

Revelation

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Preacher: Rowell, F Leslie (1902-1973)

[0 : 0 0] chapter 3 I know thy works behold I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it for thou hast a little strength and hast kept thy word and hast not denied thy name the 8th verse of the 3rd chapter of the book of the Revelation the part of the word of God that has been more particularly impressed upon my mind in this verse this evening in which I hope the Lord may enable me to speak a few words about it is the middle clause where we read behold I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it there does certainly seem to be a connection between this statement of the Lord Jesus Christ a very blessed one to the church of Philadelphia and the following clause where it reads thou hast a little strength and hast kept thy word and hast not denied thy name there have been some persons who commented on these verses who said the reason why the Lord set the open door before these people and decreed that none should shut it was because they had kept his word and have not denied his name in our words that this open door and the promise that it would never be shut was some direct reward for their endeavour to keep the word of God in its entirety and purity and faithfulness and never to deny the name of the Lord but you see friends as I read the word of God through there seems to be a rather different aspect of it here and that is this that the Lord Jesus Christ is saying to the church of Philadelphia

I know thy works why does he know their works because the works that he does know in them and that have been so clearly seen in them are the works that he has brought in them you see friends if you have a certain craft and you engage yourself in that certain craft you know far more about that particular work that you're engaged in than in some other work that you're not engaged in but some other person may be equivalently well trained to attend to their particular craft and now the Lord says this I know thy works because they are the works that I have brought in thee I know them because they are my own handiwork they are the reflection of my own glory and of my own purpose and of my own salvation and of my own mighty power of sanctification in your soul I know them because they are the works that I have brought in you and what are the works that the Lord has brought in his servants well he says in the latter part of this verse here

I have brought in you a little strength if I hadn't brought it given it to you maintained it in you well then you would have never had it and not only so but you have kept my work not because there is any nature in your flesh that is faithful to the word of God you might profess to be faithful to your friends and to your family but you are not faithful to the word of God by nature that is within the compass of human ability at all to be faithful to the word of God but says the Lord I have brought this in you thou hast kept my word you be faithful to my word and then he goes on to say you have not denied my name well here is another work of the Lord I have kept you from denying my name I have given you such a love to me and maintained that love within your heart to me given you such an attachment to my person and my work and my sacrifice and offering and blood

I have made myself so precious to your soul that by this way by this grace I have prevented you from denying my name I have kept you in the hour of temptation so that with regard to that you could say as Joseph did concerning another how can I do this great wickedness in denying the name of the Lord who gave himself as a ransom price for my son now friends it's a wonderful thing to have such a work as that within the heart now the Lord says see I have said before the open door you've got the evidence on it I gave you a little strength and you were able to exercise that strength because I sat before the open door don't think it's because of your strength that the door has been opened but your strength has had its secret the open door I open the door so that my strength should flow forth to you and that you should enter through the door of access unto the Lord through Jesus

Christ and find that there is strength available for you in your time and need the Lord says it to the apostle he said my grace is sufficient for thee and my strength is made perfect in your weakness and so friends I don't want you to think that the open door is something that is in the future even for the church of Philadelphia but already the Lord says in the little strength that you possess you've already experienced the fact that the door is open and you entered through the door and have been blessed in entering through the door of course the same thing applies to the other things thou hast kept my word if the door of my grace had been opened to you and you had not entered through that door by living faith and laid hold upon a precious Christ in love and faith and devotion then there would have never been any keeping of my word in your heart you would not have been faithful to the word that you have professed there are so many who have not known anything about the open door they've made a profession of christianity as we suggested yesterday they've said they belong to christ and belong to the church but my dear friends in an hour of temptation when apostasy and evil teaching has come they'll entertain it as easy as they did the truth and they'll cast off the truth and entertain the evil in the place of it why because they knew nothing of the secret of the open door but all these people said the lord thou hast kept my word be faithful to it because the secret was that the door had been opened up to you and there through that door both for myself and in your drawing night to be through the open door then that grace has been found whereby you have kept my word and then also the last thing is similarly true thou hast not denied my name thou hast not denied my name all friends these people have found that christ was so needful to them and so suitable to them and by the manifestation of the holy ghost and the glory and grace of christ to their soul they could say he was so precious to them you see that they couldn't deny his name well not when he was precious like that to their soul why they say he may be mr.

