



Doors & Keys

facebook.com/salvoswomen 



salvos.women@aue.salvationarmy.org 

toolkit.salvos.org.au/missionteam 

Dear sisters in Christ

It is good to greet you once again via the Salvos Women resource manual. Thank you for your ministry to women in the past year. What a wonderful privilege is ours to build relationships with women of all ages in our corps and centres and community!

This resource manual is provided to assist you with ideas and resources that we hope will prove helpful to you. It may just be one item or theme that will set you off on a creative journey as you prepare for your ministry to women.

Doors and Keys theme gives plenty of scope for creativity and initiative as you plan your meetings.

We use doors and keys every day. In fact some days I wish I did not have so many keys to carry around but we all have house keys, car keys, work/office keys, and add to that the mail box key, garage keys or swipes, security keys and one's handbag can get quite weighty.

It is a real dilemma when you lose keys. They are essential to daily life.

There are also many doors that we walk through every day – doors of all shapes, types and sizes.

My prayer is that you will look for doors of discovery and opportunity in your ministry to women. Open some new doors and close doors that need to be shut. Our message does not change but our methods need to change and keep up with the needs of women today.

This will be my final greeting to you via the resource manual as we retire on 31st May next year and I can assure you I will be walking through the door of new opportunities in retirement. I will not be resting in a rocking chair but seeking to build relationships with women I meet and ultimately making friends for Jesus.

Thank you for your support and prayers for me and our Salvos Women team. I am grateful to all those who have contributed to this resource manual and to those who have compiled it.

Keep the keys in a safe place and with courage open some new doors.

Every blessing

Jan

Jan Condon
Commissioner

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A Bunch of Keys

Major Marjorie Bruton

The Home League Digest October-December 1973

Decor

Display Holman Hunt's picture 'Christ at the Door'. Have House on the Bible in a prominent position, also coloured pictures of doors of various homes of other lands.

Preparation

Members may have interesting old keys stored away or, in some cases the key of a past residence which brings back memories worth staring.

Choruses

*And He walks with me
Safe am I*

Introductory Talk

Have you a bunch of keys at your place? You look at them sometimes and try to remember to what door or case they belong. You really think you should throw them away but then you are influenced by that age-old hoarders' argument 'they may come in handy one day'. You may recognise some of the keys and know that they will not open anything you now possess but they have sentimental value – an old school port, a long-since broken jewel box, the house where you lived when first married. The recollection may cause you to want to go back and see if things are the same or you may be wise enough to realise that the memories may be spoiled by so-doing.

What are your memories when you look at a bunch of keys? Invite members participation at this point.

Scripture

Matthew 5:1-12 'The Beatitudes' – Christ's key to living.

Competition

Words which have a KEY ending...

1. Tree dweller – MONKEY.
2. A type of film – TALKIE.
3. Victorian seaside town – TORQUAY.
4. Lively – FRISKY.
5. Favoured animal in N.T. – DONKEY.
6. Arctic animal – HUSKY.
7. Circular – Quay.
8. Not for the abstainer – WHISKY.
9. Hazardous – RISKY.
10. Tall and thin – LANKY.



11. Used in the snow – SKI.
12. Obscure – DUSKY.

Aid to Message

Cut out of cardboard, four Yale keys, about 30 cm long, attach them to a cardboard ring and print on the names of the following points of the subject.

Message

Keys play their mechanical part in our daily life; the house door key, the car key, the key of the suitcase we take with us when we travel, the key which locks the drawer where we keep our secret treasures. But we have an inner life also and it has keys – invisible keys which we can use to lock or to open invisible or hardly accessible areas of our life and our individual self. Today we will use visible illustrations of these invisible keys (*produce bunch of cardboard keys – using each in turn*).

1. Key of Silence

With which we open the door of the inner room and lock it behind when we enter. In one of her books, Freya Stark says that she thinks all children, as part of their education, should do things like walking, climbing, riding and sailing, that they may learn the virtue and value of silence.

In the 2nd class Guard Test is the provision for a girl to sit alone in the bush for a period of time and listen to all that is going on about her. To a young person who has lived in a noisy household or with a transistor as a constant companion, this is a tremendous ordeal, but an excellent character building exercise.

When we are out walking, even if we have a companion, most of the time is passed in silence, and it is a silence which is not boring. Whether we are watching people pass, or are out in the country, enjoying nature, there is something to think about. We become deeply awake and deeply happy. Silence is not an emptiness, but a fullness.

2. Key of Inquisitiveness

At the sight of this key, we possibly instinctively think of a small boy. What small boy has not been told, 'You ask too many questions,' but Professor Julius Sumner Miller has taught us that one of the most invigorating questions is 'Why is it so?' This is a kind of master-key to the world around, and will open almost any door. Books which prick the spirit of inquiry, which challenge us to understand deeper questions than we have previously delved are keys which open the door to a fuller life. Even trying a new recipe is in a way, using this key.

3. The Key of Faith

The Christian finds a daily, practically hourly, use for this key but everyone finds the need for it when they come to the door of difficulty.

Christina and Hopeful in Giant Despair's dungeon, (*Pilgrim's Progress*). With the key of faith, we can accept the challenge of life



and when the way seems barred against us, and we feel that we must get through, the key of faith is in our hand. The key of faith not only unlocks doors, but there is a sense in which it locks away securely in the heart the spiritual treasures gained through life. With this enrichment of soul held secure, people come to the last journey with no fear of the crossing.

4. **The Key of Prayer**

There is a great need for this to be well used, equally for the purpose of locking and unlocking. When Christ instructed His disciples to enter into their room and to lock the door, He showed that He knew how difficult it is for humans to keep out all intruding thoughts when they go to pray. Then there is the unlocking process, the opening of the door of friendship with God. (*Refer to Hunt's picture.*) This door need never be locked. We can live in a spirit of constant prayer. This key also opens the door of service, as a close communion with God results in a greater commitment to His work. It is much easier to find a way into the heart and confidence of the difficult and depressed person through the door of Spirit filled service to others. Grasping a key that can be used in locking or unlocking is in a sense conditioning the will, and this, with God's help we can all do, to our own enrichment and to the benefit of others.



Key of Silence
Key of
Inquistiveness
The Key of Faith
The Key of
Prayer



A Key that Opens Heaven's Door

Julie Schofield



*Imagine the world in the form of a ball
Looking at it makes us seem so very small
We wonder how each person can be seen;
We wonder what it means.
Because we know that God looks down on you and me
For He knows us each personally.
He has a love so deep and wide, really from it none of us can hide.
And when God made the world so long ago,
He wanted mankind this deep love to know.*

*So He sent to us a gift of His only Son.
But so many from Jesus, did sadly run.
He wanted us to know what this gift meant to each person on earth,
He was simply trying to show us that we would experience a new birth
So Jesus walked among mankind.
No nicer person would we ever again find.
As Jesus walked among the sick and lame, their lives were touched,
They were never the same.
But there were many who did not understand,
And they began to make a terrible plan.
They tried so hard to stop His love, but God protected Him from up above.
For he too had a plan to save mankind,
And knew that through Jesus this we would find.*

*God so loved each person down here
And His work on earth would never disappear.
For God knew that He had to make a sacrifice,
And being His only Son, that was not very nice.
He knew mankind would not understand this loss,
and why He allowed Jesus, His Son,
to suffer on that terrible cruel cross.
He gave to us a gift so deep,
So that in His arms we can tenderly rest and sleep.
So you see it's wonderful how much God loves us,
He wanted to personally make a big fuss.*

*He wanted us to understand,
that He Himself had an amazing great plan.*

*So think about the love He gives.
And how Jesus dying on the cross allows us to live.
It's a gift like a key that opens heaven's door.
Where suffering and hardship we will know, no more.*

*Today as you think about God's plan,
I hope that you can personally now understand.
Take hold of the key that allows you in.
For it will set you free from a life of sin.
Use the key to enter that door
Jesus love will give to you so very much more.*

A Key to Generosity

Debbie Hindle

Decor

A week before, ask the ladies to bring their novelty money boxes and money collections from different countries or old coins. Display these and Agents of Truth money boxes, which are available from THQ Mission Team \$10 for set of three.

Welcome

Today we will look at the key to generosity and also have some fun with money! Before we do this, let us praise our heavenly provider.

Song

HLSB 88 *Praise my soul the King of Heaven*

Prayer Time

HL Prayer *HLSB Page five*

Youtube Clips *If I were a rich man (Fiddler on the roof)*
Money, Money, Money (ABBA)

Money Readings *Mark Just and Mary Reiby's story (USB)*

Participation/Money Collection (USB)

Competition (USB) *Prize – Agents of truth money boxes.*

HLSB Chorus 21 *Lay up treasure in heaven*

Message

The key to generosity is realising God's provision in your life.

Song

HLSB 10 *The Lord's my Shepherd*

Benediction

HLSB *Page Six*

Message

The key to generosity is realising God's provision in your life. The Bible verses Matthew 6:33 and Hebrews 13:5 promise that God will provide; that God is always with us. He will look after us and provide for us.

Share your own story of God's provision for you or use the story that is on the USB.





God promises to provide for all our needs. Matthew 6:33, ***“Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what He requires of you and He will provide you with all these other things.”*** (GNT). What we have to do is concern ourselves with the Kingdom of God and with what He requires of us. The key to generosity is realising God’s provision in our life. Take the time to ponder what God has provided for you. You also have these stories. Tell them to each other!

Here’s a story from WWII. The death of many adults left many orphans. At the close of the war, the Allies provided some camps to feed the orphans and to try and find a place to relocate them. The children began to develop and grow, receiving the finest food and care. But in one of the camps, the officials became perplexed because the children couldn’t sleep. They would eat three good meals, but at night they would lie awake. The camp authorities brought in some doctors to do a study of these orphans to find out why they couldn’t sleep.

The doctors came up with a solution. Every night when the little children were put to bed, someone would come down the row of beds and place in each little hand a piece of bread. In a matter of days they were all sleeping through the night. Why? Even though they were fed to the full during the day, experience had taught them that there was no hope for tomorrow. When they had that bread tucked in their hands, they knew that at least they would have breakfast the next day.

Similarly, God has given you a piece of bread for your hand. That bread is this promise: ***“My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”*** Philippians 4:19. You can sleep knowing that our generous God is there for you.

There is no need to stockpile for the future. God is the owner of everything in the world, and He controls all the assets to provide for you because you are His child. Life for the Christian consists not in the abundance of things we possess, but in being content with the things we have. Hebrew 13:5 ***“Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never leave you; I will never abandon you.’ ”*** (GNT)

I first realised God as my provider when I was 16 years old and I was reading Psalm 23:1. At first it didn’t make sense to me – ***“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”*** ‘What? I don’t want the Lord?’ Then I read it in the Good News Translation and this is what it said, ***“The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need.”*** The key to generosity is realising that God is our provider. Having that knowledge and assurance we can be generous people.

Psalm 23:5 says, ***“You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can see me; you welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to the brim.”*** (GNT) God is an extravagant provider. He fills our cup to the brim.

My prayer is that you experience God as your provider too. You will because that is His promise. Be on the lookout for what God is doing for you and remember – *The Lord is your shepherd.*

Aggiornamento

Denise Parkinson

Aggiornamento – *The act of bringing up to date... to meet current needs.*

Purpose

To challenge people to take an inventory of their current lifestyle and update it, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Preparation

- 🔑 Whiteboard or butchers paper and pens.
- 🔑 Have ladies bring along an old photo of themselves 20 years before. Old fashions, hairstyles. If you have these beforehand you may have opportunity to put them on a power-point. Otherwise just show them by placing around room. Anonymous is best.
- Or
- 🔑 Have some ladies come dressed in 60's 70's 80's clothes and hairstyles.
- 🔑 Have the doorway that people come through to enter the event decorated in some way. Pleasant/exciting entry.
- 🔑 As Aggiornamento is Italian you may like to have an Italian theme for decor or food running through the day/evening.

Introduction

Serve old fashioned finger food and punch in old retro punchbowl. Another party favourite from the 60's was cheese and pineapple on cocktail sticks. Create a 60's centre piece by halving a grapefruit, covering one half with silver foil and sticking the cheese and pineapples sticks into it. Alternatively try cheese and olives on cocktail sticks. Other favourites...

- 🔑 Angels and Devils on horseback (*bacon wrapped around seasoned oysters and prunes*)
- 🔑 Cheese straws
- 🔑 Sausage rolls
- 🔑 Cocktail sausages
- 🔑 Scotch eggs

If you have PowerPoint or photos start by naming while people are settling down.

Unpack the meaning of Aggiornamento

- 🔑 Aggiorna – to revise, update
- 🔑 Mento – ment



Aggiornamento means the act of bringing up to date to meet current needs.

Word search in groups of three or around tables

http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp?campaign=flyout_teachers_puzzle_wordcross

This website allows you to make your own word search and print off copies. I entered a list of things that have been updated over the years. For example – communication, manufacturing, entertainment, nappies, underwear etc. Have homemade sweets like Coconut Ice, or Humbugs as a prize.

Door Activity

Get people to name out loud or write down all the doors they have been through this week – Dentists door, toilet door, car door, etc.

Message One

Doors have a purpose – to open or close an entry or exit into or from another space. Some of the doors we may have walked through have been significant in our lives. List these on Whiteboard or butchers paper.

- 🔑 Door of womanhood (*puberty*)
- 🔑 Door of marriage
- 🔑 Motherhood
- 🔑 Higher education
- 🔑 Career
- 🔑 Widowhood
- 🔑 Divorce
- 🔑 Singleness
- 🔑 Migration
- 🔑 Grief and loss

Some of these doors have been happy occasions and some sad. Some have been by choice and others have certainly not. Sometimes one door must close before another opens. This happens when we move house.

Houses Activity

Have two ladies share about the favourite house they have lived in, allow two minutes each.

Message Two

Many of us have lived in a lot of houses over our lifetimes. Before you move you must make many decisions. Sorting through, de-cluttering, deciding what is important to keep, what no longer has a current use, what is outdated? It all has to be put into some piles. Keep or Toss.

Packing and cleaning is next and when all is done you lock the door and leave the keys for the next person.



When we take possession of our new home, we get the keys, hope it has been well cleaned and we start to move in. We firstly open the front door, then we make our way through the house exploring all there is to see. We make our new home there. We certainly walk through the door of change.

From familiar to new

When we do this we take a journey. All change is a journey.

We endeavor to leave behind our old life. We need to hand over the keys, not just physically but mentally as well. This may bring some grief but it is important if we are to move on.

Remind ladies of the list on the whiteboard/butchers paper.

We then unpack what we kept, and see if it fits in our new life. (*Try to put on something you have grown out of.*)

So what about our inner life

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. Have ladies turn to their bibles or have the passage on the screen for them. Ask them to place into either of the columns below what they will keep and what they will toss.

Keep

Compassion

Toss

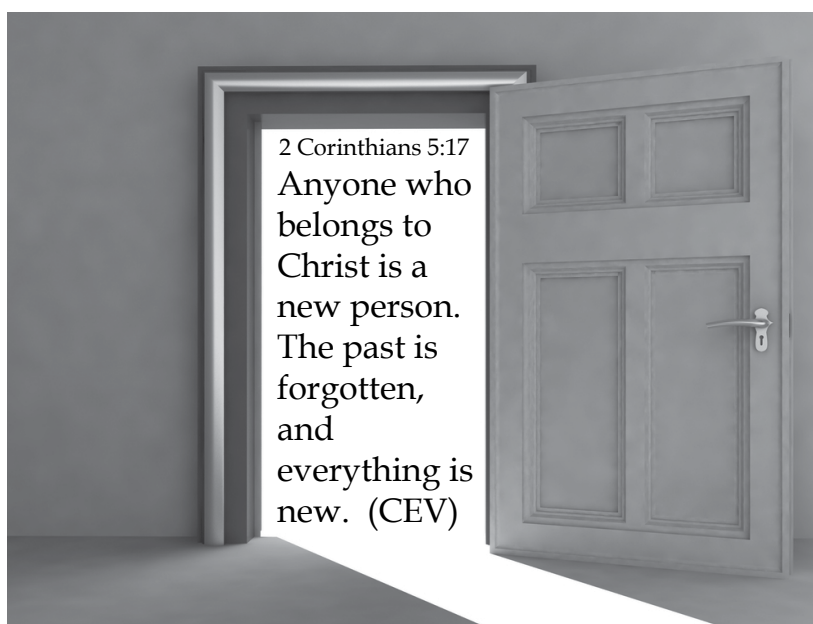
Sexual immorality

Pray with the ladies when they have finished this exercise.

Prayer

Help us Father, with the help of your Holy Spirit to see the things in our lives that are unhelpful to our spiritual journey with you. Help us to name them and surrender them to you. May our de-cluttered lives bring you glory. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

Finish with having people exit through a different door than they entered by if possible.



An Open Door to Winsome

Mrs Brigadier G. Godkin

The Home League Digest May-August 1974

Suggestion

This meeting could be a for-runner to a week of planned visitation for members, involving each in the responsibility to bring a friend the following week to a special guest morning.

Focal Point

Have a large picture of a sunrise where all can view from the moment they enter the hall.

Draw attention to the picture and say, 'Behold a New Day! First midnight... the darkest hour, then slowly and quietly from that hour comes the light. Darkness changes to light till the dawn of a new day with all its colour and splendour, dispelling all the darkness, and behold a new day with the promise of more light, sunshine and warmth. So to every believer just such a miracle takes place. Yesterday - today - the future.'

Can you recall such a happening?

At this point have a member who has a Christian experience tell briefly her joy at the dawning of a new day.

Thought

Without faith nothing is possible. With faith nothing is impossible.

Message

The Bible teaches us not to be content with the fact that light has come to us alone but that we are to find others to win them for Christ.

1. Mary Magdalene

"Mary was bowed in grief - she had lost her Lord, but she searched until she found Him. He spoke her name 'Mary' and then said, 'Go and tell.' She hurried from the garden with the wonderful news, 'I have seen the Lord'."

