

Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you worshipping with us today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{turn page over}

THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY

"Respond quickly when God comes to you"

Luke 19:41-42

The crowds shouted, "*Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!*" **Mark 11:9**

Luke 19:41-42 NLT "... as they came closer to Jerusalem and Jesus saw the city ahead, he began to weep. 'How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes.'"

Matthew 23:37 "... how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 CEV "Everything on earth has its own time and its own season. There is a time for birth and death, planting and reaping ..."

- There is a unique time when God offers man a door of opportunity, but it won't last forever.

Genesis 6:3 "My Spirit will not contend with man forever ..."

1. GOD HAS PLANS TO PROSPER YOU

Jeremiah 29:11 "I know the **plans** I have for you," declares the Lord, "**plans to prosper** you and not to harm you, **plans** to give you hope and a future."

- A time of visitation from God is when He chooses to offer to fulfill that special plan for you.
- He begins by sending the Holy Spirit to **gently nudge** your intuition -- that strange sense deep within.
- The most common point of decision is when you must choose whether or not to surrender the control of your life to His authority.
- The way you know a visit is from Him is:
 - it will be much bigger than you can make happen
 - it won't be about satisfying your selfish desires, but about helping others in some way that will bring God honor

"How has the Holy Spirit been visiting you, nudging you to step out of your comfort zone to become more dependent upon Him?"

2. THE FRUIT OF THE OPPORTUNITY IS GOVERNED BY YOUR RESPONSE TO GOD

- God visited a young man named Gideon and gave him the opportunity to become a godly hero.

- Testimonies notes ...

- Unfortunately, people can miss their opportunity.

- Jesus offered Peter, James and John the unique opportunity to support Him as He agonized in the Garden. But, they fell asleep three times.

- God does not need your obedience, but you need His opportunity in order to experience more of His life, joy and energy.

Colossians 4:5 NLT “Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity.”

- If you reject God’s offer, you’ll look back later on what a cheap and empty thrill you pursued instead of God’s rich offer, and it will cause you to even weep.

- Today, you can “**strengthen your journey with Christ**” by responding correctly to the door of opportunity God is offering you!

What can you do with your door of opportunity?

- Respond to the Holy Spirit’s nudge to step out of your comfort zone, give up your agenda and receive your uniquely fulfilling opportunities to become Christ-centered and serve your Lord.
- Remember ~ God forgives and will provide other opportunities -- but if you miss this one, it is gone forever.
- Exchange your agenda for something far bigger than you can accomplish by yourself, all of which will bring honor Him.

- Digging Deeper -

“The Door of Opportunity”

For personal or small group study

Week of April 5, 2009

Did you have an “AHA” moment from the sermon or sermon notes? If so, what was it and how has it impacted you?

GROUP DISCUSSION or PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Last Sunday was Palm Sunday and next Sunday is Easter. What doors of opportunity did God provide for the people then, and for us today, that are found on these two particular Sundays? What happens when we walk through these doors? ... When we miss them? [Mark 11:1-11; John 12:12-19; Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:13-16, 30-49]

2. Read Jeremiah 29:11-14. What door of opportunity was God providing for the people of Judah? What is God saying to you about the doors of opportunity He is planning for you today? What must your response be if you are to embrace these opportunities?

What does Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 teach us about opportunities?

3. If we are to be able to correctly identify and respond to God’s opportunities, we must be near to God. James 4:8 says, “*Come near to God, and God will come near to you. You sinners, clean sin out of your lives. You, who are trying to follow God and the world at the same time, make your thinking pure.*” What does this verse teach us about the need to draw near to God if we are to respond to His door of opportunity?

Consider these examples of God’s invitation to draw near:

- Moses saw the burning bush and turned aside to investigate. In doing so, God called out to him. [Exodus 3:2-4]
- The young boy Samuel heard a voice four times before he responded, “*Speak Your servant hears.*” [1 Samuel 3:3-10]
- When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water—walking as if He would pass them by—they cried out. [Mark 6:47-49]

Which of these examples best describes God’s invitation to you? Have you responded? If so, what was the nature of your response?

4. Write down some doors of opportunity that you sense God is providing for you to walk through. What opportunities have you missed? What is keeping you from walking through the doors you just wrote down? If you’re with a small group, break into groups of three and discuss your answers.