



**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**

**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**

*February 28, 2024*



Photo: Our Daily Bread

## GOD'S OPEN DOORS

*See, I have placed before you an open door.*

Revelation 3:8

**READ Revelation 3:7-11**

At my new school near a large city, the guidance counselor took one look at me and placed me in the lowest performing English composition class. I'd arrived from my inner-city school with outstanding test scores, excellent grades, and even a principal's award for my writing. The door to the "best" writing class in my new school was closed to me, however, when the counselor decided I wasn't right or ready.

The church in ancient Philadelphia would've understood such arbitrary setbacks. A small and humble church, its city had suffered earthquakes in recent years that left lasting damage. Additionally, they faced satanic opposition (Revelation 3:9). Such a disregarded church had "little strength, yet," as the risen Jesus noted, "you have kept my word and have not denied my name" (v. 8). Therefore, God placed before them "an open door that no one can shut" (v. 8). Indeed, "what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open" (v. 7).

That's true for our ministry efforts. Some doors don't open. With my writing for God, however, He has indeed opened doors, allowing it to reach a global audience, regardless of one counselor's closed attitudes. Closed doors won't hinder you either. "I am the door," Jesus said (John 10:9 kjv). Let's enter the doors He opens and follow Him.

**By Patricia Raybon**

### **PRAY & REFLECT**

**When doors close to me, dear God, may I turn to You, the Holy Door, and walk where and how You say to go. Amen**

What doors has God opened for you? How does your ministry and life flourish when you wait for His openings?

### **SCRIPTURE INSIGHT**

In Revelation 2-3, Christ is the speaker in the seven letters to the churches in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). The letter to Philadelphia is the sixth letter and the second to refer to the "synagogue of Satan" (3:9). The first instance occurs in the letter to Smyrna (modern Izmir) (2:9). Both usages define this "synagogue" as those "who say they are Jews and are not" (v. 9). What does this mean? These are Jews who opposed the first-century believers in Jesus and who claimed that the kingdom of God belonged exclusively to Israel. However, the apostle Paul wrote, "God does not show favoritism [between Jew and Gentile]" (Romans 2:11). He explained, "A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly [that is, by keeping the law] . . . No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; . . . [marked] by the Spirit, not by the written code" (vv. 28-29). – By **Tim Gustafson**

*Used with permission*