Thus a woman became the first bearer of the news of the risen Christ. John 10:11-18

2. The Woman at the Well.

"Her soul was as dark as midnight, then she met Jesus and the light dawned on her soul... And because of the woman many believed." John 4:39

3. Mary the Mother of John Mark.

"Her home was an open door to everyone. They gathered to pray... not to gossip, but to talk about Jesus." Acts 12:11. *"Later John*



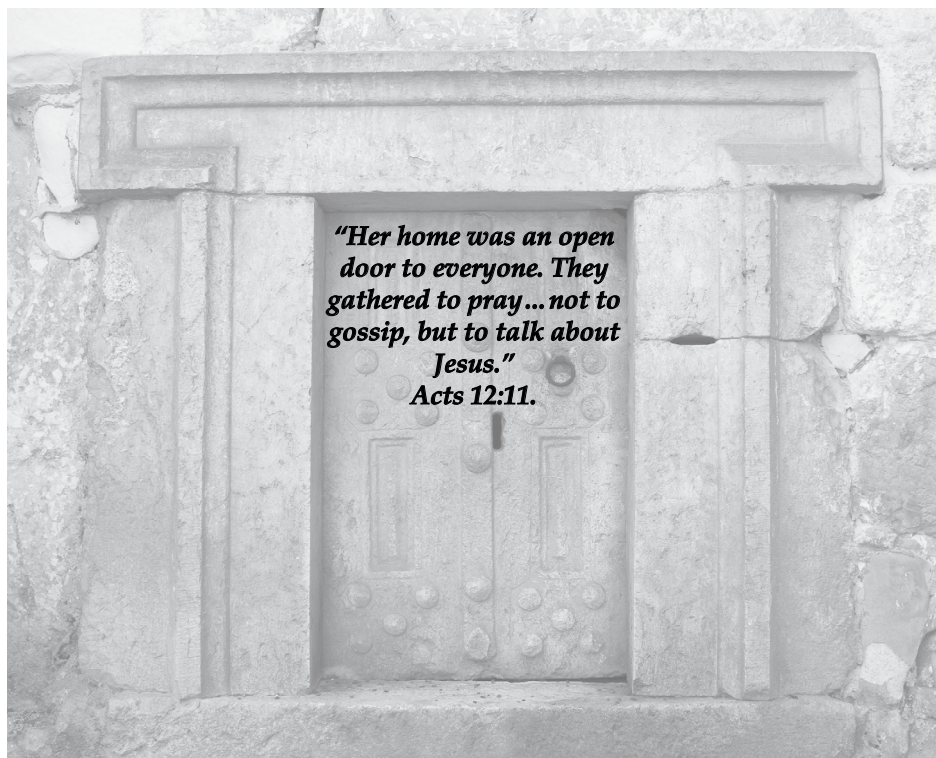
Mark would have been able to testify, 'I was first introduced to Jesus in my home by my mother.' The whole world is waiting to be won for Christ. Next door to you there is someone - every moment is precious." Acts 1:14 tells, "All continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women." Women were vitally involved in the early church's measure to the world.

If we are to be involved likewise there is need for:

- a. **Assurance about Christ.** Are we absolutely sure of the dawning of new life in ourselves? Jesus is alive! He is the Son of God! He is the Saviour of the world!
- b. **Preparation by Prayer.** All waited in prayer, preparing their hearts for the great work, to find guidance from God for the step they must take.

Here today let us determine to find someone who is in darkness spiritually. This may be their midnight hour. You can be the instrument in God's hands to bring about the miracle of the dawning of a new day in their lives.

Pray that you will be used to **win some one**.



An Open Door to Wisdom

Mrs Lt. Colonel T. Higgins

The Home League Digest May-August 1974

To the Leader

This meeting could be used either as a handicraft demonstration with a closing devotional segment or as a full meeting plan as outlined.

Opening Thought

I have heard of a little boy who was not surprised that little David conquered Goliath. Asked why he did not think it a wonderful victory, he said, 'Because it was two to one, for God was fighting with David.'

Prayer

Teach me how to love Thee.

Bible Reading

Psalm 25: 1-10.

Chorus

SASB

And He walks with me

Thought

Happiness is a roadside flower growing on the highway of usefulness.

Handicraft Hint

If cross stitch designs appeal to you, buy a graph book, and using coloured pencils, mark your designs in each square with a dot, using different coloured pencils for whatever coloured cottons you want to use.

Participation

Have a segment in the meeting for exchange of ideas etc.

1. 'This I have learned.' Demonstrate some idea of handicraft.
2. 'I want to know how?' Allow members to ask questions – perhaps another one may have the answer.

Message

Proverbs 11:30 *"He that winneth souls is wise."*

We are all out to win something, and the wisdom or the folly of our course depends on what we are winning. The writer of this proverb had already spoken of the folly of giving one's life to the accumulation of money. The same folly can exist in the seeking of fame and popularity.

There are two weapons which Jesus used in His warfare that never failed.



The first is LOVE. *'Love never faileth.'* If those to whom we go, with the message of Christ, see behind our invitation not mere duty but love, they will come, as Peter and Nathanael came long ago, because Andrew and Philip called them to the Lord.

The other weapon is PERSONAL TOUCH. It is the method which Jesus used to heal the souls and bodies of men and women in the days of His flesh, and there is still a power in this ministry today. If we were to tell today of the influence that brought us to Christ, I am sure that it would be found that with almost all of us that it was the personal touch of someone upon our lives.

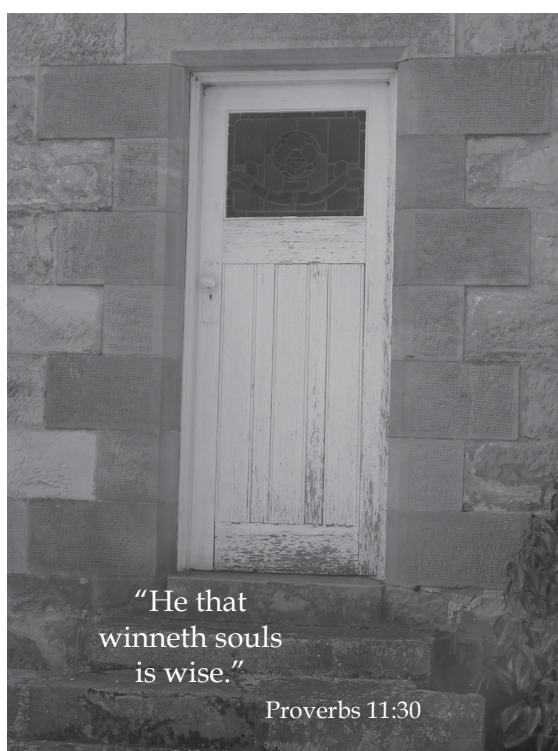
We can still learn from our Great Master. Matthew 11:29 records the words of Jesus, *"learn of Me."*

A party of students were being rowed across a river by an old Scottish sailor. Listening to their conversation, he gathered that they were theological students, so he thought he would like to get a word in and said, 'The disciples never went to College.' There was a pause, then one of their number replied, 'The disciples were at school with Jesus for three years.' The old man had no further comment to make.

What a school that was! And what a Teacher! Was there ever such a teacher as the Master? The common people heard Him gladly.

We who follow Christ and sit as learners at His feet are to be expressions of Christ. We are to live Christ. *"They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."* Such attraction must be ours if we live Christ. No man can keep company with Christ and remain the same. The beauty of the likeness of God which men saw in Him will be seen in our countenance and we shall reflect something of His spirit.

Will you be one to express it that others may see Christ in you?



An Open Door to Work

Mrs Major A Walz

The Home League Digest May-August 1974

"Your labour is not in vain in the Lord..." (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Call to Worship

"I shall pass through this world but once; any good thing that I may do, any kindness that I may show to any human being, let me not neglect or defer, for I shall not pass this way again." And as Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40)

Song

SASB 907

When the roll is called up yonder.

Prayer Season

Chorus

*When He calls me I will answer, I'll be working
somewhere for my Lord.*

Song

SASB 683

Go labour on

Message

Your labour is not in vain

William Barclay writes: *'When we Christians prove that our Christianity makes us better workmen, truer friends, kinder men and women, then and only then are we really preaching. The important thing is not words but deeds, not oratory but life.'*

1. Someone will be blessed. (*Enlarge on these points.*)
2. Someone will be helped.
3. The Kingdom of God will be extended.
4. This work will last for eternity.

Will J Brand's words, could become our prayer: *'My sin-stained hands make clean in Thine employ; Make swift my halting feet to serve as Thine; My lips engage with tidings of great joy; Hands, feet, and lips Thou hast, for Thou hast mine. And from Thy service these shall not depart, because, O God, Thou hast as well my heart.'*

Prayer and Benediction



An Open Door to Worship

Mrs Lt. Colonel C. Whitehouse
The Home League Digest May-August 1974

To the leader

The aim of this meeting is to help the ladies to understand that:

- a. It is right to set aside a day to worship God with His people.
- b. Worship should involve the whole of our living – including our relationship with other people.

Prayer

(From *Prayers of Life*) Michel Quoist.

'If we knew how to listen to God

If we knew how to look around us,

Our whole life would become a prayer

For it unfolds under God's eyes,

And no part of it must be lived

Without being freely offered to Him;

Words are only a means,

But the silent prayer which has moved beyond words,

Must always spring from everyday life;

For everyday life is the raw material of prayer.'

Scripture Reading

John 4:20-26.

Message

With discussion points – John 4:22. It's not WHERE we worship God that counts, but HOW we worship Him. We don't have to go to church to worship God, although the Bible makes it very plain that it is very important that we do this. **This is an open door to worship. We are God's children** – Together in a **family**. **We are His sheep** – Together in a **flock**. **We are members** – Together in a **body**, and when we meet together for worship, we meet as a family of God's children.

However, we can and should worship God anywhere, by remembering that He is Almighty, forgiving and full of love. (*Discuss this*)

Sometimes the reading of a Psalm, or the verse of a hymn can help.

We should read books that help our thoughts. The most common aid to worship is the Bible. God speaks to us as we read and think about it. Reading a few verses and thinking about it is more profitable than trying to read a lot at one sitting and not taking in its meaning. (*Discuss this*)

We must also take time for prayer – talking to God and letting Him speak to us. If reading the Bible is equivalent to feeding on good food – then



praying is like digesting the food and helps us to put it into practice in our daily lives.

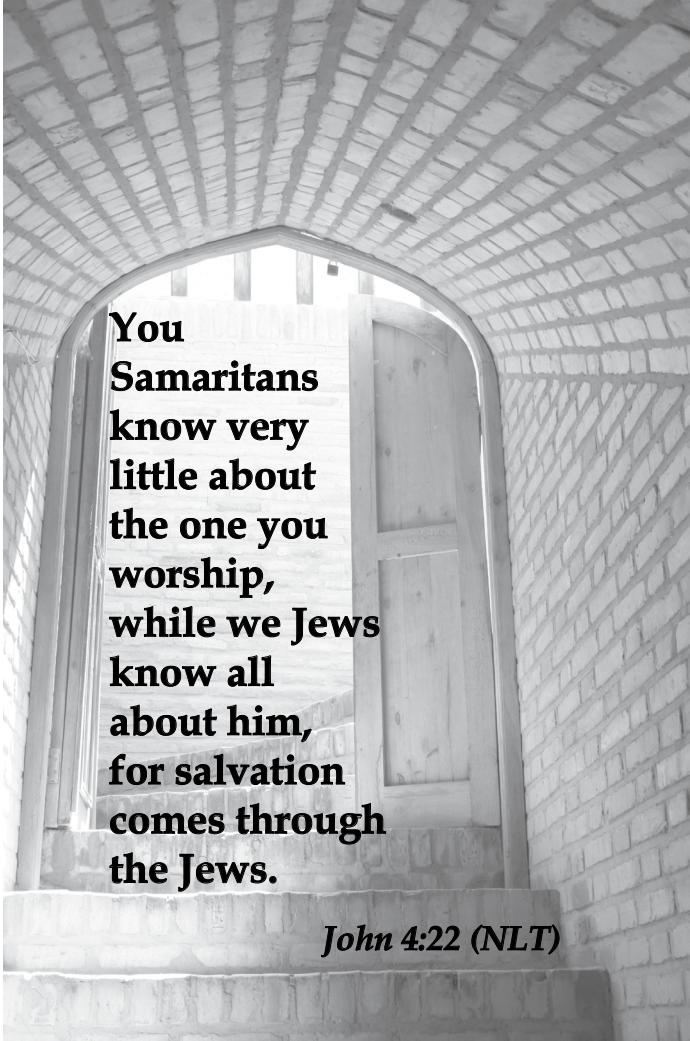
Remember, God is almighty and all powerful.

Closing Thought

To worship God is a much wider thing than an hour a week in a church service. It is to offer Him also our daily work, our recreation, and all our relationships with, and service to other people; In this complete self-offering – Christ is our pattern and Christ is our power.

Suggested Solo or Duet – *His love remains the same, Great is Thy faithfulness.*

16



**You
Samaritans
know very
little about
the one you
worship,
while we Jews
know all
about him,
for salvation
comes through
the Jews.**

John 4:22 (NLT)

Door to Heaven

Karen Masters

Songs

- HLSB 5 *Blessed assurance.*
HLSB 27 *Have you any room for Jesus.*
HLSB 78 *Oh what a wonderful, wonderful day.*
HLSB 119 *To God be the glory.*

Games on Doors

Words containing the word door – www.wordfind.com
How many doors can you name? (USB)
For information on types of doors – www.wikipedia.org/wiki/door
For quotes on doors – www.brainyquote.com

Scripture Reading

Matthew 25:1-13

Message

When we talk about doors we think of coming and going through doors, opening doors for us to walk through to new opportunities, opening a door to let into our lives new opportunities. Some doors can be difficult to negotiate and it reminds us of 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' (by Lewis Carroll) where she was faced with big and little doors where to be the right size to fit through the doors she needed to eat or drink something. God gives us the right size doors and the tools to navigate the going through of each door we face, it is how we treat and use these tools.

In the story of the ten bridesmaids, they are each holding a lamp/lantern, the lamps are burning brightly waiting for the bridegroom. Five have enough oil/fuel if the bridegroom arrives in a short amount of time. Five of the bridesmaids have made provision in case the bridegroom is a long time in coming, they have extra oil to refill their lamps.

The lamps represent the relationship between the bridesmaid and the bridegroom, five bridesmaids have a good relationship with the bridegroom and five have a brief relationship.

The bridegroom in this story represents Jesus. We don't know when He will come but we need to be prepared for that time. The bridesmaids with their lamps are us waiting for Him. How do we ensure that we have enough oil for our lamps, that we can have a good, full relationship with Jesus.





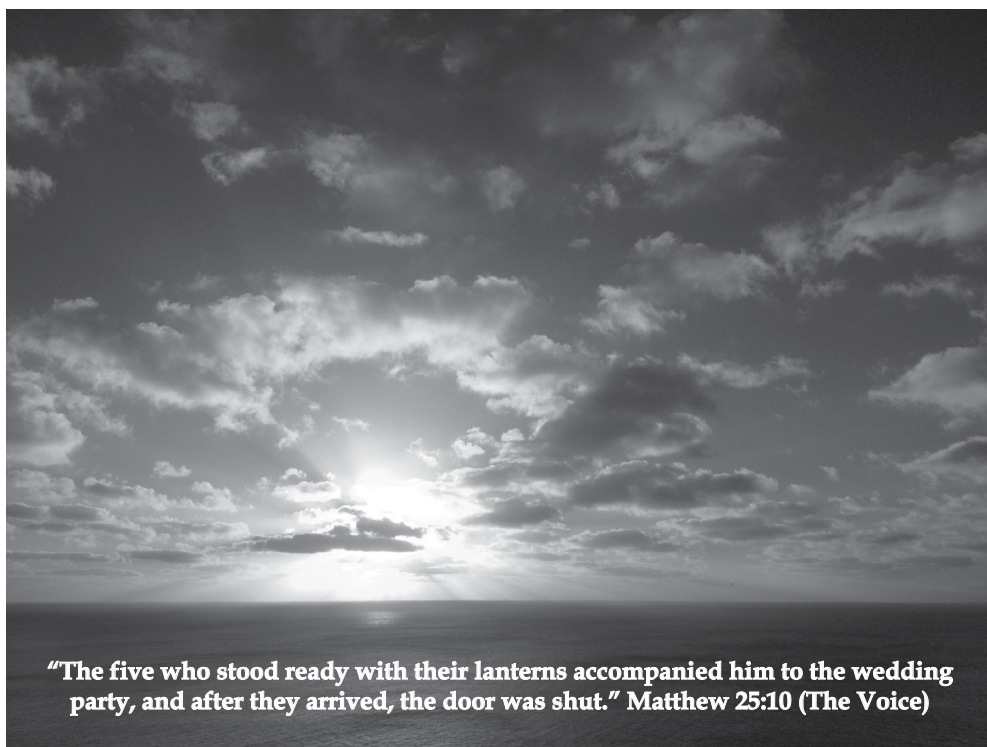
There is a simple song learnt as a child that says 'Read your Bible, pray every day, and you'll grow'. These are the simplest ways to keep oil in our lamps, by reading our Bible and praying every day, to keep our relationship strong with Jesus. This leads to us being obedient to His will and by showing His love to others around us.

Matthew 25:10 says *"The five who stood ready with their lanterns accompanied him to the wedding party, and after they arrived, the door was shut."* (The Voice)

The door here isn't just a door to a good meal and a party, this door is the most important door we will ever enter, it is the door to Heaven.

The bridesmaids with extra oil were ready for when the bridegroom arrived to enter with him. Those that were off searching for more oil were not ready when he arrived and when they did arrive, were not let in.

When we have a relationship with Jesus we are ready when the door is opened to enter through the door to Heaven with Jesus by our side. Those who wander and think there is time later to think about a relationship with Jesus will find themselves outside a closed door.



"The five who stood ready with their lanterns accompanied him to the wedding party, and after they arrived, the door was shut." Matthew 25:10 (The Voice)

Doors and Keys

Sherrie Nicol

Décor

Pictures of different types of doors & keys around the room or in frames on the display table. This meeting is set for an interactive time.

Start the meeting with a YouTube Clip, 'I'm gonna knock on your door'.

There are many versions to choose from. Here are two:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Zp8_T2Tyi4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRlhld4O68c>

Quiz – Who's behind the Door?

Each door to look the same. A clue for each person to be on the door. When the door is opened, it reveals the answer. A few examples are on a PowerPoint to give a start. (USB)

Chorus *Swing wide the door of your heart to the King of Kings.*

Sharing

How was the door of your heart opened by someone special? For example:



Receiving a bunch of flowers for no particular reason.



A box of chocolates to help through a tough time.



A home cooked meal when you've been busy.



A warm smile.



Holding the door open for you.

Quiz (USB)

Some doors need to be closed or locked

When do doors get slammed shut? Leave this open for a fun time of sharing.

Some examples to start with:



A cranky child sent to their room.



Tired of saying, 'Do you live in a tent?'

