

## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OPEN DOOR TO ME

"For a door that offers wide and effective service stands open before me."  
1 Cor. 16:9 (Wey)

This topic literally means "the responsibility of the opportunity". Responsibility denotes accountability and liability for a sacred trust.

The moment I opened my heart's door to Jesus Christ (Rev. 3:20) I had a new responsibility to God to whom I now felt morally accountable; to Jesus Christ for He redeemed me with His precious blood; to the Holy Spirit who convicted and regenerated me; and to my fellow men everywhere for Christ had said "Ye are my witnesses, Go ye".

My sense of responsibility did not all come when He saved me at 9 years, nor at 15 when He called me to preach, but it has steadily grown year after year. However, after having the glorious privilege of visiting and preaching Christ in Alaska the last three Summers, Japan and Korea the last two Falls, and all our mission stations in the Philippines, India and Ethiopia, my own sense of responsibility to all the above has tremendously increased. God has truly given me a world vision. How I praise Him for it.

Before looking thru the open door of a new century, it might be well to look back a moment to the last century, yea, many centuries, and see what my great debt is.

First, I am indebted to the JEWS who gave me 1.) the oracles of God, the Holy Scriptures, 2.) the concept of the true and living God in a world of idolatry, 3.) the Messiah, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and 4.) the first Christians including the Apostle Paul, who went to the Gentiles, of whom I am one.

Second, I am indebted to the MARTYRS thru the ages who laid down their lives gloriously for the "faith once delivered". I grew up believing that the early

church and the dark ages only produced martyrs, but my friends, do you realize that more people have died for their faith in Jesus Christ in the last 25 years than any other period in history? Having been in Korea where I talked with the survivors of martyred churches, I realize much more my debt to these heroic men and women. In taegu there is a home with 70 widows of martyred pastors! A North Korean pastor pleaded with me to help him care for 120 children of Pastors and their wives, all of whom had been martyred!! In one village 600 old men, women and children, members of the local Christian church, were called together by the Communists and mowed down with machine guns!!!

Third, I am indebted to our early PIONEERS for their faithful labors and the good foundation laid. To Dr. O.L. Swanson, the Billy Sunday of Assam, whose first convert was my maternal grandfather, which resulted in my Mother's conversion and mine.

But "forgetting those things which are Behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before", the new century speaks to me of opportunity. Yet none of us will have a century. We cannot plan on that basis for 1.) we will not live that long, 2.) Christ may come any day, and 3.) the door may be closed. We should plan carefully and wisely, but not presume on unlimited time.

We think of the open door to the Conference, yet the Conference as such will not do the work, but the local churches. And in the local churches the individuals must do the work. The responsibility then of the open door falls upon you and me.

This open door is the one Jesus opened when He rolled back the stone from the tomb and came forth to life. This made it possible for every grave to be opened, every coffin lid to be raised and every tomb to give up its dead. It is the door He opened when He said to His disciples "all power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore--".

#3

The responsibility of the open door to me begins at "Jerusalem" (Acts 1:8), the local church and community. The moment some people step thru the open door of salvation, they pick up a telescope to look across the ocean. Then they sit down in a rocking chair and sing "to the regions beyond I must go". But we need to see the needs all about us, and DO something about them.

Master Sgt. Elmer Rund whom I had the joy of leading to Christ in Korea, had been a drunkard for ten years. He believes God has called him to be a missionary, but in the mean time while in the Air Force, in 5 months time, he has led over 200 others to Christ! At the same time he has given over \$3000 to get out the gospel at home and abroad.

A returned missionary's wife with 6 children is consistently canvassing one block after another and conducting Bible classes in the homes in her community in Chicago.

Our responsibility extends to "Judea", the State or District Conference. From early New Testament times the local churches found it to their advantage to join in fellowship with others to reach the unsaved in neglected and needy towns, cities and communities. We have heard Brother Arthur Christiansen's message of such opportunities and responsibilities in California. The same is true in our other areas.

Reaching out farther, our responsibility reaches "Samaria", which I think of as our General Conference Home Missions. Thru the aid to churches, district workers, opportunity band, revolving fund, God's Invasion Army, and evangelists, the glorious story of redemption reaches not only Americans including the new Indian work, but Canada, Alaska and Mexico. Only as we evangelize and strengthen our work at home, both spiritually and numerically, will we be able to reach out to the lands beyond the seas.

Our responsibility does not end at the borders of our continent. Jesus said

"unto the uttermost part of the earth". Here is the great open door of our foreign mission advance. The opportunity is staggering. We must do more!

We are responsible to enter these open doors because, First, Jesus said "GO". When my father told me to go and do something as a boy, I felt responsible to do it. If I did not, he had a way of making me "feel" responsible. Jesus said "If you love me, keep my commandments".

Second, we are responsible because of the great NEED. Nearly 2 billion people are lost in sin. 150,000 will draw their last breath today, 52 every second, and most of them die without even once hearing that Christ was born and died for their sins.

While attending the Second World Buddhist Congress in Tokyo, I heard over and over that the only hope of the world was in "Lord Buddha". But we know only a living Christ is the answer.

Third, we are responsible because we are RICH. Materially, America is an Island Paradise in the midst of a world of want. Spiritually, we have a tremendous heritage. I brought 90,000 gospels and many more booklets to Korea, but because I had to ration them out, many times I saw men fight for a page of God's Word!

Finally, we are responsible to enter these doors of opportunity because they are OPEN and may be CLOSED. Communism, Catholicism and Materialism are doing all in their power with Satanic zeal, to close the doors. When I left Korea a missionary said "now for the second year you have seen the tremendous needs and unprecedented opportunities. WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO ABOUT IT?"

My responsibility is great. So is yours. They say "opportunity knocks only once in a life time"; but I say "opportunity knocks only one life time". "Only one life, twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last". Will you accept your responsibility to reach a lost and dying world?