[7 : 20] slimy yet i would trust in him he's so precious to me he's so needful to me so suitable to me you see and there friends the open door has been proven already you see these are the evidence of the fact that these people know something of the open door but there is of course the future here as well and that is the lord says as experimentally you have known that i have opened a door to you a door to your soul's access to god a door whereby the eternal abundant bounty of god can glow forth to you in your poverty and sin you see as you have proved that the door is open and you have known the benefits of the open door in your soul and in your life now says the lord i'll never shut it i'll never shut it i've collected myself that i will never shut it oh look look to the seed of the covenant the precious blood of jesus christ and see it written there even from that seal i will never shut for i have opened for you oh friend there's a certainty you see of god's word and his promises i don't know to what degree of comfort whistles may come to your spirit but i would that in some way denying to those who gather here every one of you if it could be the will of the lord so that this word might come as a real word of health and comfort and strength in your spirit i have set before thee an open door it may be that you've only known a little of it a little strength i like that word i like that word my friends these people at philadelphia they were not boasters like the theodosians they said i am so rich and so increased in good that i have need of nothing i've got all that i need and all that i want and all that is required of me you see they're not boasters like they ever seen but all friends the lord sums up not only their character which they know to be true but he sums up their very confession you see he tells them what has been found in their prayers his word echoes the very deepest experiences and feelings of their heart as he says oh i know that you have a little strength you told me so but that strength came from me and like the smoking blacks or the bruised ring it's not going to be extinguished it's not going to be broken the open door will be kept open the mercy seat will still be available to you the strength of god will still flow forth to you through the minutes of jesus christ the precious blood the dear he did will still be the way for your poor soul is and say i'll not shut the door against you are not shut the door against you i have set before thee an open door let us consider one or two things of course friends i realize that there may be a very special application of the word here to the fact that an open door of witness and preaching of the gospel has been granted to this church of philadelphia and also that an open door has been made into the hearts of others as they bore the gospel before these people we perhaps may mention that a little later on but i i want to speak to one of two other things first and the first is this read that you know these people have found an open door to the father the father i don't know how you feel about that word in connection with god but it is used in the bible you know oh it's used in the bible and the dear redeemer when he was teaching his disciples how to cry and he said when he cries our father which art in heaven i don't know how you feel about it friends but to me i i feel to be such a sinner and so far removed from the holiness and purity of god in my person that i rather feel like was it new and steel said on one occasion and can my heart aspire so high to say my pardon of god but you know the

lord jesus christ himself teaches this truth he said there is a wine a wine that i have made and i have opened even into the holiness by my own precious blood a wine to the father my father and your father my god and your god he said even as he speaks to the women after the resurrection oh friends don't forget these are the terms that christ uses concerning not only his relationship to the father but also concerning the relationship of poor sinners who stand completely in christ and their relationship to the one who is the father of christ and the father of his people in christ holy mercy of this friend and there there is an open door an open door you say i dare go i dare go my dear friends let me assure you of this that the fact that you don't go is not because there is an open door for paul sinners to approach unto the eternal father the god and father of our lord jesus christ all the doors been opened friends the wife and the holiest by the mother of jesus christ is still over it's still over and it will be right down to the end of the gospel life the wife will still be opened the door will still be opened there will be sinners friends convinced of their sin brought upon by the holy ghost with the power of divine regeneration converted souls who hate themselves and loathe their sins and there they will be found venturing through this open door and they will find friends that the

Lord has placed their value in the white of their approach he still says come oh you know blessed words some soldiers then come come you know friends if her minister never preached from any other word in the scriptures that matter all the days of his life and every sermon of his ministry he certainly wouldn't be unfaithful to what Christ said would he oh no he wouldn't be unfaithful to what Christ said I know there's other aspects of divine truth but the necessity must be from Christ but see what it really signifies this blessing word God the Lord says there has been a barrier in the way but I have taken it away and come you see that's how he speaks the barrier of your sin and your guilt your condemnation divine judgment upon you because of your iniquity but I have taken it away said Christ and now come come and oh with the word of this blessed king for fearful trembling one my friends have trod that way and they've come to the father's footstool and cried for mercy in the name of

