



# LIFE *On* MISSION

ADVENTIST CHURCH *in Sydney*

## ***The Open Door / God Opens the Door***

Children's Story : "Taking the right door"

Civil Engineering Students in Building Site LIFT @ Collins Street Highrise (Vic, 1986)

### Hymns:

#326 Open My Eyes that I May See #196 Tell me the Old, Old Story #358 Far and Near the Fields are Teeming

Scripture Reading: **Revelation 3:11-12a**

*11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more...*

### **ATTENTION**

I first met "Andrea" when studying at Avondale in 2002 – a very warm, friendly lady at Student Services. Little did I know the journey that she and her husband Allen Steele had been on before their rather 'normal life' in Australia at that time.

As a young man, Allen was involved in a communication club.

He was challenged by the late H.M.S. Richards from "Voice of Prophecy" to get speaking on the radio.

"We've got a message that the world is waiting to hear," Richards declared, "and it's up to you to get this message out there. God is calling you to do it!"

Allen says the world mission of the church gripped his heart that day, and he determined to pursue the challenge.

After graduation and 2 yrs as a U.S. Army draftee to Europe,

Allen volunteered to produce some radio programs at the GC for Adventist College Radio Stations.

To his delight, soon afterwards he was chosen to travel to Lisbon in Portugal to begin AWR's programs across Europe, North Africa & Middle East.

Together with his wife of 2 months, they flew out to Lisbon as AWR's first employees.

They committed for 1 year as funding was uncertain... however...

the Steele's call to Europe was the beginning of a lifetime of service to the church in the area of Media Evangelism.

They survived a military upheaval in Portugal in 1974 – not losing a single minute of radio airtime!

Allen recalls that the real milestone of AWR's growth and efficiency was the dedication of AWR's transmitters in Guam.

He says, "AWR in Guam really put us on the world stage."

With constant broadcasts into China - they became a major international broadcaster.

They recall how God then opened the doors into communist Russia

where AWR was the first western broadcaster allowed to transmit from

Radio Moscow's giant shortwave stations – (previously the signal had been jammed)

God opened doors.... and God continues to open doors with Satellite, Local Radio, and today... Internet.



## Background to the Church of Philadelphia

Today I want to look at the 6<sup>th</sup> of 7 churches in Revelation –

Philadelphia – a city at the crossroads – a city that was a 'door' to the east.

The city of Philadelphia was established for one reason >> To export Greek language/culture to the east.

It was so successful that 150-200 yrs after it was established,

the Lydian's to the east had forgotten their own language and spoke only in Greek.



As we consider the message to the church in Philadelphia,

we see that part of the message is that "**God opens the door.**"

In the time of the Apostles, the gospel had gone throughout Asia-minor

and I'm sure that the church in Philadelphia was part of the process

of taking the gospel to the Roman world



Bible students for many years have believed that the 7 churches also relate to 7 periods of history...

and this period can be attributed to a time when the Roman church is wounded (*Rev 13*)

and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Great Awakening is occurring around the world.

It is a period between the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

During this period of time, foreign missions were established by Christians all over the world.

The Word of God was made available to the entire world.

The British Bible Society was formed in 1804 >> and the American Bible Society in 1816.

Missionaries such as David Livingston, John & Charles Wesley, William Miller, and Joseph Wolff took the gospel around the world as had never been done before until that time.

God opened the door to understanding prophecy

and God opened the doors to the gospel being taken around the globe.

Many believed that Jesus would come back in 1844

based on various prophecies in the Scriptures....

...they were to discover, however, that the prophecy was relating to Christ's work in heaven – the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and not the earth as they had thought.

According to prophecy, God had opened a door to the Most Holy place in the Heavenly Sanctuary

Here, the last phase of the High Priest's sanctuary role

was to be carried out in the redemption of mankind

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So the early 19<sup>th</sup> century period created a great revival

among Advent believing Christians the world over

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Friends, God has opened doors in the past, and He ***still opens doors today***.

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## NEED

**Q:** What door or doors is God opening for you today?

**Q:** What door is God opening for us as a church today?

**Q:** Do we notice when God opens doors for us to go through... or do we walk straight past?

~

## SATISFACTION

The word **Philadelphia** means, "**Brotherly Love**"

And it was this very spirit of 'brotherly love'

that propelled the 2<sup>nd</sup> great awakening and evangelical movement

across Europe and the United States in the early 1800's.