Scripture Reading

"No one lights a lamp, then hides it in a drawer. It's put on a lamp stand so those entering the room have light to see where they're going. Your eye is a lamp, lighting up your whole body. If you live wide-eyed in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light. If you live squinty-eyed in greed and distrust, your body is a dank cellar. Keep your eyes open, your lamp burning, so you don't get musty and murky. Keep your life as well-lighted as your best-lighted room." (Luke 11:33-36 Msg – focus v34)



You may have heard it said. A closed door can say...*'I don't want to see it. Take it away.'**'I want my privacy.'**'I need some space.'**'I don't want to face this right now.'***An open door represents a gesture of...***'You're welcome.'**'Please, come on in.'*Psalm 119:18 *"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."***Song***Open the eyes of my heart Lord*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ry6bzm7K8K4>

The writer of this song, Paul Baloche was reading Ephesians 1:18 (*read the verse*) doing a ministry time at his church and this song was created through the time of prayer and worship to God.

He says, *'I've been in religion a long time and that's not enough. I want to know Him. I want to see God. I want to wake up every day and be more aware of Your presence in my life. I want to see Your Kingdom in the midst of this world, so I can be a part of it and I can do my part.'*

He continues, *'Worship is good, but unless something is happening from the inside out, it's just really a form. It's like a cloud without rain.'*

Does your heart say to God, *'Keep out'*? Or is it open and saying, *'I want to see You.'* May the eyes of your heart be an open door saying, *'Welcome Lord Jesus, please come in.'*

For prayer and reflection use the chorus: *Turn your eyes upon Jesus.*

Doors in Zanzibar

Liz Gainsford

Welcome

Song

(Own choice)

Activity 1 – Guess the door

Prior to the gathering ask people to bring a photo of their door, or the leader can go around to member's homes and take photos of their doors.

These can be displayed around the room and used later in the meeting. Each photo should be numbered.

During the Meeting: Have a piece of paper with numbers down the side (*that corresponds to how many photos you have displayed*) ask the members to try to guess whose door belongs to who, and then write it on their paper. The person who is able to recognise the most doors correctly is given a small prize.

Activity 2 – Word Game

On a large piece of paper or on the PowerPoint write the words Zanzibar doors.

The idea is for each lady to have a piece of paper and pen. In the time given (*2 minutes*) they must each see how many words they can make out of the letters **zanzibarddoors**. Only letters found in these words can be used and they cannot repeat a letter (*unless it is r, z or o*) in a word. The word must contain more than 2 letters and plurals are acceptable. Once they start a new word all letters can be accessed again.

PowerPoint – Zanzibar Doors (USB)

Devotional Thought

There are many things that we can learn from the amazing array of doors in Zanzibar. One of the interesting things about the doors is that they are all so different. Different colours, sizes, patterns, and heights, yet they all have the same purpose. Doors are made to allow access to a building, a business, and a home. They are designed to protect, by keeping people out and keeping people in.

If you were to look around the room today, I think you would agree that we are all different; our hair colour is different, we are different heights, sizes, and different ages – there are so many things that make us different from each other. However we are all people, people who are made, as we are told in the Bible, in the image of God. We are carefully crafted by the creator of the universe. We are made in His image.



We saw from the photos that the details on the doors in Zanzibar gave clues to who lived or worked inside. The outside of the door demonstrated something of what or who was on the inside.

For those who believe in the risen Lord – we have the Holy Spirit, we have the living God within us. Therefore our lives, like the Zanzibar doors, should show this.

🔑 What then do our lives show to others?

🔑 How does the way we live demonstrate what we believe to those we meet every day?

John 13:35 says, **“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”**

By what? How we love one another! How we treat other people, the way we live.

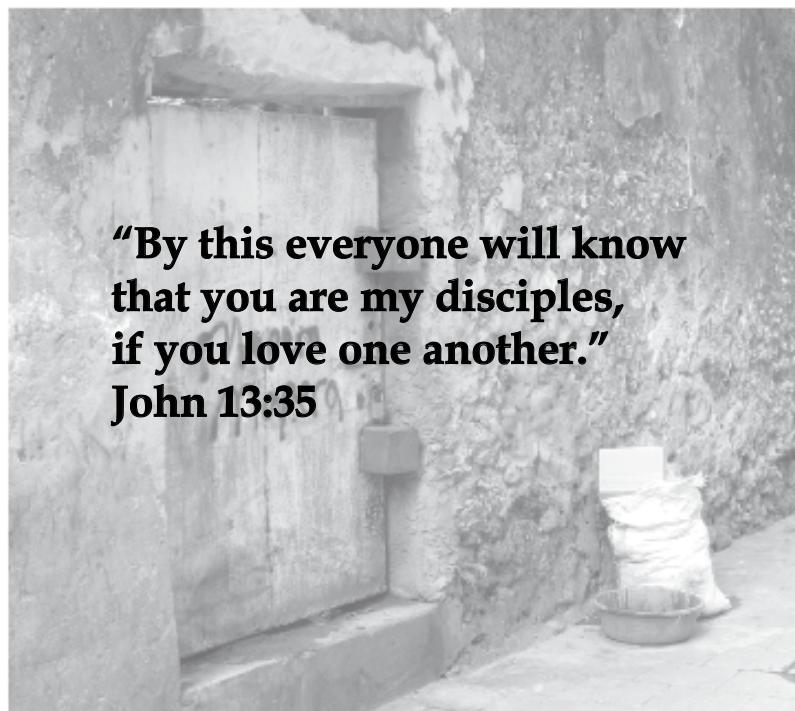
Does the way we live, how we love others clearly show those we meet that we love Jesus, that we belong to Him? This week as you pass by different doors, as you enter and exit buildings may you be reminded of the doors in Zanzibar, and be reminded that how we live, our actions, should tell of the one who lives in us – Jesus.

Listen to Kim Burrell song ‘Open up the door’ (This could be turned into a clip displaying the words.)

Response activity

Have small paper shaped *or* cut out like a door, as the song is playing encourage the women to write on the paper ways that they will intentionally show to others, through their actions, that they are a follower of Jesus. These can be brought to the front or simply shared with someone sitting next to them.

**“By this everyone will know
that you are my disciples,
if you love one another.”
John 13:35**



Doors to Discovery

Salvos Women

Discover more about what The Salvation Army does by going through the doors of discovery into the services that are provided. This can be done by inviting speakers or asking various expressions of Salvation Army ministry to give you information on what they do.

1. Aged Care Plus.
2. Booth College.
3. Chaplaincy.
4. Doorways.
6. Family Tracing.
7. Freedom Partnership.
8. Hope for Life.
9. Money Care.
10. Pastoral Care.
11. Positive Lifestyle Program.
12. Recovery Services.
13. Red Shield Defence Services.
14. Salvation Army International Development (SAID).
15. Salvos Counselling.
16. Salvos Legal.
17. Salvos Schools.
18. Salvos Stores.
19. Seniors on Mission.
20. Social Justice.
21. Spiritual Life Development.
22. Strategic Disaster Response Unit.
23. Street Level.
24. Young Hope.

If you require contact information please email salvos.women@aue.salvationarmy.org



Doors of Doubt

Karan Ross

Song Suggestions

SASB 467

Why are you doubting and fearing?

No doubt – Petra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNw4idhyLL0>

Jesus, what a wonderful name – Darlene Zschech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLUfo2sSbhU>

PowerPoint and painting (See USB)

Movie Clip

The Door chase

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbMYtIfKhAw>

Or

Goodbye

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPaTaEN2wxY>

What came to mind while you were watching the clip?

Quotes for Discussion (See USB)

Scripture Reading

John 20:19-23 Locked doors

Benediction

SASB 956

Let nothing disturb Thee

Message

John chapters 14-20

It had been a very eventful few days and we were very confused and frightened. We needed to go to a safe, private room to be able to think and discuss what we had seen and heard. What did the future look like for us now? The authorities were looking for us.

Jesus had been crucified – words can't describe how we felt, watching helplessly. We were confused and very afraid – a single word would have meant we would be arrested and possibly executed!

When the women went to the tomb, Jesus' body wasn't there – Peter confirmed it. He was talking about the scriptures and faith but this is very hard to comprehend.

Mary said she had a conversation with Jesus and then some of the disciples had similar experiences.

It was while we were together with the door securely locked; then we looked and Jesus was standing there in the middle of the room. We were overjoyed to see Jesus, we recognised Him immediately, and we were all there but Thomas.

When Thomas came back we were so excited, we said to him *"We have seen the Lord"* (John 20:25) and described to him what we had seen and what was said.

Thomas didn't believe us – he just looked around and said he needed proof. He needed to see His hand and the wounds in His hand to His side.

It was not until over a week later, when we were in our safe, locked room that Jesus appeared and a very emotional Thomas believed.

Thomas is usually portrayed in a negative light and often his faith is questioned.

Let us look at the scene, Thomas walks into a locked room where the disciples have been hiding. He knows these men – he knows their imperfections and faults, their arguments. He has seen Judas betray Jesus. Peter denies Him and others run away. Could he believe such a report? Is it possible that Thomas doubted the disciples not Jesus? They were saying that they had seen the risen Lord but their behavior hadn't changed – they were still hiding in a room, filled with fear.

There are two other glimpses of Thomas in scripture which leave us with a clearer picture of Thomas as a person.

Jesus makes the decision to return to Judea after receiving the news that Lazarus has died. The disciples are afraid and concerned for His welfare and misunderstand the message. They believe that Lazarus is unwell and 'sleeping', they don't understand that he has died.

It is Thomas who says to the disciples, we need to go with Jesus and die with Him if necessary. Thomas is prepared to die for and with Jesus. His belief and faith in Jesus is strong.

In a conversation between Jesus and the disciples, Jesus said to them, *"Don't get lost in despair; believe in God, and keep on believing in Me... You know where I am going and how to get there."* (John 14:1) Thomas is the only one of the disciples who is honest. Thomas replied, *"Lord, we don't know where You are going, so how can we know the path?"* (John 14:5)

It is believed that Thomas was a labourer in Parthia, Persia and India. This would make him a very practical man. He needed concrete facts to be certain of events. Thomas was a man of devotion and of faith. Thomas' faith became great, intense and convincing which lead him to carry the gospel to the east and was martyred for his faith near Madras, at Mt. St. Thomas, India.

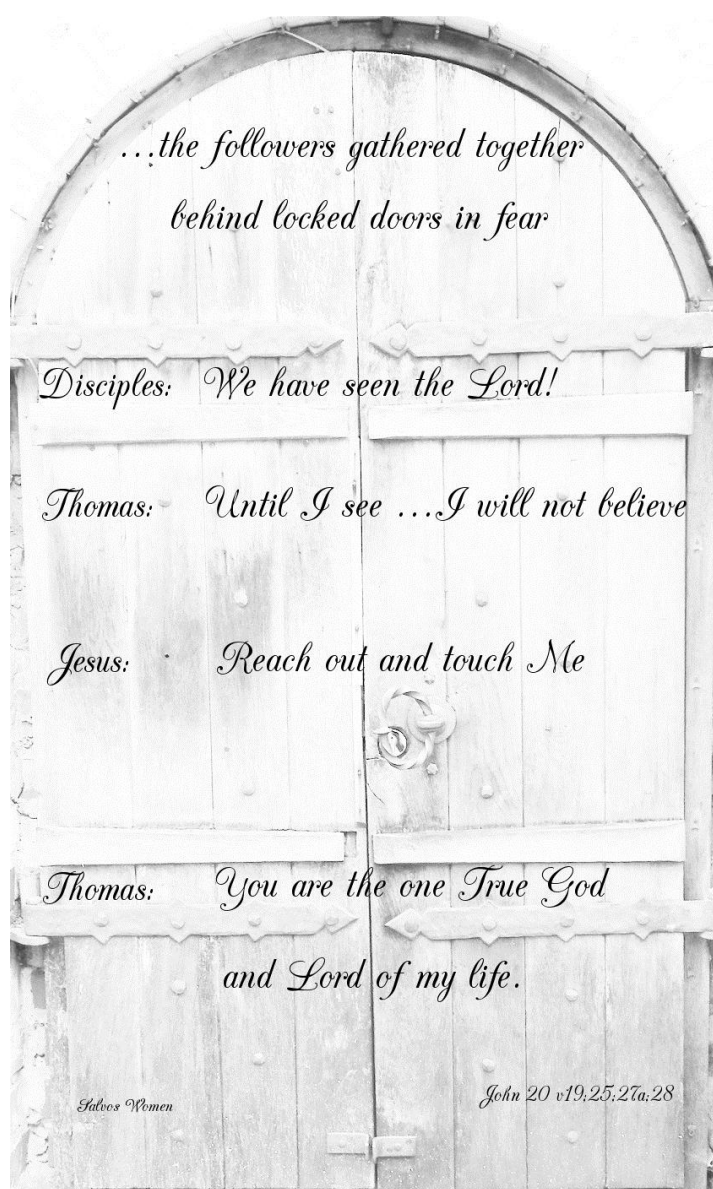
Thomas has been treated harshly, by being labelled the doubter. It can be seen that yes, he doubted – but it could be said that it was the disciples he found difficulty in believing not Jesus. He saw no evidence of a change of





behaviour that would convince him that they had actually seen Jesus. We can see Thomas as a very practical person. He has courage and faith – he was prepared to go with Jesus to a place of danger and possible death and convinces the disciples they needed to go as well. He is honest – he admits he doesn't understand what Jesus is telling them, when the other disciples do not understand either. Once he sees Jesus he states, "***You are the one True God and Lord of my life.***" (John 20:28) He spends the rest of his life extending the kingdom of God as far as India.

- 🔑 How can this be applied to us today?
- 🔑 Where are we in these events?
- 🔑 Am I like the disciples hiding safely behind the locked doors in fear?
- 🔑 Am I Thomas doubting what the disciples had said because he couldn't see a change of behaviour or relationship?
- 🔑 Am I Thomas after the encounter with Jesus and say 'You are the one True God and Lord of my life'?
- 🔑 Am I Thomas spending the rest of my life extending the kingdom of God to my family, friends, community and beyond?



Doorway to Enlightenment

Booklist

DVD's

Jesus the Door to everything
Open Doors
Praise opens the Door of Grace
Temple Grandin

Joyce Meyer
TD Jakes
Joseph Prince
Temple Grandin

Fiction

A Rose at the Door
At the Door
The Door within Trilogy
The Golden Key

Deborah Bedford
Kameel Majdali
Wayne Batson
George Macdonald

Non Fiction

4 keys to Hearing God's Voice
Beyond Heaven's Door
Door of Hope
Forgiveness – God's Master Key
I stand at the Door and Knock
Keys to the Deeper Life
Keys to... series include Living Single; Marriage; Women;
Next Door Saviour
Opening the Door to your God-sized Dream
Stranger Next Door
The Honor key
The Key to personal peace
The keys to the Chronicles
The Religions Next Door
The Universe next door
Through the Door

Mark Virkler
Max Lucado
Jan Frank
Peter Horrobin
Corrie ten Boom
AW Tozer
Myles Munroe
Max Lucado
Holley Gerth
J D Payne
Russell Evans
Billy Graham
Marvin Hinton
Marvin Olasky
James W Sire
Tina Waldrom

Websites

www.cbn.com/spirituallife/Devotions/noebel_key.aspx

www.juliabettencourt.com/themes/keytheme.html

www.toolkit.salvos.org.au/missionteam



Faith that Unlocks the Door

Cassi Everitt

This is a resource that can be used as a message or as part of a simple, non-confronting, time of sharing stories of faith.

Narrative

The Bleeding Woman (Luke 8:42-48)

What you need

A head scarf

Scene 1

The bleeding woman

I am a simple woman, no-one special... but I have a miraculous story to tell...

I stand here today a healed woman... and let me tell you why.

For 12 years of my life I bled constantly. For twelve years I was completely and utterly exhausted, physically and mentally. To do the smallest task took so much of my energy. I could feel myself withering away.

I'd gotten used to the bleeding and the weakness that went along with it. But it was the loneliness that consumed me.

Trying to smuggle my dirty rags down to wash in the river was humiliating. I could sense the stares from other women burning in my side.

For 12 years I had longed for someone to touch me – but because of my condition I was rejected. If I merely rubbed up against someone else they would have to spend a full day washing their clothes and bathing in order to cleanse themselves and return to the city. Nobody wanted to be near me. There was no-one to give me a hug, no shoulder to cry on, no sister to braid my hair. Everything I touched or anywhere I sat immediately became unclean.

I wasn't even allowed in the synagogue to hear the precious words of the Torah. I felt so alone, so unloved, so incredibly worthless. After 12 years of being treated like this I had lost hope.

I had seen doctor after doctor and tried remedy after remedy, but nothing helped. I had tried everything! I had spent all of my money paying people who said they could help me, and so I was left with no money and still bleeding.

I had lost all hope. Nobody wanted to be near me, no one could help me. I felt that this was how I would be for the rest of my life.

Scene 2

Need to get to Jesus – Faith

One day I saw a man walking passed with a crowd of men and women around Him. I overheard some women talking and they were saying that He was Jesus the healer. This wasn't the first time I had heard about Jesus and the stories of His healings. Straight away I knew that I had to get to Him. Yet how could I? I was a woman who was unclean and just by a simple touch I could defile another. I struggled with this for a while. Getting through the crowds alone would be a huge task, yet I knew I had to try.

I knew I couldn't just go up to Him and ask Him to heal me, and I was afraid that He would be angry with me if I touched Him and made Him unclean. So I decided that I would have to approach Him in secret. If He really was the healer that people were talking about, then all I would have to do is touch His cloak and I would be healed.

It took me a while to summon up the courage but slowly I started to push my way through the crowds.

Scene 3

The Crowds – barriers


I could see that Jesus was following one of the Synagogue leaders. I knew I had to hurry or I would miss my chance. There were so many people just trying to get a glimpse of Jesus. I was moving as fast as I could yet my frail body was aching. Weaving my way through people finally I was getting closer. I was almost close enough to touch him so I stooped down onto my hands and knees and pushed my final way through the legs of the crowd and as I stretched out my frail, bony almost lifeless hand the tips of my fingers just brushed the end of his robe.

Immediately I felt a healing power rush through my body, I knew I was healed! My body was full of energy that I hadn't felt for 12 years, my skin colour changed and my body felt strong. I wanted to scream at the top of my lungs. I was so incredibly happy, yet I was frightened that people would find out what I had done and that Jesus would know that I had touched Him and so I quickly made my way back through the crowd to get away.

All of a sudden I heard a voice ask 'who touched my robe?' I was trembling with fear, I shrunk as small as I could amongst the crowd to try and hide. I heard Jesus' disciples laugh at Him – there were so many people who could have touched Him, He was surrounded by the crowd, but that wasn't enough for Him. He continued looking for me.

I had no choice but to admit to what I had done. I was terrified, my body was shaking. What was He going to do with me? Would He beat me like other men who I had touched did? I was amazed by my healing and so incredibly grateful and so I stood up and walked towards Jesus.