Jesus and they've bowed that the door is to open the door is to open there's another thing about this word this word is spoken by Jesus Christ the poor citizen that is this the Lord says I know also the hindrance is that you'll find in coming he says I know it won't be easy for you there'll be unbelief in your heart that will all that will be so powerful that it will say within you but you can't go it's impossible for you to go you've got to be bad to get before you can go there must be some improvement in your character and your morals and all the rest of it before you go and you see friends the Lord knows the difficulties that his people are subject to because of their unbelief he knows also my friends that the devil will stand in the fire and say what you you go you go you go I was only reading in the cheering words yesterday evening after I got back home an extra day from the life of

Brown and North and how a person put in his hand a letter just before he was going to preach one evening Brown and North lived a very loose life in his early days before the Lord taught him my brothers and in this letter somebody who knew about his character in his early days had written out a whole list of these crimes against God that he committed and at the end he said now you go you hypocrite and talk about the demons that you've been talking about recently and of course my friend they cut the dear man's down and when he got there and he had to stand up and preach the gospel you will read it if you read the little book of course it says there that the dear man had to make an open confession that everything that was in the letter was perfect victory everything that was written there he had committed every sin every actual thing that had been written there in that letter he was guilty of you see and he said it's all forgiven it's all forgiven it's all forgiven it's a wonderful thing for a man who knows himself to be a right sinner to know by the witness of the spirit of

[16:19] God with his spirit that always forgiven him through Jesus Christ that's why the Lord says come that's why the Lord says come it's no easy power it's no part my friends along which anybody an angry body willy-nilly world being or whatever you may be can dance along that way so easily let me assure you this that if there's a longing to draw near to the father you see and to plead the precious name of Jesus Christ you'll find a thousand obstacles in the way the friends the words of the Lord prevail against the obstacles that's the mercy of it with the word of this king there is such power and authority that the obstacles and be cast down and the poor children that has trampled and heavy faded as it were from the threshold will be able to tread over the threshold into the door and find it open oh because the Lord has said come well that's one aspect of the open door another thing my friends that I feel perhaps we might mention in regard to this open door is the blessed grace and ability that the

Lord gives to his people to be able to believe in Christ to really believe in Christ I don't only mean my friends to believe the historical record concerning Christ it's a good thing that it needs days of apostasy and denial of the inspiration of the scriptures all kinds of rachsistic attacks upon the word of God for a person to really hold you see the historical record concerning the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that faith is something more than that oh a living vital faith is something more than that my friends are living faith I hear it's expressed sometimes in the words when it says my soul into thine arms like I trust I shall be saviour the only name the only hope the only saviour the only salvation that where you come strict to the end every idol now my friends with the word idol written upon you know the vanity of everything all those hopes that in yourself or without yourself that you trust in of a religious nature there only one hopeless night you see

Christ and him criticise fire an open door no man shall shut it no man shall shut it all friends let that living pulsing faith the gift of God be found within the soul of a poor sinner that would hang and cling for everything to Christ though he slay me yet will I trust in him says no an extreme case may be but nevertheless my friend not so extreme that it's not repeated in the experience of sin of the day night and there friends they hang everything upon Christ and him above an open door an open door I'll put it there I'll put it there if it wasn't for Christ there'd be no move for you perish miserably I must if it's not for Christ no merit outside of him no hope outside of him no why is the holiest not by him the open door and there friends Christ sends to these who only got a little strength a little strength oh there's so many blinding things so many hindering things they just see as though they cannot make any progress in the

Christian way but oh they've got just that little strength to look to look up the cross I often think of those poor dying men you know that's all not to say poor they've been very sinful men well that's one thing to make sure that poor men if you sin my friends you're desperately poor ever much you've got in your pocket or in the bank you'd be quite sure that desperately poor if you sin that's the trouble with men today they don't know their poverty if they knew their poverty my friends they'd certainly cry out of their bankruptcy to him who is wealthy and able to save they just don't know their poverty do you remember the case of oh a very very poor man and there is of course it's connected to the words that we have here I will set I have set before thee an open door and no man can shine there that poor man out of his great poverty he says you know the words from the cross poor dying feet that man that sin so grieve

