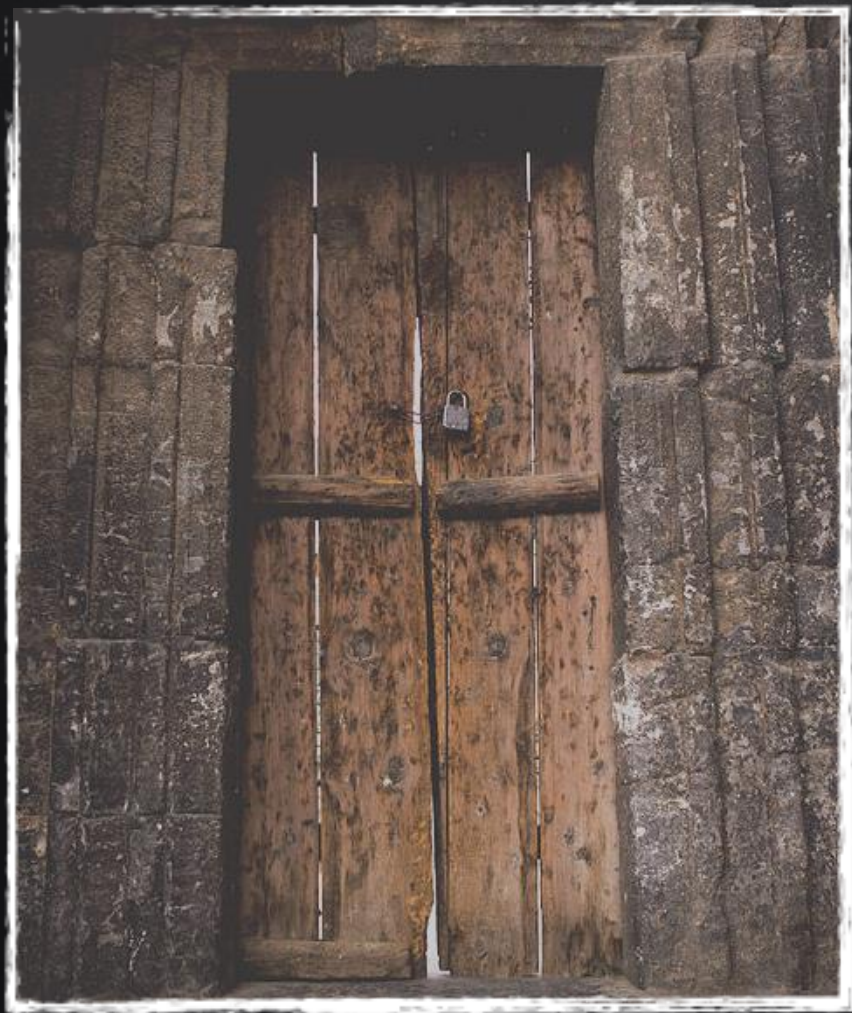




DOORS

IN THE LIFE OF FAITH



“When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” (Matt. 6:6)

Mark 1:35-39

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, ‘Everyone is looking for you.’ And he said to them, ‘Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.’ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.”

The Overflow of a Private Life with God

- Jesus is redirected.

The Overflow of a Private Life with God

- Jesus is redirected.
- Jesus is refueled.

The Overflow of a Private Life with God

- Jesus is redirected.
- Jesus is refueled.
- Jesus is resolved.

The Overflow of a Private Life with God

- Jesus is redirected.
- Jesus is refueled.
- Jesus is resolved.

According to Jesus, our ability to discern overflows from our private lives with God.

“Discernment is not a matter of simply telling the difference between right and wrong; rather, it is telling the difference between right and almost right.” (Charles Spurgeon)

Discernment is more than accurately assessing; it is positively discovering God's will—to perceive and receive divine guidance.

"And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

(Philippians 1:9-11)

"We have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light." (Colossians 1:9-12)

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(Romans 12:1-2)

A Believer's Discernment Matrix

1. Scripture
2. Godly counsel
3. Prayer
4. An openness to hear and obey

*“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,
but a wise man listens to advice.”*

(Proverbs 12:15)

*“Whoever walks with the wise becomes
wise.” (Proverbs 13:20)*

A Believer's Discernment Matrix

1. Scripture
2. Godly counsel
3. Prayer
4. An openness to hear and obey

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” (James 1:5-8)

Instead of discernment, we accept the vagaries of circumstance as indicative of God's will. We confuse what God allows to happen within the bounds of his sovereignty, with what God desires to see happen.

Revelation 3:7-8

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: “The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens. 8 I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut.”

Isaiah 22:20-22

“In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.”



Lock & Keys

Revelation 3:8-9

8 “I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.”

Open doors speak of God's welcome and authority. They are realities to discern and truths to claim. They call for our patient endurance as we partner with the Lord's work.

1 Corinthians 16:7-9

“For I do not want to see you now just in passing. I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”

An open door does not mean an easy way. The removal of obstacles and obstructions is no sure way to discern if God has opened a door or not.

Too often the mind justifies the
decisions of the heart, calling it “an
open door.”

For those who have put their trust in
Jesus, God fills us with his Holy Spirit.
The Holy Spirit is our helper in
discernment.

John 16:7, 12

7 “I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you... 12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”

John 16:13-14

13 “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

“And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.” (Isaiah 30:21)

"The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

*“The steps of a man are established by
the Lord, when he delights in his way.”
(Psalm 37:23)*

Acts 8:26, 29, 35, 39

"Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza'... And the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over and join this chariot'... Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus... And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away."

Acts 16:6-7

“And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.”

Acts 16:6-7

"So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them."