Falling at his feet, my body quivering, I confessed, 'Jesus it was I who touched your robe.' I couldn't even bear to look at Him. I stammered out how I so desperately wanted to be well and how I knew that just touching His cloak would heal me, and that it did, that I was finally well. I apologised over and over again for my actions, hoping He would understand just a little why I dared make Him unclean.

Scene 4

Your faith has healed you

The crowd was silent. I was anxiously waiting for His response, still trembling on my knees, with my head touching the ground. Then I heard soft footsteps moving towards me. I could hear the dirt scuffling under His sandals. He didn't yell at me, He didn't beat me, He didn't even walk away in disgust. Instead He walked towards me and knelt down at my side.

And then, and I will never forget this, He placed His hand on my shoulder and said "**Daughter, your faith has healed you - go in peace.**" My own father had rejected me and no one had touched me in years, and here Jesus blessed me and called me daughter. That touch, that word healed me more than just stopping the bleeding. For the first time in years, I felt accepted and loved - I felt whole again.

Together we stood up. He didn't seem to care that I was a woman. The way He embraced me, it was truly as if I was His daughter. I was full of joy and hope and love. I couldn't stop smiling this ridiculous smile - I was just so happy.

The crowd had witnessed my acceptance and once again I knew what it was to be loved and acknowledged. Jesus had healed me - He gave me a new life.

My life has never been the same. For 12 long years my life was worthless and hopeless. But now I stand a healed woman, free to live again.

Jesus' the healer, healed me and gave me a new life. I will never forget His words, 'Daughter, your faith has healed you, go in peace.'

Faith to Walk through the Door

Leah Fowler

Acts 12:8-11

'Quick, get up!'

Shackled between two guards, monitored by two sentries and anticipating a trial that may lead to his execution. This is how Peter was sleeping when a light shone into his cell and a voice called *'Quick, get up!'*

In a home not far away, faithful believers had been fervently praying for weeks that God would intervene and save Peter from his seemingly certain death, and it was at this most desperate moment that God intervened. As his friends petitioned to God, an angel petitioned to Peter, and as he obediently rose, still in a daze, the chains binding him fell. The angel instructed Peter to dress and fasten his sandals, and then to follow. God provided the miracle, however he still required Peter to act.

Anyone of sound mind couldn't be blamed for questioning how they could simply 'follow', knowing the confines of a prison, and this was no simple situation. Peter had been incarcerated twice prior and Herod was taking no chances in ensuring he made it to trial. There were multiple guards standing alert and door upon door blocking the way to his freedom. Peter was dumbfounded.

However, Peter obeyed, albeit thinking it was a vision rather than reality, and he followed. We read in Acts 12:10, *"They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it."* It was only at this point, having come through the gates, that Peter came to his senses and recognised the miracle that had occurred. Walking away from the prison and towards safety, the angel then immediately left. Peter could now make his own way.

How often do we find ourselves shackled between perceivably inescapable thoughts, trials and situations, sitting in the daze of our own circumstances feeling entirely trapped? God is with us. How often do we fervently pray that God would intervene, only to miss His call, *'Quick, Get Up!'* We are loved by a constant and present God who is calling us to get up, leave the shackles He has broken off and follow Him. He promises to open the doors and lead us to safety in Him, if only we have the faith to strap on our sandals and walk through the door. Let us not be surprised when our miraculous God answers our prayers, but open our eyes to the freedom we are given in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"Then Peter came to himself and said, 'Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent His angel and rescued me...' " Acts 12:11



H.O.W. ~ Keys to the Doors of Life

Christine Tamsøtt

H.O.W. – Honesty, Open-mindedness and Willingness are the cornerstones of The Bridge Program and the 12 steps of Recovery.
(A participants handout is on the USB).

Being honest, open-minded and willing you will be prepared to:

- 🔑 Further your spiritual awareness and growth
- 🔑 Improve your self-awareness
- 🔑 Focus your actions on your recovery
- 🔑 Become aware of the fronts and masks you may be hiding behind

Describe in your own words what the above quote means...

H.O.W. helps you get started on your own spiritual journey in recovery
(from anything not just addiction to drugs, alcohol or gambling) by helping you to:

- 🔑 **Honestly** face your problems and deal with any resistance you may have towards spirituality.
- 🔑 **Open your mind** to the possibility that there is a power greater than yourself who cares for you.
- 🔑 Be **Willing** to investigate and explore spirituality.

Honesty

You will be well on your way to recovery by honestly facing your problems, attitudes, beliefs and values, and also dealing with any resistance you may have towards spirituality.

Today I will be honest with myself and others by...

Facing up to your problems and admitting, accepting and responding to the reality of your situation requires you to be honest with yourself and others.

Take a few minutes to think about what you need to work on and accept.

Make a list of those things about you that you are ready to admit and accept...

Open-mindedness

Be open-minded to the possibility of God as your higher power, who cares for you.

Today I will practice open-mindedness by...

Ways to practice being open-minded include...

- 🔑 Having an attitude of enquiry, open your mind to new concepts and look to make better choices in your life.
- 🔑 Being open minded is a step of faith, open your mind to the possibility that there is a higher power who cares about you and that a new life is possible.

Today I will take a step of faith by...

Willingness

Be willing to explore spirituality and make a decision to let go and let God! This means to turn your will and your life over to His care this means you will be exercising your willingness.

How will God do a better job of caring for you than you have?

If you are willing, then you are ready to take a personal risk and experiment with change, exercise your faith, and accept responsibility for yourself and to be honest with yourself and others.

Today I will display my willingness by...

Declaration of H.O.W.

Write down your personal declaration of your intent to be honest, open-minded and willing.

Ask yourself these questions, they may assist you:

- 🔑 When I honestly look at my life am I powerless?
- 🔑 Is my life manageable?
- 🔑 Am I open minded to a Higher Power greater than myself?
- 🔑 Am I willing to make a decision to turn my life and my will over to the care of God?

Remember: Honesty, open-mindedness and willingness are the Cornerstone of The Bridge Program and the 12 steps of recovery and become keys to the doors of life.



I Stand at the Door

Kerrie Farthing

Discussion Question

Note to Leader: Facilitate a discussion using this sharing question.

How do you feel when you knock at someone's door and you know they are there, but they don't answer? Give several people an opportunity to share.

Competition (USB)

Notes for Talk

The symbol of a door is used in different ways in Scripture.

🔑 Jesus talks about Himself as a door or a gate in John 10:9.

🔑 We are told to ask, seek and knock and the door will be opened to us in Luke 11:9. This is referring to the door of the Kingdom.

🔑 Psalm 141:3 says, *'set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.'*

🔑 In Revelation 3:20 we hear that Jesus stands at the door and knocks and this door refers to our inner lives.

"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 them and they with Me."
(Revelation 3:20)

Jesus stands at the door... knocking. He doesn't barge in or force the door, but waits for us to open the door when we are ready. The only criteria being that we hear His voice and open the door. He wants to come in and receive our hospitality around the table.

Exercise

Note to Leader: Either provide pictures of different doors (*enough for everybody with a few spare*) spread out on a table or provide drawing paper and coloured pencils/markers.

When you consider Jesus standing at the door of your life, think about what the door looks like. Draw a sketch of what it might look like or find a picture that represents that door.

Consider these questions: (*handout on USB*)

1. What is my door made of? Is it wood, steel, glass...
2. Is my door closed or open? Perhaps it's ajar or heavily locked?
3. Is there a door knob, a letterbox slot or a sign on my door? Does it need a key? Do you know where the key is?



4. Is the main function of my door for protection – to keep something out, or to keep certain things in?

5. Are there inner doors which have not been opened for years?

🔑 Imagine Jesus knocking at the door of your inner life. You invite Him in. What does He say to you?

🔑 Sit in silence for a moment and listen for His voice.

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6)

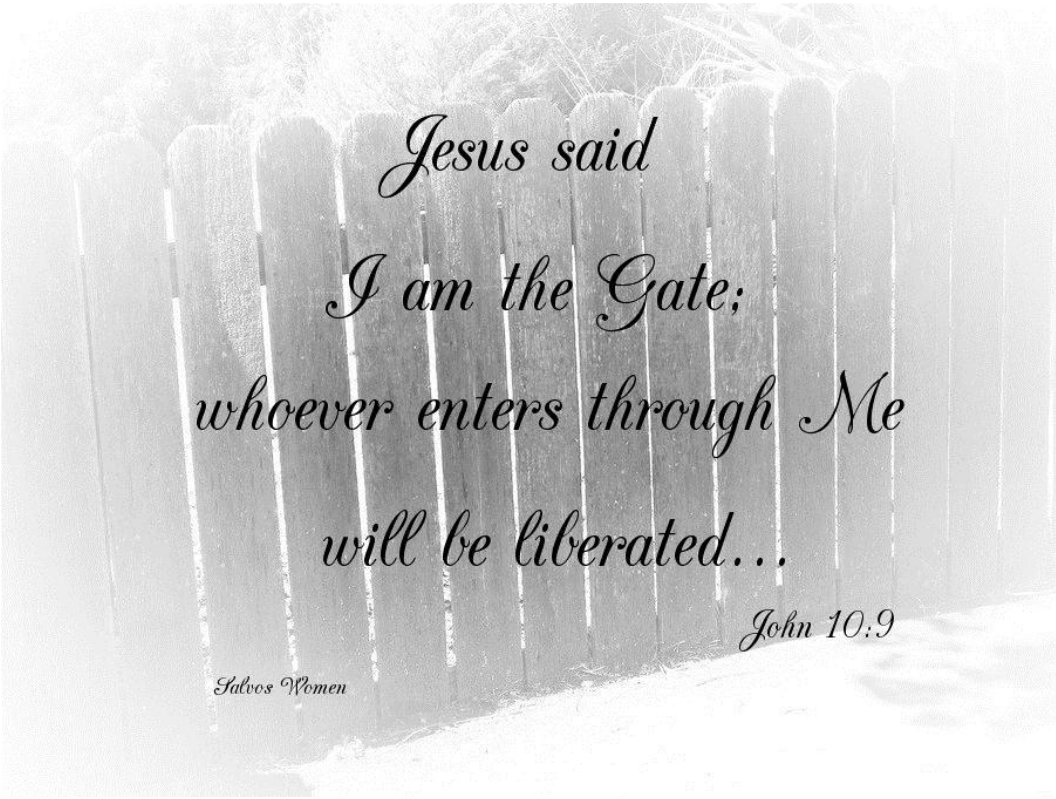
🔑 Some people might like to share about the door they have chosen or drawn.

We talked about how we feel when we knock at someone’s door and they don’t answer. Revelation 3:20 tells us that Jesus is knocking at the door of our inner life. Let’s swing the door wide open to him!

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, ‘*Be an opener of doors.*’ Keep opening the door of your life to Jesus, the King of kings and keep opening your door to others around you in hospitality. Let’s live our lives with open doors!

Song

SASB 227 Chorus *Swing wide the door of your heart.*



*Jesus said
I am the Gate;
whoever enters through Me
will be liberated...*

John 10:9

Salvos Women



If only we would Open the Door

Joanne Slater

Concept

Fear is very real. It can be very controlling and debilitating. It can cause us to hesitate or to respond in such a way which can rob us of the joy, surprises and excitement of our life's journey. What are the doors you would like to enter but lack the relevant key to do so, for some reason? Allow God to help us to find the relevant key for the door and open it wide.

Décor

Prepare the entry door into the area being used for the meeting with...

- 🔑 Pot plants
- 🔑 A welcome mat
- 🔑 Different types of Doors and Keys
- 🔑 A number of objects that need a key to unlock them and a few extra keys, so that the key cannot be easily identified to the object.

Spread the objects around. *(These items could be used as a Game Challenge and as well as Decor items.)*

Welcome and Introduction

What is a Door/Doorway? The plural noun – doors meaning is a hinged, sliding or revolving barrier at the entrance of a building, room or vehicle, or in the frame work of a cupboard. Synonyms – Doorway, portal, opening, hatch, entrance, entry, exit, egress. *(Allow time for discussion of what doors mean for them, what different type of doors they have come across. For example, unique, colours, size, a story to tell when they opened a door.)*

Song/Prayer

HLSB 36

I come to the garden alone

Acknowledgement Time

- 🔑 Birthdays.
- 🔑 Those who are unwell.
- 🔑 Arrival of babies or grandchildren.

Game Challenge

This game can be as challenging and interesting as you would like it to be. Make it fit your group. Depending on the size of your group, have an object per person that needs to be opened a particular way providing some of these are with a key.

Ideas of items that could be used are:

- 🔑 Bottles with lids.
- 🔑 Gift Boxes with lids.
- 🔑 Jewelry Box.
- 🔑 A number of different sized cash tins.
- 🔑 Diary.
- 🔑 Journal.
- 🔑 Package Box.
- 🔑 Sealed Bag.

In each item place a small gift or a scripture verse inside. *(It will be interesting to watch those who open the objects they can see into and those who don't open the objects that they cannot.)* Make this a discussion point after every person has had a go. People will hesitate to approach items they cannot see into.

Scripture

Revelation 3:19-4:11

Devotions

What do you fear or think about when there is a knock at the door? Is it:

A salesman – bad news – the unknown or unexpected visitor

It can also be: Family – good friends – a gift or parcel. Either way, we cannot know the potential of what is on the other side of the door until we open it.

Think about the apostle Paul. He often had opportunities to minister that differed from his previous expectations. One night a man appeared to him in a dream, pleading, *“Come over to Macedonia and help us”* (Acts 16:9). In the morning Paul and his companions concluded that God was calling them to travel to Macedonia. They went expecting to find the man of Paul’s dream active in ministry there.

Instead, they found a Jewish woman, Lydia, leading a women’s prayer group by a river. Paul spent some time with these women, and through his influence Lydia committed her life to Christ. She then persuaded Paul and his team to lodge at her home, where a church soon blossomed. (Acts 16:13-15)

Paul had come to Macedonia in response to a vision he had seen of a man heavily involved in ministry begging for his help. The reality he found, once there, was different to what he was expecting. Paul was willing to come to terms with the changing situation. He accepted that the person he was to assist was a woman, not a man. And because she wasn’t an active Christian in ministry when Paul arrived, she had to be converted first!

Paul was able to come to terms with a changing situation because he had a keen sense of his priorities for ministry. The most important, was to take the Gospel into regions unfamiliar with Christ. In light of this





overriding goal, Paul simply looked for open doors and the opportunities that they provided. His confidence in God's provision was so strong, that he assumed that every opportunity to grow a new Christian movement in unevangelised territory, signalled God's will for him. The chance to work with Lydia and her friends to launch a church in Macedonia was a good opportunity and so even though it meant revising his initial assumptions about the 'who' and the 'how' of evangelising this country, he gave it a go.

How do you handle things when they turn out to be different from what you expect?

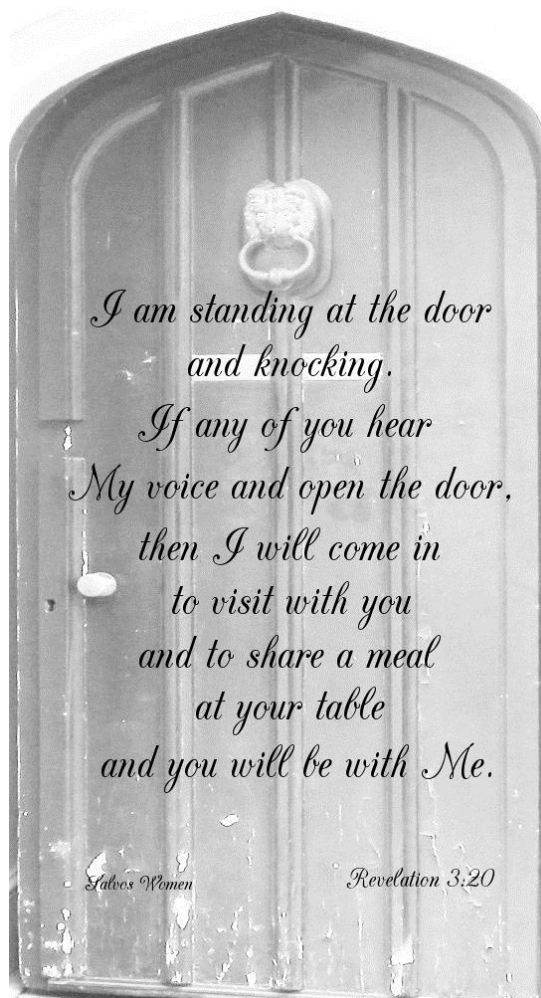
Paul was able to adjust to the changing circumstances, but the opportunities would not have been there if Paul had not moved across to Macedonia. Unless we open the door, we cannot know what is on the other side.

Jesus said, *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock."* (Revelation 3:20). What that means for us, will not be realised until we open the door. It is then that we prove the remainder of the verse as truth. *"If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with Me."*

Are you willing to open the door and let Jesus come in today?

Bookmark (USB)

Benediction/Blessing



Jesus – The Door

Jo-Anne Brown

A time for reflection, worship and prayer.

Call to Worship

Leader Jesus, Bread that nourishes our soul.
Jesus, Shepherd of our heart.
Jesus, Light of our life.

All You open the way to new life.
We choose to follow You
and step into the new way You open before us.

Song

Begin with a familiar song that praises Jesus

In John's Gospel, Jesus is recorded seven times as saying emphatically and powerfully, **"I am..."** This wording would have reminded His listeners of God's words to Moses when He spoke out of the burning bush: **"I am who I am"** (Exodus 3:14). These words speak of the power and mystery of the God who is, who was and who always will be. Jesus echoed the truth of this when He used the same words. Each statement was followed by a powerful description of one aspect of His character and the purpose of the incarnation.

This reflection focusses on the words: **"I am the Door."** (John 10:9)

Scripture

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber; but He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens; the sheep hear His voice, and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. When He has brought out all His own, He goes before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from Him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." This figure Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not heed them. I am the door; if any one enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." (John 10:1-9 RSV)

"I am the gate; whoever enters through Me will be liberated, will go in and go out, and will find pastures." (John 10:9 – VOICE)





Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, we worship You this day as our Shepherd.
You love us, know us and care for us like no other.
You call us by name and lead us to a place of safety and blessing.
You go before us to guide us and protect us.
Teach us to more readily know and respond to Your voice.
You are our Shepherd. You are the Door.
You are the Gateway to a new and better life
And when we step through that gateway, You welcome us.
You surround us and protect us.
We are safe in Your care.
Thank you, Lord.
Amen

Mining the Scripture

Read through the Scripture passage (pg 39) again, slowly and reflectively. A different person could read each verse. Pause for a moment after this reading. Let the Scripture speak to you.