As we begin the message to the Church in Philadelphia we find that it has NO Reproof... only praise! 😊

**7** "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens':

Nobody but God is holy... This passage – like the other 7 churches is referring to Jesus

He has the “Key of David” (*Isaiah 22:22*)...

which represents both Christ’s authority over the Church

and also His access to all the treasures and resources of heaven

>> Jesus has been given full authority to take forward the plan of salvation for the earth

The door that He opens – nobody can shut.

8 “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Here this passage is referring, I believe, to an Open Door for mission work

An open door in the time of the apostolic church

An open door in the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> great awakening

And TODAY an open door also for the end-time people and end-time message

To proclaim Jesus’ soon return and to prepare the world for the Day of the Lord.

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When we look at the Scriptures – we can see a number of places where God opens doors:

- *Ps 78:23-25* >> When the DOORS of heaven open >> Manna was sent to Israel
- *Isa 45:1* >> The DOORS of Babylon are left open >> allowing Cyrus to carry out God’s will
- *John 10:3* >> Jesus is the DOOR keeper >> His sheep follow His voice
  - *The Door to Jesus is ALWAYS open* 😊
- *Acts 14:27; 1 Cor 16:9; 2 Cor 2:12* >> We read of an Open DOOR to preach the gospel

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As the message to Philadelphia says, God can open and shut doors.

Now, the Apostle Paul says in *Colossians 4:3* that we ought to pray

that God would open a DOOR for the preaching of the gospel

**Q:** What door of opportunity is God opening for you?

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This past week – I believe God is beginning to open a door in the area of Jewish Ministry

Through God’s providence I was able to meet a Jewish Adventist who would like me to study the scriptures with his mother here in the Eastern Suburbs. We had a great 2 hour meeting on Tuesday night just this last week... where we got to know each other... and read a few Bible verses.

The lady was very hospitable and at the end of the visit she asked if I would like some Matsah & Grape Juice for Passover (as the Passover begins this weekend). I said I would take it and share with the church folk on Sabbath 😊... so look out for it at Potluck today.

What’s interesting is that that I shared the last 2 verses of the Old Testament (*Malachi 4:5-6* RE the coming of Elijah) as part of Bible Study... and I learnt that at Passover time there is always a spare glass of grape juice for Elijah... and the children always go to open the door for the invisible Elijah.

We decided that after Passover time... we would meet again and do a few Bible studies of the topic of Elijah and what those last 2 verses in the OT mean for us today.

GOD has OPENED a DOOR! 😊 AMEN!

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Q: What door of opportunity is God opening for you?

Q: Are you through your life and witness able to reach people (family/friends) that others cannot?

Q: What doors are open for you that are not necessarily open for me?

They're out there, Q: Right?

You all have access to a different set of people that are unique to your life.

God opens the doors that are in our territory... but it needs to be our decision to go through

It may seem risky... it may be a place you haven't been before

But if God opens a door for you – don't hesitate to go through. It's guaranteed to be EXCITING! 😊

Illustration: SURF MINISTRY

Lighting up traffic on Facebook

Pray it lights up young people across Eastern Seaboard for the LORD

When God opens up doors – it's guaranteed to be exciting

Challenging... but exciting... and rewarding... >>> BE READY to be stretched....

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I recall many years ago praying the prayer of Jabez.

Some of you may be familiar with the Prayer of Jabez in **1 Chronicles 4:10** It reads,

*And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed,*

*and **enlarge my territory**, that Your hand would be with me,*

*and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!"*

*So God granted him what he requested.*

When the prayer says, "enlarge my territory," it's not speaking about ½ acre of beachfront property! 😊

It's actually talking about your 'sphere of influence'

It's talking about God opening DOORS for you –

in order that you may be an instrument in His hand – for His glory.

I remember praying this prayer for a short while... and then stopping!

Q: Why?

Because I felt I was not ready at that time for the doors that God was opening up to me! 😊

YES! God answers this prayer... that's for sure...

And you'll be amazed what you can do for the Lord

when you obey and go through the doors He opens up to you

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I ended up going through the door God opened... only it took me a little time... a little 'push' 😊

I was saying, "It's too fast God... too fast!"

>>> Afterwards I wished I'd gone through the door much earlier! 😊

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Today, I'm trying to give you all a little 'push' 😊

Q: What is God calling you to today?

Q: What door is God opening up for you?

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He has promised to help you!

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As I mentioned before – we understand from prophecy that in 1844 a door was opened in heaven.  
The door to the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary –  
a door that no man can shut.

The period of time in earth's history since then is Biblically speaking, the "Time of the End"

It's a time when Jesus is preparing for His return

A time when a warning of impending judgment is to be sounded to earth's inhabitants.