Lord remember that amen well that's it thyself and myself it's an issue between me and evil nothing else can now come into the way my companion in evil he's had his side I've heard what he's had to say he's reproved me because I was such a sinner now I'm saying what I am saying but Lord it's just between me and me now believe believe that just between me and me everything else has to go then an issue between your soul and the Lord Lord remember me that thou comest into my kingdom we indeed just may receive the new reward about it but this man this man oh this holy perfect pure spotless man this man that is a sacrifice often to see this man has done nothing

[22 : 01] Lord remember me when thou comest in my kingdom yes friends there is a wonderful open door granted to poor sinners by the gospel and by the Lord Jesus Christ an open door to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ perhaps I might mention one or two other things briefly to one thing to have an open door to love one another to love one another you know it's everything in me my friends that would not love but would rather hate it seems to me to be an amazing thing that the critical censorious man should ever become a real lover you never find that in Christ of course no criticism no censoriousness of that nature it is simple my dear friends Christ is a divine lover a perfect lover oh read your song of Solomon through if you've got any spiritual understanding at all pray that the Holy Ghost may bet it to your reading and there friends you'll see the declaration of the one the description of the one the words of the one who is so perfect and faithful a lover of those of our own world and because his love is set upon the sea the fruit of it is the lives of those of his love they confess their backness but oh they say he says I'm coming he says I'm coming and then friends what do we find these people doing despite all the prevailing and power of sin within them everything that would cause antagonism and envy and cowardice and pride which is so disruptive to all loving relationships despite the prevalence of those things within them they find friends there are blessed seasons when their heart is drawn out in love and unity to other dear pilgrims and the journey oh it's a wonderful wonderful

I am very much like the narrative of John Bunyan in the second part of the pilgrimage progress when he described the house of Gaius and what happened there dear friends the whole of the narrative is relevant of wonderful Christian affection love toward one another in that house do you know I can pray tonight friends for you and having to chat it might be that when we come here the spirit of Gaius house might be preserved here in absence to meet the glory of our God and Christ if it is so or an open door to be able to love a better self to sit with them and pray for them and labour for them and suffer for them one will think when it is so to be willing friends as some people have said to become a door match let people wipe their feet on you if necessary but nevertheless to be preserved in love to the Lord why says dear David it is love to Christ and also to the church he said

I'd rather be a door keeper in the house of my God I know the great emphasis is to all the Lord there the house of the Lord but also what about the inhabitants of the house I'd rather be a door keeper a menial a servant to serve them and me or me and them if you like it that way about I'd rather be there than to dwell in the tents and wickedness even for a seat God be our sure there's another aspect of it God grant that you may take it home and feed the mountain an open door also to an the ordinances of Christ on open the end the Lord has set before his people an open door let there be that little faith you see that little strength that desire to keep his name keep his word the Lord has set before that people an open door to and in the ordinance of his house God bid that we should despise them I feel so sad for him when I go about the place and I find congregations gathered together under the ministry of the gospel there's hardly any church left in some places none at all makes me exceedingly sad oh where is the love the love of

Christ within the heart the love of Christ that constrains friends to enter through that door which the Lord has provided and opened and maintained open even to the ordinances of the gospel what think of following Christ you say I want to I want to follow him day by day I want to see him before me as a perfect example of his people and wherever I see the footsteps of my master I want to put my own there is that all is that all is there not those particular peculiar things that the Lord himself has ordained in which his own name and honour and work and suffering and glory is found out is it not in those ways also that my friends love would constrain us to walk in you say but I'm not fit together let me tell you this my friends you'll never be fit to be son never be fit to be son you'll never be fit for heaven not in yourself not in yourself pour on on yourself too long let it sink below look to