- 🔑 What words or phrases stand out to you? Repeat them to yourself.
- 🔑 Consider what those words mean to you today.
- 🔑 Is God inviting you to something through these words? Is He challenging you?
- 🔑 Offer these words back to God in silent prayer.
- 🔑 Give God thanks for His Word and how He has revealed Himself to you.

Reflection

Jesus said that He was "*the Door of the sheep.*" We more often see this translated as the "*gate for the sheep.*" Either way, He is describing what would have been very familiar to those who first heard these words. The sheep in Jesus' day were often kept in an enclosed area, with no gate that could be opened or closed. The shepherd himself would lie across the opening to protect the sheep by night. Nothing could come in or go out without the shepherd knowing. The sheep were safe and protected. The shepherd could hear every sound the sheep made and he was right there with them.

The shepherd provided for the sheep – as they entered into the sheepfold, he provided food for them. As he led them out of the sheepfold, he led them to fresh pasture and clean water. The sheep were safe with the shepherd and had all they needed.

The metaphor of Jesus as both Shepherd and Door speaks of intimacy, safety, guidance and new life. The shepherd is right there with the sheep, through the hours of the night and the day, during times of danger and times of safety and he will not let the sheep be harmed. He knows the sheep and they know him. This image speaks of both now and in the future. He is there with them, caring for them right now. He is also the door that leads to new life – as Jesus says, "*those who enter by Him will be saved.*" (John 10:9)

- 🔑 What does it mean to you that Jesus is the Door?
- 🔑 How have you experienced this?
- 🔑 What do you think 'pasture' means in this passage?

Scripture

Jesus said, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me.' (John 14:6)

Let us pray together

*"Show me Your ways, Lord,
teach me Your paths.
Guide me in Your truth and teach me,
for You are God my Saviour,
and my hope is in You all day long."* (Psalm 24:4-5)

Scripture also reveals another way that Jesus served as a doorway. The following account of the first Passover shows that the blood of the Passover Lamb on the doors of the houses saved the first-born sons from death. It was also a picture of what the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, does for those who allow Him to be the Doorway to new life. The angel of death passed over the houses sprinkled with the blood of the lamb and the Israelites then passed through these same doorways as they left Egypt and followed the Almighty God into freedom and new life.

Scripture

"Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. ²²Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning. ²³When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and He will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down." (Exodus 12:21-23)

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, Lamb of God,
You have opened the way to freedom and deliverance.
You have released us from all that has held us captive.
You are the way to life. You are life itself.
Through Your blood, through You, we now live.
We rejoice in this gift of new life and freedom.
Help us to remain true as we follow You wherever you lead.
Amen

Song

SASB 259

Thou art the way



Let us pray together

My dearest Lord, be now a bright flame to enlighten me,
A guiding star to lead me,
A smooth path beneath my feet,
And a kindly shepherd along my way,
Today and forever more.

Amen.

(St Columba 521-597)

Benediction

Let nothing disturb you, nothing frighten you.
All things are passing; God never changes;
Patient endurance attains all things;
Who God possesses in nothing is wanting;
Alone God suffices.

(Teresa of Avila, 1515-1812, translated H. W. Longfellow)

Extra material for going deeper

Creative Expression

Draw, paint or create a collage of what it might look for Jesus to be the Door for the sheep. Or what it might look like that Jesus is the Door for you. Think about what is on each side of the door. Don't worry about being 'artistic' – simply reflect on what this passage means to you and be creative.

Visualise Scripture:

Read John 10:1-9 or Exodus 12:21-23 again – all of it or some selected verses.

- 🔑 Close your eyes and picture what is being described.
- 🔑 What do you see, smell, hear?
- 🔑 How is God speaking to you through this?
- 🔑 You could either record this experience in your journal or share it with someone.

Share

What is the most important insight you have gained about Jesus being the Door? (Remember, He is not just *a door*, He is *the Door*.) Share this insight with someone else.

Key Ideas

Intergenerational Cupcake Project

A few ideas of how you can use your cupcakes to speak into the lives of other generations.

- 🔑 Cook up your cupcakes and give to a new mum.
- 🔑 Bake your cupcakes and give to a neighbour.
- 🔑 Take your baked cupcakes to a local nursing home and chat to the women there.
- 🔑 Cupcake making day – teach some younger girls how to make the perfect cupcake.
- 🔑 Cupcake drive as a fundraiser to send some younger girls off to a camp or a day out.
- 🔑 Encouragement cupcakes... attach a word of encouragement with a cupcake.
- 🔑 Make a batch of cupcakes and invite over some older and younger women from your church or community.
- 🔑 Sisterhood of the travelling cupcake – make your cupcakes... give as a gift to another generation with a letter encouraging them to pass on the gesture to another generation.

Cupcake costume, photos and instructions can be found on Pinterest.

Cupcake recipes, photos and instructions can be found on Pinterest.

<http://www.marthastewart.com/274461/our-favorite-cupcakes/@center/276944/cupcakes>

www.allrecipes.com/recipes/desserts/cakes/cupcakes

www.cupcakerecipes.com

If you do not have access to Pinterest please contact the Salvos Women team.



Key to a Positive Future

Carolyn Hallett

Once upon a time there was a wise man who would go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work. One day while walking along the shore he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man and what he was doing was not dancing.

The young man was reaching down to the shore picking up small objects and throwing them into the ocean. He came closer and called out 'good morning.'

'May I ask what it is that you are doing?' The young man paused held out his hand and replied - 'throwing starfish into the ocean.' I must ask, 'Why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?' To this the young man replied, 'The sun is coming up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they will die.'

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, 'Do you realise that there are miles and miles of beach and there are hundreds and hundreds of starfish, you can't possibly make a difference.' At this the young man bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it into ocean. As it met the water he said, 'It made a difference to that one.' (*PowerPoint on USB*)

The Salvation Army International leader General André Cox has joined the World Bank Group and more than 30 leaders from major world religions and heads of global faith-based organisations to launch a call to action to end extreme poverty by the year 2030. In April 2015, The Salvation Army (TSA) International Headquarters organised the first TSA Global Sponsorship Conference. It was an invaluable time to discuss issues, how sponsorship can be more effective and how we can be part of ending extreme poverty by the end of 2030. (*More details on USB*)

TSA Child Sponsorship Program helps provide the basic needs of food, education, shelter and basic medical care. Child Sponsorship changes the lives of thousands of children. Many are supported through primary and secondary schools, with some able to complete college/university studies so that they can use their God-given potential. The stories of how children's individual lives, along with their families and communities, have been changed are endless! (*See USB for stories*)

Why is child sponsorship important?

🔑 Child Sponsorship can change lives and give hope.

🔑 God's call to give change because children are our future.



- 🔑 Opportunity for children to develop in the context of their family and the community.
- 🔑 Children deserve the right to access opportunities for their future development.
- 🔑 All children have the right to the same opportunities and it's our responsibility to provide them.
- 🔑 Education to alleviate poverty.
- 🔑 Empower the life of a child in great need.
- 🔑 Children are integral to changing the world and bringing hope.
- 🔑 Part of The Salvation Army's mission is to work on behalf of the most vulnerable. *(See USB for details)*

Thank you Australia and New Zealand! To all our existing sponsors we say thank you – you are helping The Salvation Army to change lives every day.

Further information is available on following websites:

www.salvationarmy.org.au/childsponsorship – Australian Southern Territory

www.salvationarmy.org.nz/support-us/child-sponsorship – New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory

The link to a video clip produced by USA Central shows how and why sponsorship is important.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RyKvMxggJY#action=share



Key to a Prayer Jar

Cheryl Lynn Pethybridge

This is an idea that can be used in a variety of settings and themes. You can choose items that have been donated and you use them simply to bless the receiver or specifically purchased items that relate specifically to the theme.

See USB for picture of when I used this as a gift idea on prayer.

Items needed

- 🔑 Mason Jar
- 🔑 Twine
- 🔑 Tag - verse (*close the door or...*)

Suggested contents

- 🔑 Teabag.
- 🔑 Coffee bag.
- 🔑 Time out.
- 🔑 Candle.
- 🔑 Pen.
- 🔑 Notebook.
- 🔑 Book mark.
- 🔑 Recommended books.
- 🔑 S.O.A.P. - how to.
- 🔑 S.O.A.P. verse - Doors and Keys.
- 🔑 Key to a quiet place - *"He restores my soul."* (Psalm 23:3 NKJV)



Key to Building Community

Karan Ross

Song suggestions

SASB 940	<i>Christ is our cornerstone</i>
SASB 941	<i>Lord of Heaven</i>
SASB 943	<i>O God of love eternal</i>
Primary Chorus	<i>Build on the Rock</i>

Confidence in God and each other, courage for the task

The exile has taken its toll on God's people – many had taken their eyes off God and their faith had waned. It became easier to become part of the culture in Babylon than to remain faithful to God. This scenario sounds very familiar to us today. History teaches us much and we will look specifically at the book of Nehemiah and Paul's teaching on key themes of building a community, not as a group of individuals but as a community of believers who choose to focus on others.

Nehemiah was distressed when the reports came back to him that the walls of Jerusalem and the city gates were in a state of disrepair. He spent the next three to four months in prayer, confessing his sin and the sins of the nation to have a clean heart and for success in the task God was preparing him to do.

Nehemiah realised that asking permission to return to Jerusalem could lead to his death. He was in a privileged position to be able to speak to the King directly. God honours Nehemiah's courage when he is not only given permission to go to Jerusalem but is provided with all the materials needed to rebuild the wall.

Key to commitment to the task and cooperation with others

Nehemiah explains to the people, the state of the wall after he inspects it. In Nehemiah 2:18, he told them, *"How kind God had been and what the King had said. Immediately, they replied, 'Let's start building now!' So they got everything ready."* King Artaxerxes' had given permission for them to return to Jerusalem. When they arrive, Nehemiah divided the work into manageable sections. Each group completed their designated area, while some built, others stood guard to protect them and the task was completed.

They faced criticism and conflict

Nehemiah and his people encountered constant verbal criticism and conflict. A few examples can be found in Nehemiah 2:19; 4:1-5; 4:14 and 6:9, where we read how they faced ridicule, death threats, anger, greed,



discouragement, failing strength, rubbish, slander and conspiracy. These could have produced stumbling blocks for the people but they courageously continued with the task.

Nehemiah was confident of success (Nehemiah 2:20), he rebuked the negativity and he saw the task completed.

Confession

We read in Nehemiah 9, of how the people again confess their sin. Their prayer expresses the depth of remorse they felt after Ezra reads the Law of God to them. This was a sign of the community coming back to God in a more significant way.

Connection, Compassion and Caring

Nehemiah could have been consumed by the task of rebuilding the wall but he challenged the behaviour of the Officials and showed his concern for the vulnerable.

Compels us to complete the task

Nehemiah and his people give us a sound template of building community. Nehemiah's physical task was to rebuild the wall; He achieved that successfully but more importantly built a community of faith, compassion and hope. The key theme of building community is a constant plea of Paul in his letters as he continually encourages his readers to 'build each other up'.

The following verses reinforce the sense of community; of unity; of purpose:-

1 Thessalonians 5:11-24 *"So support one another. Keep building each other up as you have been doing. Brothers and sisters, we ask you to show appreciation to those who are working hard among you and those who are your leaders as they guide and instruct you in the Lord – they are priceless."*

I Corinthians 3:10-11 *"Like a skilled architect and master builder, I laid a foundation based upon God's grace given to me. Now others will come along to build on the foundation. Each serves in a different way and to build upon it with great care."*

Let our prayer be that we will demonstrate these attributes and the task of growing God's kingdom will be seen in our communities.



Key to having an Attitude of Gratitude

Christine Dickson

This can be adapted for most meetings or get togethers. It is focusing upon our attitude and how powerful that is. The world around us changes when we can approach life with an attitude that is filled with gratitude.

Bible Reading

Matthew 5:3-11 from The Message. (*This is an excellent translation for this reading.*)

What attitude did you put on today? When getting ready today, deciding on what to wear and how to do your hair did you consider what attitude you decided to wear? When the unexpected happens, how do you choose to respond? Happy, cranky, joyful, miserable, generous, stingy, grateful or selfish? So many choices. And the idea of choices is significant when it comes to attitude, because attitude is a choice.

There is a quote which says 'If you don't like what you are reaping, you had better change what you have been sowing.' J. Rohn. This applies to various parts of our lives but today we are going to consider how the attitude we sow will determine the gratitude we reap. **"Remember: A stingy planter gets a stingy crop; a lavish planter gets a lavish crop."** 2 Corinthians 9:6 (MSG). What lavish crop are you wanting to reap? Check out what you are sowing.

Quotes – (See USB PowerPoint)

Time to Celebrate

Give out some poppers or party blowers for the next part. This gives opportunity for people to think about what or who they are grateful for and celebrate.

Who likes to celebrate? Why do we celebrate? What are different ways you like to celebrate? Celebration is uplifting. Celebration is gratitude in action. Don't wait for birthdays or special occasions. Celebrate something everyday. Celebrate others, celebrate friends, celebrate families, celebrate accomplishments, celebrate each other, celebrate life. Is there someone here who deserves your celebration? So for the next few moments, why not think of something or someone that you would like to celebrate. Stand up, share with us, pop your popper or blow your horn and let's celebrate.

Great Attitude

When it comes to attitude, do you find yourself to be a more positive or negative type of person? Have you ever taken the time to think about it? You have probably heard of the phrase 'glass half full or half empty?' Well how you see the glass impacts how you see life. Let's have a look at them.





Matthew 5:3-11 is where we find the 'Be Attitudes'. They are a reminder that we are blessed, no matter what. It describes situations where we would likely feel anything but blessed and it may be difficult to be grateful. And yet, there it is – Finding joy no matter the circumstances, being grateful when the world would expect us not to be. It is not an attitude we can have in our own strength.

As we go through life, we are never alone. There are times we may wonder, but we are reminded through God's Word, to *"be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you"* (Deuteronomy 3:16 NIV). This promise does give us courage and through God's power we can have the attitude of Christ as found in Philippians 2:5-11.

What is the result of an attitude of gratitude? Generosity. *'Gratitude ALWAYS produces generosity. That's why grateful people are also generous people.'* (Robert Morris from Gateway Church in Dallas, USA). When one person shows generosity to another, we start to see the world change. It may only be for those two people, but as the attitude of gratitude is passed on and we see generosity grow, then we are witnesses to something amazing.

God is the supreme example of generosity. If we are to have an attitude like Christ, then having a generous spirit must be one of them. As we start each day, may we consciously put on an attitude of gratitude and pray God will lead us to opportunities to show His love, kindness and generosity to others. *"For God so loved the world that He GAVE His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16 NIV)

God bless you as you go out each day sharing the love of God with others that they may not perish, but have eternal life.

Song suggestions

Scripture in Song 41	<i>Freely, freely</i>
Scripture in Song 509	<i>Give thanks</i>
Scripture in Song 577	<i>Lord be glorified</i>
Praise & Worship 96	<i>Seek ye First</i>
SASB 48	<i>God's love to me is wonderful</i>
SASB 579	<i>He giveth more grace</i>
SASB 843	<i>Jesus loves me! This I know</i>
Hillsong	<i>Christ is enough</i>

There are some great clips available either to purchase or from YouTube. They are always good to include. Some suggestions would be:

🔑 The Stool.

🔑 God's Pie.

Key to our Inner Room

Christing Unicomb

Have you ever stood at a door – wondering? Maybe it was a solid closed door and you wondered what was behind it. Possibly you needed to unlock the door and did not have the key. Maybe it was a glass door and you wanted to enjoy what was on the other side.

On other occasions you may have shut the door to keep someone or something out. And then there might have been the time when you wanted to peek through a partly open door but were not quite courageous enough.

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” (Matthew 6:6)

This is about going into our inner room – our heart space – and having a place of solitude and quiet where we can be with God and be especially aware of His presence. Once I am in this place of solitude, I may encounter other doors.

The closed door

You may come across a closed door and need to ask – What is behind it? Is anybody there? Perhaps this is a door that you have closed to keep God out of that area of my life. Perhaps it could be a door that God has closed saying this is not the right place for you, or now is not the right time.

Maybe your closed door is very small and you don't think you will fit through it like 'Alice in Wonderland' when she was large and the door was small and she could not get through. Maybe your closed door is so large you wonder how you will ever open it – like the women who went to the tomb of Jesus and wondered how they would move the stone, only to find it had already been rolled away.

As you think about your relationship with God, are there closed doors that need to be opened to God? Are there doors God wants you to walk through but you haven't made the time, or you have avoided, or perhaps you don't know how to open?

Are there open doors that need closing – things, people, situations that God is asking you to move away from? As you ponder these questions, what do you need from God to enable you to enter, or to close, a door?

Knocking on the door

I need to knock on doors to let those on the inside know I am there. At other times friends and visitors knock on my door. When I think of



knocking on doors I wonder how hard I will I need to knock, for how long, whether anyone will hear me, and whether I am at the right door?

Jesus told a story about God's assured response when we come knocking. Leon Morris has commented like this *'Prayer to a loving father is effective. The fact that we are asking the Father shows that we know that what we are seeking is within the gift of God... and the imagery of knocking is of a closed door – that we cannot open. All who serve God know what it is to be faced with 'doors' that are fast closed, and it means a lot that prayer will result in the opening of such doors.'* (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1992).

In Revelation 3:20 we read where God stands at the door of our heart and knocks. He is waiting for us to respond and let Him in – are we listening, or does the noise of our daily life drown out the sound?

The Open Door

Part of our journey is coming to an open door – do I want to go through it, do I have the courage to venture forward, or am I ready to let God come into all the space in my life?

To the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: *"These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut..."* Revelation 3:7-8.

I am reminded of Mary Lennox in the story of *'The Secret Garden'*, where she discovers an old door and finds the key. She enters the neglected, overgrown garden and invests her energy into restoring it to a place of beauty. Christ, the lover of men and women stands and asks entry to the garden of our hearts and wants to transform it into a place of beauty. Will you let Him in?

Joyce Rupp has written a book called *'Open the Door – A Journey to the True Self'* which you might find helpful as you consider the doors of your life.

**"But when you pray,
go into your room,
close the door and
pray to your Father,
who is unseen. Then
your Father, who sees
what is done in secret,
will reward you."
(Matthew 6:6)**



Keys and Doors

Julie Moyler

Decor

Keys and padlocks. Pictures of doors.

Song suggestions

HLSB 4	<i>Swing wide the door of your heart</i>
HLSB 67	<i>Love the key to every home</i>
SASB 229	<i>Behold me standing at the door</i>
SASB chorus	<i>Ask! Ask! Ask!</i>

Game

Visit your local locksmith and obtain a bunch of old keys. Have a padlock ready with its key among the others. Give each person a key at the start of the meeting. At different intervals invite some people to come forward and try to open the padlock. The person with the correct key wins a prize.

