

Richmond Hill Baptist Church
April 10, 2011
Miracle Sunday: An Open Door #3

Prelude & Prayer Time

Call to Worship: *This is My Father's World*

Welcome: Good morning and Welcome! Thanks for joining us on this special day that we call Miracle Sunday. Our theme is an Open Door which comes from Revelation 3:8 which says:

I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

Today we will celebrate and give thanks for all that God has done in this church. If you are not familiar with our story you can read about it our brochure. We have a great service planned and we that hope you will stay and join us for lunch. If you are a guest please fill out a Connect Card and place it in the offering plate when it comes by. Let's take a moment and greet one another.

Sing: *Mighty to Save, Our Great God, Grace Greater Than all Our Sin*

Picture: Thanks for your great response as we update our photo directory. If you have not gotten your picture taken – you have one more opportunity. Following the service today go upstairs in the middle foyer to get your picture taken.

We want to do something out of the ordinary and take a group picture. Let's get everyone in the balcony and wings to join the group in the middle.

Let's say thanks to Barry and our directory team for your hard work!

Offering: Each year on Miracle Sunday we like to remember those had the faith and vision to see a church planted in this community. At this time I would like to invite our **charter members** to please stand so that we can honour you and say thank you for your commitment. Would you please stand?

Each year on Miracle Sunday we like to thank God for his provision in the life of our church. Would you please join me in a **guided prayer**?

1. Thank God for our charter members.
2. Thank God for our facility.
3. Thank God for our families.
4. Thank God for our finances.
5. Thank God for all of our volunteers & leaders.
6. Thank God for all of the good things that He has done in this place.

Prayer: God, we thank you for the miracle of this church. We thank you for opening a door of ministry in this community. We give you glory, praise, and thanksgiving for all that you have done in this place. You are a great & wonderful Saviour & God. Amen

Each year on Miracle Sunday we collect a special offering to reduce our building debt throughout the year. Through this offering God has allowed us to reduce our debt from 2.8 million dollars to \$683,000 since 2003. In just a few minutes we will take up this offering. Please use the Miracle Sunday envelope and commitment card. If you need one please raise up your hand and our ushers will provide one for you. Once the offering is collected then our Teller Team will count it and give us the results at the conclusion of our service.

Would our ushers please come forward?

Prayer: Father we thank you for what you have done in the past and once again we look to you to provide for our needs as a church. We thank your for opening a door of ministry in this community. Please help us make the most of the opportunity that you have given us. We pray for strength, wisdom, courage, faith, and we ask that you fill us, use us, and give us great opportunities to minister in your name. We give this offering to you joyfully and gladly for your glory and honour. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Offertory: *The Life I Live* by Deanna Burchnall

Children's Corner: Alyssa (Kids Craft & Bake Sale: \$745.95)

Sermon: **Miracle Sunday: An Open Door #3 (An Opportunity to Share)**

Kids great job on the Craft and Bake Sale! You are a significant and special part of our church. I have a couple of Knock, Knock jokes for you:

1. Knock, knock! Who's there? Boo. Boo who? Don't cry; it's only a knock-knock joke.
2. Knock, knock! Who's there? Banana. Banana who? Knock, knock! Who's there? Banana. Banana who? Knock, knock! Who's there? Banana. Banana who? Knock, knock! Who's there? Orange. Orange who? Orange you glad I didn't say "banana" again?
3. Knock knock! Who's there? Little old lady? Little old lady who? Wow! I didn't know you could yodel!

Last Sunday we concluded with **Matthew 7:7-8**

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Using this card many of made a commitment to **pray 3 prayers for myself, and 3 prayers for 3 unchurched people, 3 times a day for 3 weeks.**

We have been doing this at home before we eat. The kids pray for their unchurched friends. They invited 4 friends to the pool party on Friday.

We took the names from Sunday and on Tuesday our Church Council joined you in praying for your friends and family and we taped their names on this door. As I was praying for each name – I prayed that each of these names would some day be written on the Lambs Book of life.

I hope you will follow through on your commitment and make the most of this **opportunity to pray**. If you missed last Sunday here are some extra prayer cards. Following the service today: take one and write the names of three unchurched/lost friends or family members and tape the bottom portion on the door.

In the New Testament the word “**door**” was used to express an opportunity to tell the good news about Jesus. We see Paul use this expression several times.

Acts 14:27

On arriving there (Antioch), they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

2 Corinthians 2:12

Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me.