Jesus kind and strong pity join the tower who does he have pity to the righteous the worthy the meek the honourable my friends but the sinner the sinner if you tarry till you're better you'll never come to never come to that applies my friends not only to the way of faith through Jesus Christ but also to entrance in the ordinances of the gospel oh an open door an open door Christ has opened it Christ has ordained it Christ makes it precious in the heart of his people he shows himself in the ordinances of the overwhelming sufferings that came from the land of God the immersion of that blessed one in the depths of distress and of victim for his people sake he shows at the table of the Lord in the broken bread and the poured out wine significant of the sufferings of his tortured body but more my friends the suffering of his perfect soul and then the poured out blood and our dear

[28 : 34] Emmanuel the blessed atonement for our sin all friends an open door to and in the ordinances of the gospel then of course I did just mention did I not how in this world there does certainly seem to be a reference to the open door that the Lord had made for this church of Philadelphia to be able to witness to and preach the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ I have set before thee an open door you have a little strength there has been a little of this it's been according to the measure of the grace that I have given to thee I know that I can't be spirit of the fear and the weakness that dwells in so many of the members of the church I know all about that but I have given this little strength that they may be able to maintain a faithful witness to my name and to my glory and to my honour and to the precious things of the gospel of the grace of God I have given that grace a little strength has been there and the door is still open oh friends what a wonderful thing to realise that the door is still open

I think of some of my brethren I feel I can speak like that about them tonight I feel love to them you know men behind the iron curtain who suffer never so many things for Jesus sake today who really love the Lord the dear Redeemer that's not full strict baptists I don't know what they're called in Russian I don't know the word and nevertheless my friends I believe they're brethren to me who've got a little strength and have kept the word and not denied his name and have suffered in the cause of it as well I feel that they are brethren to my sovereignty these young people that have been maintained for the grace of God like that and as I think of them there behind the iron curtain suffering as they do what a little thing is that although all the rulers of Russia and all the satellite countries were trying to completely destroy religion in every world particularly evangelical religion gospel religion you see and the Lord says I have set before the open world nobody will be able to shut it now all the communistic doctrine will be poured out through the aliens it will never be able to stop it you see and all the ecumenical apostasy which will go on increasing within this country will never be able to stop it you see and all the attempts to close down the chaffs and refuse to allow licenses to build new ones in order the gospel may be preached here or there in various places

I have set before the open law no man can stop it no man can shut it and the blessed truth is this way the law has set before his weak tribe people you see an open law that there shall be a witness unto the word divine truth still continues and then not only so but he's given an open door into other people's hearts as witnesses unto him to his word you think friends the great rebels who have to bow Ananias says to the Lord when he comes to visit him tell you about Saul of Tarsus down in the street called straight at Damascus Ananias says you have heard by many of this man yes but Ananias you don't know what I've done with him you don't know what I've done with him you go down to the house Ananias and you'll find that I've opened the door you see and what you say

Ananias will be received and he'll love it he'll love it he'll embrace it he'll embrace it you know that's what I have to pray for friends when people come to this chapel may have been coming here as many years but I have to pray for the open the door in their hearts so that the word is proclaimed here though in such weakness may nevertheless enter it by divine power of who the antichristian that all the glory may belong to christ and all the benefit may be the benefit of that poor sinner whose heart the Lord has touched and opened what did she do this Lydia well she gave heed to the things of the apostle preach an open heart an open heart have you got somebody at home who you know who has not got this open heart yet you pray that the Lord may set before you in connection with that person an open door you pray for that this is great work it's great work it's another concerning regeneration it's the giving of life and the opening up of the business clothes a new heart of life give me a heart of bread and take away the heart of stone that's it that's it the open door the open door master door

I have set before thee an open door yesterday he had to solemnly speak about the shut door tonight friends the Lord has caused me to speak to you about an open door I don't want you to think that what I said tonight it by any means exalts the blessed gospel truth that is contained in this world there are so many other things that seem to rest upon my spirit which could be shall I say included incorporated in this wonderful doctrine of the open door by the power of God that the power of the Holy Ghost in the midst of the sinful world oh what open door you pray friends that more and yet more you may see that open door and the glory of Christ's sacrifice even in that door that has been opened for you may the Lord have his blessing amen in number 33 bless be the father and his love to who celestial source we owe rivers of endless joy bound and rills of comfort here below hymn 33 mog■ thee onwards or like or and this or will fee they come and surely and they they

[35 : 20] Thank you.