Quotes (USB)

Message

Armed with the 'keys of the kingdom', the New Testament apostles went into the world with the gospel. They opened prison doors allowing a host of joyful captives to stream through the gates of salvation. Despite torrid tribulation and heartless persecution, city after city was set alight by the gospel. Do we possess these keys today? How do we recover these keys and open the flood-gates of restoration in these needy times?

Excerpt from the free resource – *Keys, Gates & Prison Doors* by Victor Hall and Murray Wylie.

http://www.keysgatesandprisondoors.info/books/keys_gates_and_prison_doors

Other Resources

Door – Video Clip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjyq-s--HNA>



Keys of Hope

Julie Alley

Scripture reference

"To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." (Proverbs 21:3 NIV)

Décor

- 🔑 Have tables around the room where women can go to sign up to help someone.
- 🔑 Write a letter of hope and love to a woman in a refuge.
- 🔑 Pray for someone they may know who needs help.
- 🔑 Trace their hand and put it on the wall as a sign that they will be bearers of hope in their community.
- 🔑 Set up a place where they can go and sit in a spot that could replicate a homeless person's shelter (*e.g. shopping cart filled with rubbish, covered by a tarpaulin, newspaper on the floor*).
- 🔑 Table set for afternoon tea with cards on it – get the ladies to commit to visit someone who is a shut in, etc... (*There may be many more ideas that you can think of.*)

Have a piece of paper on each table or wall near the station explaining what the activity is. Also explain each activity to the group before they begin this exercise.

At each of the stations that have been placed around the room, have a large cut out key with a word on it that explains that particular station. For example, the key for the afternoon tea table could be called the key of 'Friendship'; the key for the wall could be called 'Bearer of Hope'.

Introduction

There are so many people in our nation and around the world, who find themselves feeling they have no hope. This could be because they feel they don't have a voice, they feel insignificant, they have lost someone close to them, they are sick or they have lost their job. Living in circumstances such as this can be debilitating. As Christian women we can help each other in so many ways. We can be the bearers of hope.

God of Justice By Tim Hughes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nnqOI4mVKc>

Activity

Explain the stations that have been set up around the room. Give the ladies enough time to visit each station and complete the task set aside for

each. This is to be a time where they are not rushed, and can enter into the spirit of what is presented. Maybe play some music softly in the room. Be available to explain anything at any time.

Devotional

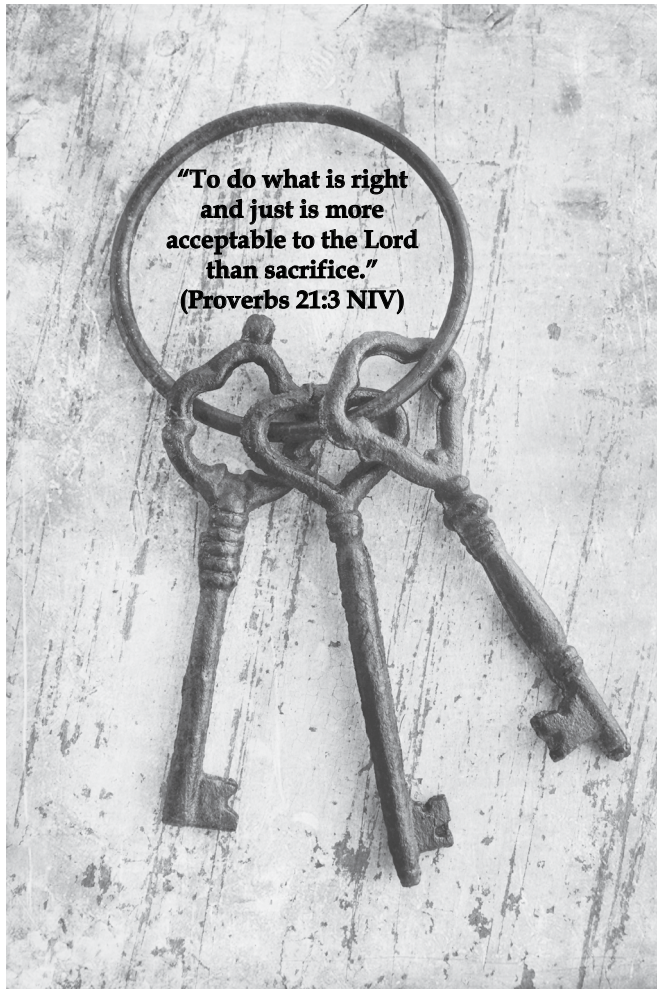
You may know someone who has a wonderful story of hope to share with the women.

Encourage the ladies to be Bearers of Hope. Give them a cut out key with the verse on it to take away. Let them know that hope lies within them. When we have Jesus living within us, we have hope. We are called to spread this hope around us just as Jesus did.

Show the *'Faces with no voices'* PowerPoint. (USB)

Prayer time

Have a time of prayer for each of the stations.



Keys to Abundant Living

Derek Hughes

Introduction

Jesus said: *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."* John 10:10 (ESV)

What does it mean to have life abundantly? What does abundant living look like? Let's look at some other things Jesus said and see if we can figure it out.

Prayer

Heavenly Father thank You because, as part of Your love for us, You want us to have an abundant life, guide us today as we explore Your word for what that means so that we may live lives that are truly abundant.

Song Ideas

SASB 458

Take time to be holy

SASB 525

Take my life and let it be (or various modern variations)

All to Jesus I surrender

Build Your Kingdom here

Bible Activity

Present the following Bible verses in a way that suits your context: e.g. PowerPoint, have members read, give each member a copy.

🔑 Matthew 7:1-5

🔑 Luke 6:27-36

🔑 Luke 12:22-31

🔑 John 13:34-35

Discuss each of these verses and extract the key message that Jesus is trying to make in each one and verbalise it in one or two sentences. Have the participants list these key points as 'keys for abundant living' they could list them on a provided piece of paper that has four big keys drawn on it. (See the example on USB) This activity will vary dramatically in time depending on the people involved.

Song ideas

A New Commandment I give unto you

That's how it is with God's Love

Summing up

Today's activity was designed to remind us that abundant living is about grateful living – appreciating what God has given us, not just physically but spiritually and if we are truly connected with God then that love will compel us to not only consider '*what would Jesus do*' but to share His attitude towards others.

It was adapted from the '*Jesus Said*' badge which is part of the curriculum for SAGALA which stands for Salvation Army Guards and Legion Activities; this is a life skill program for 5-18 year old whose purpose statement says: (*PowerPoint slide on USB*)

In other words – it aims to teach kids the keys to abundant living.

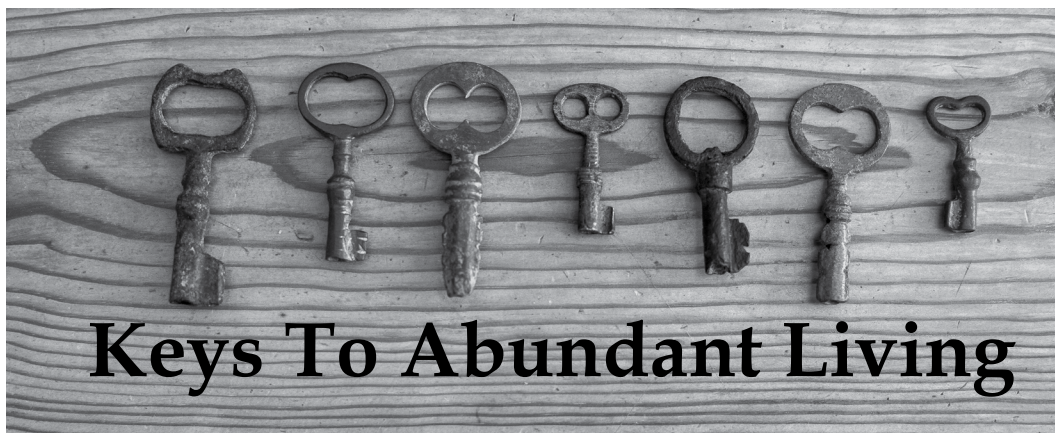
Song

Choose from suggestions already listed.

Closing Prayer

Suggested prayer points.

- 🔑 Opportunities to bless others.
- 🔑 Strength to model grace and forgiveness to others.
- 🔑 The wisdom to love each other as Christ loved us.
- 🔑 The SAGALA program, its leaders and the families it impacts.



Knock Knock – Who's There?

Cathryn Williamson

Member's Sharing

Knock, knock jokes.

Introduction

A door is an opening through which people enter and leave a room or building. The word also means the moveable frame used to open and close such an opening. This frame may be hung on hinges; it may slide back and forth in a groove, turn on a pivot like a vertical axle, or fold up like a concertina. There are doors that are divided into two parts, so that the upper half can be opened while the lower half stays closed. This type of door is popular in European cottages as the top part can be left open to allow people to see out and the bottom section remains closed to prevent animals coming in or young children getting out. Some caravans have these kinds of doors too.

The revolving door, divided into four panels, enables people to go in and out quickly and at the same time keeps the door opening closed. We use roller doors on our sheds and garages.

Doors can be made of many different materials – wood, glass, metal. Doors have sometimes been made of rare woods with carvings and decorated with precious metals and stones. The Bible tells us that workmen made the doors of King Solomon's temple of olive wood and gold. Church doors are often decorated with bronze on which beautiful designs and figures are created.

Song

SASB 241

Have you any room for Jesus

Humour: a young pastor had rung the doorbell at the home of one of his parishioners and was waiting to be received but no one came to the door. He sensed that someone was at home, but repeated ringing of the bell brought no response. As a final act he wrote Revelation 3:20 on the back of one of his calling cards and stuck it until the door. It read, "*Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in.*" Two days later the pastor received his calling card back in an envelope with a brief note attached that simply contained the text from Genesis 3:10, "*I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*"

Competition

Fill in the missing 'door' parts (*Handout on USB*)

Song

SASB Chorus 64 *Enter, enter right into my heart, Lord.*

Prayer

Thought

Opportunity may only knock once but opportunities are always waiting on your doorstep.

SASB 227 *Swing wide the door of your heart*

Looking at Doors

- 🔑 Door Bells
- 🔑 Door Mat or Scraper
- 🔑 Screen Door
- 🔑 Keys
- 🔑 Door knob
- 🔑 Door Stops

Hint

Make a draught and dust stopper, but instead of filling with sand or sawdust, open and roll the newspaper, push in and tuck in the ends. When not in use, take out paper, wash and fold away.

Competition

Some 'Door' sayings

Scripture Reading

Acts 12:5-17

Message

We live in a world full of doors, not just our own front door. Doors that close and doors that don't. Doors that open and doors that won't.

When there is a knock at your door, how do you react? If you are expecting someone then it's up and open. Sometimes the bell rings unexpectedly and we wonder who it will be... a salesman, or someone who doesn't quite know where someone lives? Do you peep through the hole in your door or pull back the curtain a little to see who it is first?

Let's look at the reading from Acts. I think about Peter standing in the street that night, waiting to be let in. Rhoda ran to the door to answer the knock but because she was so excited when she heard Peter's voice, she forgot to open it. She ran to tell the others, and they thought she was mad. But weren't they glad they opened the door to Peter's persistent knocking. On the other side, just waiting to come in, was a friend.

There are calls for us to open doors too. In the morning we see the beauty of the blue sky and sunlight and let the fresh air blow on our skin. Once I open the door ... the world is mine ... the dew on the grass, the birds singing in the bush, the cobweb looking like it's covered in diamonds.





*'He who wanders widest lifts
No more of beauty's jealous veils
Than he who from his doorway sees
The miracle of flowers and birds and trees.'* (John Greenleaf Whittier)

However, many a voice we hardly like to hear, asks us to open the door. It is the voice of need. Wherever we live there are people about us who need sympathy and love. This will involve opening both the door to our house and also the door of our heart. In our best moments we feel that the door of our heart is always open for someone in need, but sometimes we feel that we are asked to give too much.

Such is the world's advice.

But, there was One who flung it open wide – and He was crucified. Jesus still comes with those nail-print hands, and knocks at our heart's door too, *'May I come in?'*

I am sure you have all seen beautiful pictures painted by artists like Holman Hunt. Jesus stands and knocks. The doorstep at His feet is overgrown with bushes and weeds, and tiny tendrils are clinging to the door. They are pictures of our human hearts closed against the knocking of the Saviour.

The lock is on the inside. We may open, or we may refuse to let Him come in. It has been said that, *'God enters by a private door into every individual.'* That is the risk God took when He gave us free will. He won't force an entry but softly says, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hears My voice and open the door I will come in and will sup with him and he with Me."*

A copy of this picture of Hunt's was on a calendar. A mother and her son were looking at it after they hung it on the wall. The little boy called to his father, 'Look Daddy, Who is it, Daddy?' The father looked at the picture but gave no answer. The little boy was not put off. 'Who is it, Daddy?' At last the father blurted out, 'A man, of course.' 'What man, Daddy? What's his name?' The father then answered, 'Christ.' 'But what is He doing, Daddy?' 'Can't you see? He's knocking at the door.'

Then after a pause, the little boy said, 'Did He get in?'

I trust today that you have unlocked the door of your life to Jesus so that He is not left on the step, knocking. Allow Him to come in and share His grace with you and delight in each other's company.

Song

SASB 229

Behold me standing at the door

Benediction

O Jesus, Thou art standing
Outside the fast-closed door
Dear Saviour, enter, enter,
And leave us nevermore. Amen.

Let's Open the Door

Jan Condon

Songs

Be bold, be strong

Be strong in the grace of the Lord

I the Lord of sea and sky

Just where He needs me

Devotional

In Numbers 27: 1-11 – we read about the challenges that women faced and what they did with dignity to affirm their rights. It was an act of courage – they appeared before Moses and the other leaders of Israel.

The purpose of their visit was to protest against the unfairness of a legal requirement that favoured sons and not daughters.

At the time it was a patriarchal system where the law only recognised males. The culture did not favour women. They had no property or voice.

The women asked for the law to be changed. Because of their bravery a new law was enacted that said if the man had no sons then his inheritance could go to the daughters.

Without an inheritance their economic future was uncertain, they had no tribal identity as descendants of Abraham. Because they were born female they were left out, locked out and marginalised.

These five women faced being ostracised for being so bold as to speak out against the law and did not allow the culture to impede what was rightfully theirs, but they took up the challenge to try and receive it.

It was a real step of faith and courage and this one brave act suggests that their personal character was such that it added to their case and caused it to be taken notice of.

They had to speak up – they had no advocate to speak for them, but what they did have was a strong faith in the power and promises of God concerning the allocation of the land of Canaan. They also wanted to honour the memory of their father who had died and was obviously dear and precious to them. They wanted their father's name to be remembered.

This bold and courageous act by the five daughters of Zelophehad meant that every other female benefitted because the law was changed.





Doors need to open. The following three Scripture references can be discussed. They are promises or assurance to those who are prepared to do what they can to open doors.

Scripture

Isaiah 40: 29-31 (NLT)

Psalms 37:18 (NLT)

Proverbs 1:33 (NLT)

It takes courage:-

- 🔑 to open doors when they are slammed in your face
- 🔑 to continue on
- 🔑 to believe the door will open
- 🔑 to believe we can do all things through Christ

God does not want us to quit.

What are some doors we can try to open? Maybe have a discussion on how women can do this.

We can speak up against...

- 🔑 Injustice and unfairness
- 🔑 Violence
- 🔑 Abuse
- 🔑 Sexualisation of children and women
- 🔑 Slavery

Help...

- 🔑 Homeless
- 🔑 Unemployed
- 🔑 Disabled
- 🔑 Voiceless
- 🔑 Barren
- 🔑 Oppressed
- 🔑 The poor
- 🔑 Least, last, lost

To conclude the meeting, play the song, "Go Light your world" by Chris Rice <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtIIFJlxdUw>

Maybe ask women to sign up to be a light and open doors and ask them to

light a candle as a public witness that they will do something.

Other Ideas and Resources

- 🔑 Invite someone from the Territorial Social Justice or Freedom Partnership teams – to be a guest speaker.
- 🔑 Show part of the DVD '*Our People*' depicting the work of William Booth and the poor of London.
- 🔑 Invite someone who has been assisted by The Salvation Army to share their testimony eg. someone who has come through Recovery Services centre, or assisted by Streetlevel or Moneycare or Doorways

Download and show a testimony from MySalvos – <http://my.salvos.org.au/>



Locked in Love

Bindy Lupis

Target Group

Suitable for Home League, CAMEO or evening meeting. The devotional could also be used at a Life Group or Bible Study to introduce further study on covenant love.

Decor

Anything to do with love, padlocks or bridges. A bridge mercy seat would be fantastic if you have someone creative to make it. There is a PowerPoint slide included on the USB.

Songs

Source 186	<i>How deep the Father's Love</i>
Source 370	<i>Amazing Love</i>
Source 255	<i>I want to be out of my depth</i>
Source 602	<i>Your love keeps following me</i>
Hillsong	<i>The love of God can do</i>

SASB 43-55

Scripture

Deuteronomy 7:9. Have a variety of translations available for different women to look up. Alternatively print out a copy of the verses from the USB.

Story/Illustration

Have you ever heard of love locks? Spend a day in Paris and it won't take you long to notice an unusual feature on some of the bridges over the Seine River. Padlocks of every shape and size are locked to bridges, some completely covering the bridge. It would be easy to dismiss it as contemporary art or 'tres chic' but take a closer look and you will find that there is a story behind every single padlock... and even better it's a love story.

The history of love padlocks has been traced back to a Serbian tale from World War I. A school teacher named Nada fell in love with a Serbian officer named Relja. After they committed to each other Relja went to war in Greece where he fell in love with a local woman. Relja broke his engagement to Nada, leaving her devastated. Nada never recovered and it is thought that she died due to heartbreak. Young women, hearing her tragic story wanted to protect their own loves, they started writing down their names, with the names of their loved ones, on padlocks and affixing

them to the railings of the bridge where Nada and Relja used to meet. (Rubin, Alissa 27 April 2014). *"On Bridges in Paris, Clanking With Love"* New York Times, Retrieved 7 May 2015.)

Today love locks can be seen on bridges around the world but are particularly popular in Europe, especially Paris. Couples come from all around the world to lock their love in the most romantic city in the world. Tradition has it that if a couple writes their names on the padlock and attaches it to the bridge their love will last forever. They then throw the key into the river below as it is said the only way to break their love is to unlock the padlock.

Devotional

🔑 Have different women read out Deuteronomy 7:9 from the various translations.