Jesus has opened that door for us in order that we might be ready for His soon return!

In **Hebrews 4:14-16** we read

*14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

The door to find help... to obtain mercy and grace... is open to us all.

*9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.*

*10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

Q: Remember how Paul said that he was a Jew inwardly? (Rom 2:28-29)

Clearly there must also be those that say they are Jews (outwardly)  
but they're not actually Jews (inwardly)

That's what this text is saying.

There are those who are Christians by name only... but they're not really Christians.

There are those that profess to Love God... but they do very little to obey Him

**1 John 2:4** says, "He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

There have always been people who profess to follow God –  
but in reality they are rebelling against Him!

It was the case in the time of Cain who chose to worship in a different way  
The brothers of Joseph who sold him into slavery and lied to their father Jacob  
Judas the disciple of Jesus – who betrayed his Master to the religious leaders

Clearly it was also the case in the church of Philadelphia  
Just as it has been throughout the Christian era – And so it is the same today.

*“He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments,  
is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”*

BUT... if we go back a few verses in **1 John 1:7** we read  
*“if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,  
and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*

That’s where the true Israelite is at... **Q:** Isn’t that true?

The light we have revealed to us in the Word of God... that is the light we ought to follow.  
*“...AND if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” **1 John 2:1b***

Praise God for His mercy! Amen?

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**11** *Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.*

Those that truly know and follow the Lord need to Hold Fast... Hang ON!  
Because there are many that would like to take you off course!

Be ready for distractions!

Those that can take you off course are often the closest to you. **Q:** Have you thought about that?  
It makes sense because they have the most access to you  
And they have the most influence over you – as you have trusted them with so many things!

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Hold Fast... to what you have!

Trust God and His Word.

Be ready for the Lord’s coming...

He has said, *“I am coming quickly”*

*Hold Fast... that no one may take your crown.*

12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches"

When I was studying engineering, we had two forms of applied Physics that we need to learn.

Statics – and – Dynamics 😊

I preferred Statics. Things that did not move! 😊

You design it... you build it... and it stays there! Period! 😊

I thought, "Man, if I wanted to do dynamics,

I would have done Mechanical Engineering, not Civil!"

Anyway... we had to do what we had to do.

Water moves... so we had to learn about that! 😊

Jesus says here, though, "He who overcomes, I will make him a **||: pillar :||** in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more."

**Q:** Does that sound like Statics or Dynamics? >> Statics!

If you are faithful to God, He will set you up for ETERNITY 😊

Like a PILLAR in the House of God!

If you STAND FIRM for the truth, you will carry His name with you FOREVER.

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But first... you must go through the Open Door.

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## VISUALISATION

The story is told of a mother who wanted to encourage her young son in his piano lessons, so she took him to see one of the great masters >> **Jan Paderewski** in concert.

After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her.

The boy was a curious youngster and he was so impressed by the great concert hall, that he too got up and decided to explore a little.

Eventually he made his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE"

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that her son was missing!! Suddenly, the curtains parted and the spotlights focused on the impressive **Steinway** on stage.

In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance and quickly moved to the piano.  
He whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't stop ... keep playing!!"

Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part.  
Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child,  
and he added a counter melody to what the boy was playing.

Together, the old master and the young novice  
transformed a potentially disastrous situation into a wonderfully creative experience...  
and when they had finished playing the audience broke out in thunderous applause.



## APPEAL

TODAY friends – **Q:** Do you want to place your life in the hands of the Master?

When you do, He will surely open a door for you to go through...

And what's more – He won't leave you on your own but He being the Master

Will accompany you and make what you thought could be a disastrous situation  
into a lifetime masterpiece – a masterpiece of eternity

Jesus is calling all of us to a deeper experience

The door is open before us...

But first we need to open the door of our heart (*Rev 3:20*)

**Q:** Today, will you let Jesus, your Lord and Master into your life, into your heart?

**Q:** Today, will you go through the door that He has opened before you?

**Q:** What is the door that God is opening before you today?

For some of you it may be the door of **Baptism**

For some it is the door of **Obedience**

For some it may be a call to step up and be more **active in the Lord's work**

**Q:** What door is the Lord opening for our church today?



## COMMITMENT CARDS – EVANGELISM



**Q:** Today, who will raise their hand with me and **FIRSTLY** say, "Lord **come in thro Door of my heart**"

**Q:** Today, stand with me – if you want to say **HELP ME LORD**

to recognise the doors that you want me to go through – and to **GO BOLDLY**