’s the master of deception, distraction, doubt and despair (Jn 8:44; Jn 10:10; Eph. 2:1-3) and adept at influencing us to second guess God (Gen. 3:1) and ourselves!

2 Cor 11:13,14 “such are ...deceitful workers...

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”

a) He is a liar and adept at causing us to second guess God. (Remember Gen.3)

b) He’s the “god of this world” (2 Cor 4:4) and uses worldly resources to keep us “earth bound”.

2) Society: (Eph. 6:12)

a) *“The god of this world”* (2 Cor 4:4) uses worldly resources to accomplish his agenda. 1 Jn 2:15,16

(1) He used the religious leaders to oppose Jesus, and the early church.

(2) He used the Jews in Philadelphia to oppose the believers. Rev. 3:9 *“the synagogue of Satan”*

(3) Throughout history he’s used social pressure to get us to “conform to this world” (Ro. 12:1,2)

b) His tools (devices {2 Cor 2:11}) include:

(1) Infiltration. *“Certain men crept in unaware...”* Jude 1 (See Mt 13:24-33)

(2) Intimidation. *“The fear of man bringeth a snare...”* Pr. 29:25; 1 Pt 5:8 (Justinian Code of 529)

(3) Preoccupation. *“for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind (regard) earthly things.”* Phil. 3:18,19

B. Internal Adversary: SELF.

Our flesh fights against God. (Gal. 5:17; Ro. 7:18-19)

Why do we so often sabotage God’s opportunities?

- 1) **Folly:** We want to open our own doors. (After all, we know what is best.)
 - a) We can't see past the key-holes of life's choices. (1 Cor 13:12; Jer. 17:9)
 - b) That's why wisdom directs us to Pr. 3:5,6; and Heb. 12:1,2

- 2) **Frustration:** Open doors are often cluttered with problems/challenges. (Strait gate in Mt. 7:13)
 - a) We can miss God's open door because of the "obstacles". (Kadesh Barnea Nu 12:33; Acts 14:22)
 - b) The caterpillar becomes a butterfly through the process of metamorphosis
and the **pressure** of freeing itself from the chrysalis! **Ro. 12:2**
- 3) **Finite time limits:** Most doors don't stay open for long. (Numbers 14: Rev. 3:20,21)

Gen. 6:3 *"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man"*
Heb. 3:7,15; 4:7 *"To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts"*

 - a) Hesitation often becomes procrastination and leads to devastation: (Acts 24:25 and 26:28)
Our reservations are the damnations of our dedications!
- 4) **Fear:** We want to stay inside where it's safe. (*This is what kept Israel in the desert for 40 years*)
 - a) Persecution was raging when John wrote this. (Domitian demanded worship!)
 - b) John refused to acknowledge Caesar as Lord and was banished. (Rev. 1:9)
 - c) Every believer faced the choice of compromise or consequences.
 - d) The Philadelphian church felt inadequate to represent and reflect Jesus. (Mt 28:18-20)
 - (1) Jesus' letter encouraged them to stand firm. Rev 3:8
 - (2) Their commitment would test and grow their strength and faith. 2 Cor 12: 9,10

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Conclusion: Palm Sunday is a vivid example of how effectively we can be deceived into believing that God wants exactly what we want. Mt 21:9 *"Hosanna"*

From Yasha {open wide, free, save us!} and Na: Now!

Jesus then cleansed the Temple (vs 12,13); Healed the sick (vs 14) annoyed the priests (vs 15); Cursed the fruitless fig tree (vs 19) and later wept over the barrenness (hardness) of Jerusalem. (Mt 23:37,38)

I wonder if he ever weeps over our stubbornness, hardness, & barrenness? (Jn 15:16)

When it became clear that Jesus wasn't going to cooperate with what they wanted, their cries praise turned into cries for his crucifixion. (Mk 15:12-14)

Application: We, like the early believers, face both opportunities, and opposition (1 Cor 16:9) from Satan, Society, and our own selfish flesh.

These work together to **blind us** to God's open doors

(Through infiltration, intimidation, or distraction)

And **bind** us to our own (or ultimately Satan's).

(through folly, frustration, finite time limits, or fear)

Satan, Society and "Self" offer us "easier paths" that will ultimately rob us of God's Paths, power and promises. (Pr. 14:12; Jn 10:10)

No Wonder God's "Path Principle" reminds us to: *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, And Lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him,*

(yada: consider, recognize and respond) *And He shall direct thy paths."* Pr 3:5,6

(Yashar: make straight, right, clear, prosper)

Heb. 12:3 *"For consider him..."* (Analogiz' omai contemplate, proportion, prioritize)

Are you truly willing to honestly "consider" Christ?

<https://sethadamsmith.com/2015/07/29/lost-and-found/>

"My House is Full, But My Field is Empty"

was written by Lanny Wolfe.

There is peace and contentment in my Father's house today,

Lots of food on His table and no one turned away.

There is singing and laughter as the hours pass by,

But a hush calms the singing as the Father sadly cries,

My house is full, but my field is empty,

Who will go and work for Me today.

It seems my children(all)want to stay around my table,

But no one wants to work(in)my fields,

No one wants to work(in)my fields.

Push away from the table. Look out through the windowpane,

Just beyond the house of plenty Lies a field of golden grain.

And it's ripe(white)unto harvest, But the reapers, where are they?

In the house, Oh, can't the children hear the Father sadly say,

My house is full, but my field is empty,

Who will go and work for Me today.

It seems my children(all)want to stay around my table,

But no one wants to work(in)my fields,

No one wants to work(in)my fields.

Swear by the genius of our lord the emperor": False Worship and Persecution of Christians

By Rex Butler <https://www.nobts.edu/geauxtherefore/articles/2016/swear-by-the-genius-of-our-lord-the-emperor--false-worship-and-persecution-of-christians.html>

Toward the end of the first century, Emperor Domitian sent out a decree that all in his empire should worship him as "God the Lord." Residents of the empire were ordered to come to the public square, burn a pinch of incense, and speak the words Caesar kurios, "Caesar is lord." This act of devotion seemed little enough in light of the emperor's divine power and benevolence toward his subjects. And refusal could result in imprisonment, confiscation of property, banishment, and even death. Christians, however, did refuse. They confessed a higher allegiance: Iesus kurios, "Jesus is Lord," recalling Paul's admonition, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

In western Asia Minor, known today as Turkey, emperor worship was embraced, so Domitian's edict was strictly enforced. In 17 AD, a powerful earthquake destroyed many of the cities in that area, including Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Smyrna. Because Emperor Tiberius paid for the reconstruction of these cities out of imperial funds, the citizens were grateful to the emperor and quite ready to worship anyone who occupied the imperial throne. And any resident who refused to worship the emperor was severely punished.