Biblical scholars have often complained that the word *chesed* in the Hebrew Bible is difficult to translate into English, because it really has no precise equivalent in our language. Take a look at some of the different translations and words such as loving-kindness, mercy, steadfast love and sometimes loyalty, are used.

The word *chesed* seems to be used only in cases where there is some recognised bond between the parties concerned. It points towards the attitude that both sides of a covenant should have toward each other. It is more than kindness, more than loyalty and mercy. These words on their own do not convey the idea of the steadfastness and persistence of God's love for his covenant-people.

God's loving-kindness is that sure love which will not let Israel go. Even though they messed up time and time again, God remains faithful. He refuses to wash His hands of them – that is *chesed*.

It has been described by one blogger as “the consistent, ever-faithful, relentless, constantly-pursuing, lavish, extravagant, unrestrained, furious love of our Father God!”

It is often so hard for us to imagine a love like that. But the same *chesed* that was lavished on the rebellious Israelites is offered to us today. We mess up, we don't deserve it... but God loves us anyways. With *chesed*... He has put our initials on a padlock, locked it up and thrown away the key.

It's a forever love... Do you want to be loved with a love like that?

Response

You may have women in your group who struggle with the idea of God loving them – they may be experiencing hard times in their life that make this concept difficult. Be real about their struggle – don't dismiss it.

Create a mercy seat space

Provide padlocks and their keys (*can usually buy small ones from Bunnings/KMart*) that the women can come and lock onto the bridge (*or something else*) and then throw the key into a bucket of water.



Locked Up

Logn Edge

Theme

Today's meeting will give us the opportunity to think about those who are locked up, both literally and figuratively and offer us some possible responses to those situations.

Décor

Put some chains, padlocks and keys around the room or on the tables.

Guest Speaker: Three ideas

1. A chaplain from the Courts and Prisons ministry to come and speak about their work.
2. Someone who works with the anti-trafficking or modern slavery ministry.
3. Someone who has been through rehabilitation for addiction and is willing to share their story.

Sharing

There are some things it is good things to keep 'Locked up' *"Son, do what your father tells you and never forget what your mother taught you. Keep their words with you always, locked in your heart."* (Proverbs 6:20-21).

Ask the group to share some of the wise words they have kept 'locked in their heart.' These might be words of advice they received in the past or sayings they think are worth remembering. You might like to come prepared with a few quotes of wise advice yourself and ask the group to comment.

Input

Locked Up today and how we can help?

Explore with the group some of the ways in which people might be locked up today and some of our available responses to these situations. These might include:

Modern Slavery

There are a lot of resources on our own Territories websites

<http://endslavery.salvos.org.au> – This website includes 10 ways you can end slavery (USB). Copy this for everyone in the group and discuss the ideas presented there.

Another group working in this area is A21. More information and resources can be found at <http://www.a21.org/index.php>

Prisons Matthew 25 contains these challenging words from Jesus, *"I was in prison and you visited me."* The 2014 national census tells us that 'The number of prisoners in adult corrective services custody increased by 10% over the past 12 months to reach a ten year high of 33,791.'

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4517.0>

One ministry which seeks to offer hope to those in prisons across Australia is the *Kairos Prison Ministry*. They are an interdenominational Christian ministry reaching out to incarcerated individuals, their families and those who work with them; to bring sustainable meaning and hope in the place of loneliness, isolation and despair. Watch this short video about this important ministry. Pray for the leaders and those attending the Kairos courses. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNNSeyWEOS0>

Addiction

Addiction is the condition of being held captive to a particular substance or activity. Most people have heard of addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling but there are many other substances of activities which hold us captive and limit our freedom and joy. Read about the work The Salvation Army does in this area on <http://salvos.org.au/need-help/addiction-services/>. Alternatively you could watch this two minute clip about addiction for those wanting an introduction to this issue. <http://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment/what-to-do-if-your-adult-friend-or-loved-one-has-problem-drugs>

Devotions

Many people know the story of the great hymn of the church, 'Amazing Grace'. John Newton was involved in the Atlantic slave trade. After a violent storm at sea in 1748 he called out to God for mercy and that become a significant spiritual conversion moment for him at which point he wrote the first verse of his famous hymn. He did not give up the slave trade immediately but by 1755 he had given it up and started studying theology. The words to Amazing Grace were written in full in 1773 and it began to be sung to the tune we associate with it today in 1835.

A few years ago a contemporary song writer Chris Tomlin considered that well loved hymn and said *'I started thinking about where John Newton came from, the slave ships, and what God had done in his life. We're all made slaves to sin in our life, but God has set us free. He has ransomed us from our slavery. I just wanted to add this idea that I hope brings freshness to the heart of the song.'*

The slave trade still exists today and we need to pray and advocate for an end to this suffering. There are also those who are enslaved in other ways like depression, addiction or abuse. Let us pray and act to bring an end to all types of slavery in our world today.

Finish by watching the clip and listening to the song . The following YouTube link of the song includes images from the Movie 'Amazing Grace' about John Newton. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-4NFvI5U9w>





Song

Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)

Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found was blind, but now I see
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed

My chains are gone I've been set free My God, my Saviour has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy reigns Unending love, amazing grace

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Songs (admin. by EMI CMG Publishing) (ASCAP) Traditional, Chris Tomlin,
Louie Giglio.



Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)

Master Key to God's Riches

Jan Laws

Discussion – Interaction

Name types of keys – house key, key to the city, 21st birthday key, car key, key card etc.

Discuss some of the things that we keep under 'lock and key' – personal diary, jewellery, treasure box, our Will and Testament, passwords, money etc.

Information website about keys

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_\(lock\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_(lock))

New Ways to use Old Keys

<http://scraphacker.com/diy-keys/>

Activity

Word Search (USB)

Scripture Reading

Ephesians 1: 3-14 (PowerPoint on USB)

Devotional

I heard a true story about a man, who most of his life kept a small locked box safely in his house. When the time came for him to move from his home his family took possession of the little box. On discovering that the key to the box was missing they set it aside unopened. One day they decided that they would like to know what the box held so they went to a locksmith who was able to cut a key to open it. On opening the box the family found a collection of old coins, some of great value. What a find! If they hadn't taken time to find the key to access the box they would have never have known of the 'treasure' it contained.

Recently when I was sorting through a whole lot of keys that belonged to the house where I lived, I realised I had never used several of these so I found myself going from door to door to check out which key unlocked which door!

So often we miss out on the abundant blessings of God because we either don't know how to 'unlock' them or we just neglect to open them. You may know the frustration of trying to open a lock with a bunch of unmarked keys! It seems to take forever to find the right one. You try this key and then another – and of course the right key is always the last one you try! For many large buildings there is often one key that is called the





'master key'. This key is usually entrusted to one person who then has access to all the doors in the building.

Jesus is our Master Key. He is the only key to 'God's treasure box' of spiritual blessings and riches that God wants to shower upon His children. God intends for His children to experience all the richness of His wealth and blessings. There is no need to live in spiritual poverty. Through faith in Christ the vault of God's treasures are opened to us.

God alone is the 'Master Key' to our spiritual riches and blessings. Christ is the only Way to unlock them.

Ladies to participate at the end of the devotions as follows

Make up a bunch of keys as per template attached which has examples of the riches and blessings that God wants us to experience. Pass the bunch of keys around and have the ladies read a verse from each key.

☞ Forgiveness of sin

Ephesians 1:7 "He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins."

☞ Adoption into God's family

Ephesians 1:5 "God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ."

☞ The gift of Peace

John 14:27 "I am leaving you with a gift, peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."

☞ Life of Freedom

Galatians 5:1 "Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you."

☞ Hope

Hebrews 6:19 "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil."

☞ Eternal Life

John 3:16 "For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

☞ New Identity

Galatians 3:26 "For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

☞ Power of God

Ephesians 3:20 "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."

☞ Holy Spirit's Presence

Ephesians 1:13 "And when you believed in Christ, He identified you as His own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom He promised long ago."



Victory

1 Corinthians 15:57 *"But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Conclusion and prayer

Jesus is the Master Key to our riches. We unlock them through faith and trust in Him.

Give the ladies a set of the keys each to take home as a reminder of this.



Open the Door – the Light of the world is waiting

Christine Ivors

Songs

SASB 179

How Marvellous

Bless the Lord Oh my Soul – 10,000 Reasons – Matt Redman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXDGE_IRI0E

Shine Jesus Shine – Graham Kendrick

My life is in your hands – Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIc_cEH_EPU

Carry your Candle – Chris Rice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wN5SILxm55Q>

Décor

Keys of all shapes and sizes, candles, lanterns – symbols from the Holman Hunt Art work.

Participation

Ask ladies to closely look at the painting of 'The Light of the World' – and name the elements or symbols within the painting either say them out loud or write them on a sheet as a competition.

Read 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 that person, and they with Me."*

Some questions to ask after reading Revelation 3:20:

1. What do you think the room looks like on the other side of that door?
2. Do you think the door will be opened?
3. How does Jesus feel standing there?
4. Does the person inside know it is Jesus outside?
5. What will Jesus want to do if/when He is invited inside?
6. How will that feel to the person inside?
7. How does the painting make you feel?

Background Information

It is helpful to know some of the background behind the Holman Hunt Painting – 'The Light of the World'.

'The Light of the World' by William Holman Hunt comes from Jesus'



description of His mission to be *'Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (John 8:12)

It is documented that Holman Hunt painted three versions of this image one of which you can see at Keble College Oxford (1851-1853), Manchester City Art Gallery (1851-1856) and St Paul's Cathedral (1900-1904). The most famous is the St Paul's version, which is usually the version you see reproduced. Holman Hunt said that working on the first version of the painting had made him become a Christian. The final version is life-sized which shows the image of Jesus knocking on a door. This idea is taken straight from the Scripture we read earlier from Revelation 3:20.

The door at which Jesus is knocking is the door of the human heart – you can see that there is no handle on the outside, because Jesus can only 'come into a person's heart' if *they* open up and let Him in. Apparently the door has been shut for a long time as weeds are growing up all over it. The bat flying around in the darkness is a symbol of ignorance or some say it represents how late it was. Jesus wears a crown of thorns to remind us of His death and sacrifice on the cross. He carries a light, but Jesus is the light and is shining (halo). The stars and crescents on the lantern show Jesus is the king of the whole world. www.ely.anglican.org/education/schools/collective_worship/pdf/HolmanHunt.pdf

Personal Response

This painting, while full of symbolism, gives us a great opportunity to reflect on whether we have kept Jesus knocking at the door of our heart. Maybe He has been trying to gain access personally or in members of your family. To respond to the Light of the World would mean transformation, no matter how long He has been knocking at the door. Please respond to Jesus by...

- a. Reflecting on each symbol of the Painting and allowing Jesus to show you how to respond.
- b. Open the door of your heart and let Him in. You might like to light a candle to symbolise His presence. You might like to take a key (*old keys can be purchased from family stores and op shops*), which symbolises you have unlocked the door of your heart.

Have opportunity for prayer – especially for family members away from the Lord.

Celebration of new life lived with the Light of the World.



Prayer – Open, O doors and bolts of my heart

St Dimitri Rostov

Open, O doors and bolts of my heart,

That Christ, the King of Glory, may come in.

Come, O Christ my light, and illumine my darkness.

Come, my life, and revive me from death.

Come, my Physician, and heal my wounds.

Come, Flame of divine love, and burn up the thorns of my sins.

Kindling my heart with the flame of your love.

For you alone are my King and my Lord.



Prayer is the Key but Faith Unlocks the Door!

Shari Fowler

Decor

- 🔑 Set tables with nice table cloths
- 🔑 Tables – use Prayer Jars, old door handles, locks and keys (USB)
- 🔑 Have displays of Prayer Jar and/or Faith/Prayer Blocks and/or Floral basket (USB)

Song

SASB 991

'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

Message

I have had the privilege of serving as an officer for the past 23 years. Sixteen of those years were in corps work both domestically (USA Western territory) and overseas. I have spent the past seven years of my ministry in The Adult Rehabilitation Centers (ARC) working with people seeking help with substance abuse and other social handicaps. Daily I see men and women, young and old, all walks of life, every socio-economic background, various races and cultural backgrounds come through the doors.

They are “tore up from the floor up.” Broken hearted, physically unwell, desperate for healing and The Salvation Army is often their last ditch effort to find hope for change. It is heartbreaking and exhilarating to receive them in the name of Jesus Christ. Heartbreaking for the struggles and pain they have experienced but exhilarating because we know the answer to their every need.

What I have found throughout my ministry, whether in corps or the ARC, is that people are people. Regardless of who any one is, where they come from, what they have done, what they are up against, we are all limited in our capacity to deal with all that life may bring our way. Some have more education or skills, others have more resources or support, but the reality is that outside of Jesus Christ, we all fall short at times in our ability to manage all of life's twists and turns. The truth of our limitations as human beings is a universal condition.

- 🔑 So what do we do when expectations exceed our ability to meet them?
- 🔑 What do we do when our strength runs out before the task is done?
- 🔑 Where do we turn when our brightest ideas do not answer the questions we have?
- 🔑 To whom can we go when the pressures and demands of life are greater than our ability to manage them?





Many turn to other people, family or friends. Some turn to government agencies or programs for temporary assistance. Others turn to drugs or alcohol, sex, gambling, eating, excessive shopping or other means of escape to cope with what they feel powerless to control or handle. Any of these options may seem adequate for a time, but are always second rate at best and often lead to other hassles, hurts and problems.

2 Chronicles 7:14-15 tells us that if we will humble ourselves, seek God, turn from our wicked ways, then He (God) will hear us and answer our prayers. He will forgive us and rescue us from the situations in life that have overwhelmed us. Too often we rely on ourselves or others to try and meet our needs. We scheme, plot, plan and put together a course of action never even considering that God Himself has a plan for our lives. Prayer is the key to finding true and lasting help for our lives. God invites us to trust in Him and rely on Him for all that we need. He promises to hear us when we pray and to answer us when we put our trust in Him.

Prayer, honest and open communication with God, is the key to change. It is the key to hope. It is the key to victory in our lives. But, prayer must be accompanied by faith. A firm belief that the one to whom we pray is listening, cares and has the ability and willingness to answer our prayers.

1 John 4:4-5 tells us that as His children we can have the victory over the evils of this world. We are promised the victory in the battles we face if we believe (*have faith in*) Jesus Christ. He makes a way when there seems to be no other way. He gives us that extra 'oomph' when we have exhausted all that we are and have used up all that we have.

Prayer is the earnest seeking of connection and communion with God. Faith is the absolute belief that God is who He says He is and can do what He says He can do.

Hebrews 11:6 says that it is impossible to please God without faith. If we are going to come to Him (*through prayer*) then we must believe that He is the real deal and that there is a reward, a blessing waiting for us if we are sincere in our seeking. Prayer is the key, but faith unlocks the door to a relationship and abundant life is Christ.

- 🔑 Are there areas in your life where you feel inadequate?
- 🔑 Are there challenges and struggles you are facing for which you don't have the strength or knowledge to handle them?
- 🔑 Where has your life gone sideways or slipped out of control?

God knows all that you are and all that you are going through. He is faithful and He is able to meet you right where you are. Trust Him. Have faith. Call out to Him. Pray for your needs and have faith that He will make a way for you.

Prayer time

Share requests and pray with one another. Write requests on slips of paper to be put in prayer jars. (*Craft USB*)

SASB chorus 73 *In Thee O Lord, do I put my trust*

Craft – Prayer Jars (*USB*)

Shut the Door

Cleyns Fairhurst

Songs

SASB 227 chorus *Swing wide the door of your heart*

SASB 250 *Love of love so wondrous*

SASB chorus 64 *Enter, enter right into my heart, Lord*

PowerPoint (USB)

Movie Clip

View a movie clip from 'Monsters Inc.' where various doors are used as access into the rooms of children. The monsters harness children's fear, yet by the end of the movie they learn to collect laughter as their power source instead. Could be used to illustrate contrast of dealing with fear and having God's Spirit replacing with joy.

The history and stories depicted on doors is fascinating. Let us look at the doors of the Florence Baptistery completed in 1128 and the more modern Green Door.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence_Baptistry

Devotional

'Shut the Door' can be a firm command, a polite request, or a shouted order. Why does a door need to be shut? To keep out a draught or insects in summer. A door signifies an entrance. Shut the door to self-pity, gossip, and negativity.

In 2 Kings 4, the woman with a small amount of oil and a large debt, came to Elisha to seek help. He told her to send her sons around the town to collect all the empty jars possible (v 4-5) *"then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put to one side. She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring."*

She not only shut the door to her house – she shut the door to a negative attitude. She could have said, 'What's the use?' By obedience to the command to shut the door she *opened the door* to blessings.

The Shunamite woman's son died (v21). *"She took him into the prophet's room, laid him on the bed and shut the door"* before going to find Elisha. When he arrived (v33) *"he went in, shut the door on the two of them and prayed to the Lord."*





The door was shut to give privacy. He shut the door so he could concentrate on the task before him, and keep out any negativity, or curious onlookers. The result was great blessing. Metaphorically shut the door on unhappy memories, 'What ifs', self-accusations, and regrets.

In Matthew 6 Jesus taught the disciples about personal prayer and the importance of being alone with God. (v6) *"When you pray, go into your room, shut the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."*

Song clip 'Shut De Do' www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvyjqRptRrU

Scriptural Reference

James 4:7 *"In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."*

Ephesians 4:26-27 *"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*

A physical shut door leads into the place of private prayer and opens the door to communications with God.

- 🔑 Open the door to joy by shutting out self-pity
- 🔑 Open the door to encouragement. Encourage others and accept encouragement when it is offered to you.
- 🔑 Open the door to peace by closing doors to fear and worry.
- 🔑 Open the door to positive thinking.

2 Chronicles 29:3 *"In the first month of the first year of his reign, Hezekiah opened the doors of the temple of the Lord and repaired them."* Hezekiah knew the value of placing God first in the life of the nation, and individuals.

Job 31:32 *"No stranger had to spend the night in the street, for my door was always open to the stranger."* Hospitality extends open doors in a good way. There are some strangers that would not be welcome yet strange thoughts are given access too easily.

Acts 5:19 *"The angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out."*

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."*

When lives are opened to Christ, He opens doors of opportunity. He helps shut doors to harmful things and opens doors on things that bring encouragement, positivity and serenity.

- 🔑 Have you shut the door on God? Or opened the door of your life to Jesus?
- 🔑 Is God requesting you shut the door on something from your past? And asking that you open your life for Him to come in?

Revelation 3:8 *"See I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut".*

God's open door is the door of salvation and His promise of eternal life. Shut the doors that lead in the wrong direction and open those directed by God.

