

## Online Bible Study Doors – Front Porch

A door is a pathway to opportunity. We walk through doors everyday. Some days we open doors to new relationships, or new business. Other days we close doors on activities, relationships, and sometimes even on God. God created a pathway for us to know Him. He sent Christ to be the open door of us to know God and the power of His love.

As you prepare your heart for this study, reflect on the depths that God went to for you to know Him. Think about the steps He took, including the death of His Son, so that we might know Him now, and for eternity. Give Him thanks for His provision, for His pathway to the opportunity of knowing God.

Revelation 3.20 says: *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.* As you reflect on this verse, note how you have heard His voice in the past. Note a couple of instances where you've heard God speak to you and guide you.

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John the Revelator uses a picture of a meal to describe the type of relationship that we can have with Jesus. The picture John uses is one of a friendship over a meal. What kind of picture would you use to describe or define your current relationship with Jesus?

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Luke 5.27-32 says:

*After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.*

*Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"*

*Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*

As you read the text, what immediately comes to mind?

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Levi (Matthew) meets Jesus and then leaves everything to follow Jesus. What have you left to follow Christ? What has that “leaving” process been like for you? How have you been tempted to go back to your old ways?

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Levi was a tax collector. Because of his occupation Levi would have been known as a traitor, robber, reprobate, even a murderer. But Jesus calls Levi. In spite of the way Levi is defined, in spite of the remarkable sin, Jesus pursues Levi. What does this pursuit tell us about the character of Christ?

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Jesus is sometimes described as a “friend of sinners.” Jesus was even accused of being too friendly with sinners. Jesus response was “it’s not the healthy that need a doctor but the sick.” How has Jesus been a friend to you, a doctor to you in your own sinfulness?

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God through Christ has entrusted in us the message of hope and redemption for the world. Before we can share His message of redemption we must first know it ourselves. We must first know the love of God in our own lives. In what ways is God’s love changing your heart today?

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Jesus was a “front porch” guy. He spent His time on the front porch, talking with people, sharing stories, being available and intentional. How are you being a friend to sinners? How are you making yourself available to sinners?

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Over the next couple of weeks we have offering some “front porch” environments. This Friday night we will host a screening of the movie Fireproof. Saturday we will host our Saturday Serve event, and then in a couple of weeks we will offer a variety of environments built around Easter Sunday. As you think about your sphere of influence, who could you invite to participate in these events?

Take a moment and pray about who God would have you invite to join us on our “front porch.” Below are the opportunities ahead of us. Write the name of the person that you’d like to see participate in the ministry event. And then pray for that person, and for that time together.

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| Fireproof       | Friday, March 20, 7:00 p.m.                                  | _____. |
| Saturday Serve  | Saturday, March 21, 8:30 a.m.                                | _____. |
| Good Friday     | Friday, April 10, 7:00 p.m.                                  | _____. |
| Easter Egg Hunt | Saturday April 11, 4:00 p.m.                                 | _____. |
| Easter Services | Saturday, April 11, 6:00 p.m.<br>Sunday, 8:30, 10:00 & 11:30 | _____. |

### **The Ministry of Reconciliation**

*Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

*So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin[a] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says,  
"In the time of my favor I heard you,  
and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.*

2 Corinthians 5.11-6.2