Colossians 4:2-6

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Last Sunday we talked about an opportunity to pray. Today we will talk about an opportunity to share.

An Open Door: An Opportunity to Share

I have a little acrostic for you using the word SHARE:

S peak of Christ

verse 3: *pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ*

verse 4: *Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.*

This word proclaim is literally the Greek word for “speak.”

The Map: “Get out of Witnessing Free Card by David Murrow” (page 219)
Journey: Surrender, Strength, Sacrifice – but I don’t like his message of silence....

Paul followed Christ on this journey and he is praying for an opportunity to speak of Christ.

Howard Hendricks (Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary)
In the midst of a generation screaming for answers, Christians are stuttering... and I would add stammering, and even worse they are silent.

Think & Pray before you speak. Consider gaining permission to speak.

Jesus was masterful with questions. Here are some questions that you gain you permission to speak:

1. Could I share with you the most important thing that has ever happened to me?
2. Has anyone ever shared with you how to have peace with God?
3. May I share with you what Easter means to me?
4. Would you say that you know God in a personal way or would you say that are in the process of knowing God?
5. Has anyone ever explained the significance of the cross to you? Are you interested?

Speak of Christ everyone opportunity that you get.

Help your conversations with wise actions

Verse 5: *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders*

You actions can either help or hinder your witness.

Unchurched Response: Did you see that? The unchurched struggle with inconsistencies in Christians lives.

The unchurched are often surprised by the hypocrisy in our lives.

Let' surprise them with something else. Let's surprise them with a life of integrity, service, love, & kindness.

Be wise! Pay attention to your attitudes, words, and actions and don't be a stumbling block causing someone to trip over your behaviour. (Romans 14:13)

Your actions will either reinforce your message or they will discredit your testimony of Christ.

A ttract others with grace filled and flavourful conversations

Verse 6: *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt,*

We know that legalism is repulsive to God; but you know, it's also repulsive to most everyone. Be gracious with others. Withhold criticism, negativity, and condemnation.

Think before you speak – especially around unbelievers.

Your words can either inspire them to know God or incite them against him.

You words can either encourage them to know Christ or discourage faith.

Your words can either draw them to Christ or lead them away.

You words can either wet their appetite for Christ or cause them to have a sour taste in their mouth for God.

Your words can either attract or detract.

R espond with good and Godly answers

verse 6: *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

Ask God for wisdom. Sometimes I am amazed at what God says through me.

E ngage every opportunity that God gives you

verse 5: *make the most of every opportunity*

Make of the most of lunches, outings, breaks, hobbies, and time on the sidelines.

Engage opportunities with confidence. If God is opening up doors of opportunity then He is on your side. If God is for us who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)

Mildred Cable (Missionary with the China Inland Mission)

If we go about apologizing for speaking to people of the things of God, we must not be very much surprised if they catch our timidity and they feel awkward and we feel awkward. There is a certain shyness and awkwardness about us when we go to tell men and women of the things of eternal life, which react upon them until they become nervous and awkward too.

Greatest miracle is Salvation.

Carol Lian's – Testimony

Two Scenarios:

Scenario A: Let's pretend that during Passion Week you go out to eat and the place is empty except for the table next to you and you overhear someone at that table mocking Christianity particularly the resurrection of Christ. You have the courage to stand up for Christ and get in this person's face and give them a flying run down of the proofs of the resurrection.

Scenario B: Let's pretend that during Passion Week you go out to eat and the place is empty except for the table next to you and you overhear someone at that table mocking Christianity particularly the resurrection of Christ. You have the courage to say, "You know, I couldn't help but overhear your conversation, and found it very interesting. If you don't mind, I would like to pay for your meal. The reason I want to do this is that, because of the resurrection, Jesus Christ has changed my life and He lives in me, and wants to communicate his tremendous love for you."

Which scenario do you think would be more effective? A or B

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

I hope you will make the most of every opportunity to share. Some of you have nothing to share so this could be an opportunity for you to respond to Christ.

Opportunity to Respond to Christ

Revelation 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Sometimes we struggle with concept of free will verses election in the Scripture.

Door of Faith:

On one side: Whosoever will.... For God so loved the world that He gave his one....

On the other side: Chosen from the foundation of the earth

Commitment:

1. Give away the 3: Easter Invitations: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, & Easter
2. Share with 3 people what God has done your in life.
3. Open up the door of your life and invite Christ in.

Response: *In Christ Alone*

Announcements:

Doxology