Revelation 3:20 is often used evangelically and presented as a personal request for willingness to allow Jesus entry into a life.

Holman Hunt's painting *'The Light of the World'* is inspired by Revelation 3:20's metaphor of Christ knocking at the door of the Laodicean church.

www.explore-stpauls.net/oct03/textMM/LightWorldN.htm

It is addressed to the church of Laodicea who had been described as lukewarm, poor, blind, naked, materialistic, opinionated, image conscious and as having misplaced pride. Yet Jesus is knocking, wanting to go in and share their hospitality.

Revelation 3:15-16 *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of My mouth."*

The city of Laodicea is located in the Lycus River Valley. The water that was piped to Laodicea was rich with calcium which over time would cause the pipes to clog. The engineers designed the aqueduct with vents covered with stones that could be removed periodically for cleaning. Archaeology shows Laodicea had an aqueduct that carried water from hot mineral springs about five miles south, which would have become tepid before entering the city. The nearby towns of Hierapolis had hot springs and Colossae had pure water. It is often suggested that 'hot' is good and 'cold' is bad (neutral or lacking in zeal or indifferent) in spiritual matters. This is true in regard to faith, yet in this passage the imagery suggests that physically both hot and cold water have their usefulness and purpose. Jesus' condemnation of the city's church for lukewarmness rebukes not their lack of fervour but their lack of effectiveness.

Revelation 3:17-18 *"Because you say, 'I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing;' and don't know that you are the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked; I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich; and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see."*

The words attributed to the Laodiceans indicate an over-confidence in regard to spiritual wealth. They were unable to recognise their own bankruptcy. The city was known for its worldly wealth.

Outline Based on material supplied by Jan Fryer-Knowles, printed in Programme Aids for Home Leagues/Home League Fellowships July-December 2000 Inter-Islander a resource for Women's Ministries The Salvation Army New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory.



Standing on the Threshold

Jodie Pethybridge

Decor

- Have a variety of doormats displayed throughout the space (*since these are usually what we pass over at a threshold*).
- Before, during or after the gathering you could have a mini pamper session during which participants have a foot spa. (*These will need to be borrowed from people*).
- Have a couple of volunteers offer to do pedicures (*a simple file, buff and polish – gloves recommended*) throughout the gathering.

Song suggestions

Hillsong *Your servant* (Album Rolled Away)

Planetshakers *Send me* (Album Phenomena)

SASB 865 *Send me Lord*

SASB 170 *They shall come from the east*

Definition of threshold (*See USB for PowerPoint*)

Bible Reading

Luke 2:25-32 (NRSV)

Message

Simeon came into the temple. Picture him turning to stand at the threshold of the temple doors. He is old and his hips ache. Maybe you know the pain and discomfort he feels. His vision is blurred and his hands are calloused, frail and translucent. Veins run thickly along his forearms. He feels the heat through his robes and longs for the relief of the cool interior.

He pauses to stand at the doorway and as his eyes adjust, Mary and Joseph ascend the steps, clutching a child by the hand. The child, a boy, looks around, stumbling as he does so and he trails slightly behind his mum and dad. He gets distracted by a grasshopper crossing his path and deviates to chase it. His mother gently leans down to take his hand and guide him back toward the man standing in the doorway. He pulls a face at his mother but complies with her direction and falls in step behind her. Without any introduction Simeon knows in whose presence he now stands.

He took the child into his arms and praised God. Simeon had waited for that day – to usher that child, the child of God, into the temple. There would have been many things that the Lord accomplished through Simeon. But that moment, was perhaps the most divine and sacred. His

final purpose had been accomplished.

Metaphorically or literally there are many instances during which we stand at a threshold: as we speak to our neighbours at the fence, the delivery man at the front door, parents at the school gate or children as we ready them for bedtime, as we greet walkers in the early morning light or stand behind someone at the bank. Like Simeon we too have the opportunity, as we stand at these thresholds, to welcome others into the presence of God.

Who is it that we might knowingly or unknowingly be called upon to usher into the presence of God? We might be able to call them to mind immediately or less swiftly for some of us. We can make the most of every opportunity presented to us, or even create them, as we encounter others. This threshold may indeed be the place or point of beginning where we can lead them to an encounter with Jesus over the threshold from the kingdom of this earth into the kingdom of God's beloved son.

Guest speaker

A pharmacist or podiatrist may be willing to come along and give a 10-15 minute presentation on general foot care. This might include natural remedies, posture, products available and general health issues that may affect our foot care.

Demonstration – Foot Washing

I call this a demonstration as some people may find being involved in this presentation uncomfortable. Therefore it may prove more suitable for the group to have two people (or a couple of pairs) demonstrate foot washing as Jesus did in John 13:12-17 with a short explanation of its symbolism.

Prayer time

Encourage an open prayer time where people pray for those who are yet to discover Jesus. These may be people from home, friends, acquaintances or neighbours. Specifically pray for boldness to take hold of the opportunities God gives us to lead others into his kingdom and that we would have eyes to be aware of these opportunities.

In a moment of resolve and visual/demonstrative prayer one could invite members of the group to stand on a door mat as they pray. They can imagine, in their mind, that they are guiding the person over the threshold as they pray.

Alternatively open the prayer time up for general prayer requests and intercession (healing, comfort, health and joy etc).

Activity

Cinquains and Antiphons (*See USB for instructions for individual use*)

This is an exercise in writing our prayers with a familiar threshold or doorway in mind.

We walk through many thresholds throughout the day. The more active we are the more doorways we are likely to pass through or, we may pass



through one or two repeatedly. We're more likely to cover some distance throughout our homes or visit different places throughout our day as well. The threshold may be from one room to another (dining room to kitchen, garage to hallway). We may pass over from a neighbour's front porch into their foyer. We might enter from the heat of the outdoors to the air conditioned comfort of a library. Whatever the threshold might be, bring one to mind that you frequently pass. While we bring the threshold to mind, we're also drawing to mind the presence or character of God.

Cinquans and Antiphons are simple poems or psalms that draw our attention to a particular theme or topic. They are designed to be simple and uncomplicated. Encourage your people not to assess or critique their work. It is authentically their own and a personal expression of the presence of God in their life.

Thought for the day

The following extract has been taken from Bishop Phillip Newell's *Body Search* (1993, pp22-23, AIO Press, Sydney).

Reflection

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation..."
(Isaiah 52:7)

We hear of beautiful eyes, beautiful hands, beautiful faces, even a beautiful nose, but rarely do we speak of beautiful feet.

Perhaps that is because we think of our feet primarily as a means of transport. The feet of those who serve God as His messengers are described as beautiful. Beautiful are the feet of God's messengers who usher in peace where the world knows only conflict and discord. Beautiful are the feet who bring Good News to a society whose daily diet so often consists of disaster and disappointment, failure and frustration, recession and depression. Beautiful are the feet which carry the announcement of God's purpose of salvation, which proclaim that the Lord reigns. How much of our feet time and feet energy do we put into being beautiful feet? We spend a deal of time, even expense, making sure about our face and hair. What about our feet?

Our feet take us to those who know nothing of God's love in Jesus Christ. In fact Jesus tells us to leave the ninety nine and let our feet take us to the one who is lost. In this decade of evangelism we are discovering all over again what that means.

Our religious feet take us to worship and Bible Study and Prayer Group and the like, but they seem to have lost their way when it comes to entering the community of non-believers.

All around us people need peace, Good News and salvation. They will only experience these things when we use our feet to take us to them, to move amongst them, to be alongside them.

Prayer

Lord, I want to be your feet, bearing your love and light to the world; as I come alongside those who do not know you, may my feet grow more beautiful as the messengers of your peace and Good News and salvation.

Resolution

To ensure that the very feet which take me amongst fellow Christians also carry me to those who do not share my faith.

Visual presentation/reflection

How Beautiful by Twila Paris

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqO4PZ9iaKA> – including scenes from The Passion of the Christ. Some scenes may upset some viewers. For those who might possibly find offence at the graphic nature of Christ's death the following has lyrics only;

How beautiful by Twila Paris

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJM0hFvz_64

Close – A Franciscan Benediction

May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in the world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor. Amen.



The Fridge Door

Rowena Smith

The fridge door is commonly used as a place people put things they want to remember. This outline provides various ideas which consider the theme 'Remember'.

Decor Ideas

1. If possible obtain a small bar fridge. Ask ladies to bring a magnet from home to attach to the fridge.
2. Alternatively, display a replica of a fridge. Obtain a discarded large fridge box from a white goods store. Paint the box white, cut open one side so it represents a door. Attach a variety of things to the front, for example, business cards, photos, kids artwork, lists, promotions for special vouchers like pizza deals. Stand a small bookcase inside the box to represent shelves. Several food items can be placed on the shelves to be used later in the competition.
3. Bunting. Use the templates provided on the *USB* to print some bunting to string across the table at the front of your group. There are two styles.
Option A – print in colour onto white card.
Option B – print in black onto five different coloured sheets of card.

Suggestion – Some great material might be sourced from the book by Christian author Martha Bolton entitled '*It's Always Darkest Before the Fridge Door Opens*', available from Amazon. It is written in a similar humorous style to Barbara Johnson's books. It contains numerous life situation stories that women can relate to. Perhaps one of these stories could be used as a devotional during the meeting. Visit the website, click on the image of the book which opens to provide an opportunity to read one of the stories... (*This might help you decide if you want to buy the book.*) It could become a useful resource to use in other women's meetings.

http://www.amazon.com/Always-Darkest-Before-Fridge-Opens/dp/076420307X#reader_B00B85AGKU

Introduction

See *USB* for script and PowerPoint.

Participation

1. Seek answers from the ladies to compile a list of things that people attach to their fridge door. (*See USB for a comprehensive list but you might be able to add even more*)
2. Give ladies advanced notice to bring along a fridge magnet and share the story.



3. **Scripture Memorisation** – some ladies may bring magnets with scripture. Invite ladies to share verses they have memorised. Then teach a memory verse. *See USB for a suggestion with PowerPoint slide to help in the memorisation.* There are two verses that can be used. Psalm 111:4-5 is a good text to put on the fridge as it speaks about God providing food. *See USB for a template to make a fridge magnet which can be distributed to each member.*
4. **Memory Game.** This would occur later in the meeting after the ladies have shared the story about their fridge magnet. Put all the magnets in a bag. Ask someone to reach into the bag and select a magnet then try to remember who owns it. Repeat several times.

Songs

SASB 724 Chorus *No more! no more!*

SASB 98 (especially verse 2) *Tell me the old, old story*

SASB 371 *O what wonderful, wonderful day*

SASB Chorus 190 *Never to be remembered anymore*

If you do not have a pianist, this link will provide the lyrics and music to a song by Tommy Walker, We Will Remember.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzoxsxsIMCE>

Alternatively, you could play the YouTube clip of the Prestonewood Choir and Orchestra singing 'We Will Remember.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkpLN4RAK7M>

Vidzo Clips

Bear Raids Fridge. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DU2qAiYLbp8>

Resourceful Dog raids the fridge. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZZtKnKTJOI>

Play the scene from Mrs. Doubtfire where she opens the fridge and pushes an iced cake into her face. Use this link or google videos 'Mrs. Doubtfire loses her face'. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20MGAOQeQyc>

Competition/Game

Have you ever forgotten where you put something only to find you left it in the fridge? We can all do with some exercises to test our memory. (See USB)

Taste and See (and Remember)

Prepare an easy to remember recipe for the ladies to sample.

Suggestion – Five cup loaf which contains five ingredients each measuring one cup. (See USB for recipe handout to print for each person)

Participation – Ask ladies if they can share any recipes they cook from memory. Distribute a fridge magnet to each person with the Scripture verse Psalm 34:8. (USB)



Educational Segment

Include a short summary of 'Foods to boost memory'. There are numerous websites. www.besthealthmag.ca has some good recommendations.

Humour

Several jokes could be read from the church bulletin produced by the Tumut Catholic Church. This bulletin is called 'The Fridge Door' presumably because people often attach their church newsletter to the fridge. (USB)

Devotions

(USB for three options)

Other Ideas

Video Clip. There are various ways to lock a fridge. See this link that demonstrates a lock and key attachment. <http://www.lockthefridge.com/>

Funny Video Clip. Play this short 4 minute clip 'Joey and The Fridge' from the sitcom FRIENDS. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3sED_87JKA

Short Story. 'Fridge Art becomes Family's Scrapbook' by All Batt in Country Magazine. This is not very long and connects with the theme that the fridge door is a place where things are remembered. <http://www.country-magazine.com/short-stories/funny-stories/fridge-art-becomes-familys-scrapbook/>

Book Review. If there is someone in your group who likes to read, perhaps they might like to review the book entitled 'Life on the Refrigerator Door' by Alice Kuipers. For an overview see this link. http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/256003.Life_on_the_Refrigerator_Door

A YouTube video also shows a summary of this book. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EebFpj0uGZU>

Education. Watch this short clip (1.45min) by Justin Gmoser to learn how best to store things in your fridge. <http://www.businessinsider.com.au/how-arrange-food-your-fridge-groceries-2015-4>

Make a fridge magnet. Your DHQ might have a badge making machine - (South Qld Youth Department has one that can be lent to corps in that Division). In South QLD materials required are sold by the Youth Dept at cost price. Purchase the magnetic kit from Badge-A-Minit. Provide a variety of graphics with quotes or scripture for ladies to choose from. A template is included on the CD to assist with the size required for your graphics. The process of using the machine takes about one minute. Ladies might like to stay after the meeting to do this activity. Make a larger quantity and sell as a fund-raiser.

Resources and ideas (See USB)

- 🔑 5 Cup fruit loaf
- 🔑 Competitions and Games
- 🔑 Devotions

- 🔑 Introduction Script for PowerPoint
- 🔑 Jokes about Forgetfulness
- 🔑 List of things attached to fridge door

Refrigerator Games

- 🔑 PowerPoint
- 🔑 Scripture Memorisation
- 🔑 Template for fridge magnet activity
- 🔑 Word puzzle competition template
- 🔑 Taste and see magnet
- 🔑 Bunting Template A & B instructions with pages 1-5



The Key to Happiness

Steven O'Neill

Songs

SASB 10	<i>Joyful, Joyful we adore</i>
SASB 244	<i>If you want it – it's yours</i>
SASB 722	<i>Happy we who trust in Jesus</i> <i>'Happiness is the Lord' by Ira Stanphill</i>

Introduction

What makes you happy? To involve those present write responses up on a poster sheet or whiteboard.

Did you know there is an 'International Day of Happiness?' It is a recognised annual day on the United Nations event calendar.

🔑 www.un.org/en/events/happinessday/

🔑 www.dayofhappiness.net/#happiness

🔑 Google search 'Worlds Happiest Countries'

Would you be surprised that Australia came in 10th place? You could build this chart into a feature of the meeting.

🔑 What are they measuring?

🔑 Once countries only looked at hard economic statistics as a measure of success. What countries came in higher than Australia?

Bible Reading

Matthew 5: 3-11 (GNB)

Visual

Draw a key, trace a front door key, enlarge the image on the photocopier so that it is large enough to use as a visual for the group. Make three copies.

1. On one key write the word 'Godliness'
2. On the second key write the word 'contentment'
3. On the third key write the word '= happiness'

Attach them onto the wall or a poster board. There is the key to happiness! Key Verse *"Godliness with contentment is great gain."* (1 Timothy 6:6)

The key to happiness – Godliness plus contentment.

Talk outlining

1. Godliness: If we want to be truly happy we need to be a godly person. Godly means to live as God would have us live. *"Take delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart."* (Psalm 37:4)
2. The world works hard to make us discontented with our life. Advertisers work especially hard to make us discontented with what we don't have. They are trying to make a desire within us to want what we don't have. Yet let's always remember what we do have, what God has given us.



The Lost Key

Beatrice Kay

Welcome

A Key shape invitation

Songs

HLSB 107

The word is the way

HLSB 67

Love at home

Keep Singing

Happiness is to know the Saviour

Quiz

Types of keys or words with the word key in it.

Answers

1. Monkey
2. Honkey
3. Monkeying
4. Key
5. Keys
6. Keying
7. Keystone
8. Keystones
9. Keyboard
10. Keyboarding
11. Key boards
12. Keystrokes

Poem

Thank you God for everything – Helen Steiner Rice (*Heart Gifts*)

www.karensopotryspot.blogspot.com.au/2008/08/thank-you-god-for-everything-by-helen.html

Scripture Reading

Luke 15:8-10

Chorus – You are the key to my living (Author unknown - Tune Idelwise)

Life has come, Life's begun.

He's the key to my living

Gone my sin, Christ within.

Promise of His forgiving.

Doors of Love open wide for me.

Joy is mine in Giving.

Christ Has come, life's begun.

He's the key to my living



Devotional

The Lost Key

Several years ago when my children were young, we loved our tenting holidays. We stayed in a caravan park in which we need to pay a deposit for the key to the amenities in the park.

During our stay one of our boys lost the key. We didn't want to go to the owner to get another one as this would cost an extra \$25 so my husband said 'let's pray that we find it.' In our family everything went back to leaning on God in all situations, so we prayed.

'Let's wait until night when it is dark', said Noel my husband, 'we will walk in a row together, the six of us, and we will search for the key. We will take a torch and the key will shine.' So this is exactly what we did and the key was found near the tree roots.

Wow, another answer to Prayer!

This story reminds me of the Lost Coin (Luke 15:8-10). There are a variety of clips of the parable of the Lost Coin on YouTube.

www.youtube.com/results?search_query=parable+of+the+lost+coin

Finding the coin was important to the woman and she did all she could to find it. Then she saw something sparkle just like in my story. She was so excited. Just as this coin was important to this lady we are important to God. Because He loves us with an everlasting love, Jesus is the light that flickers in the dark.

This story also shows us of God's love, no matter how much we are in a dark place in our lives He is there for us. We may be lost but we can be found. Relax; God is on the trail of the lost, He will not give up until we have found our way.

"Praise be to the Lord for He has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield, my hearts trusts in Him. And He helps me my heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise Him. The Lord is my strength of salvation and His anointed one." (Psalm 28:6-8)

If you have faith as a grain of a mustard seed, nothing shall be impossible unto you.



The Open Door of Welcome

Astrid Herring

Scripture Passages

Leviticus 19:34 *"The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God."*

Luke 15 : 11-22 – A Lost Son

Our first door in Moscow was anything but open when we arrived at our new apartment as, having carried our luggage up the inner stone staircase, we were faced with a large iron door with two separate locks needing two different large metal keys to open it. The first you turned clockwise twice and the other, anti-clockwise once. Then, when that door was opened, another door was immediately in front of your face requiring a separate set of keys.

Later enquiries about this 'double dooring' revealed that these were common in Russia. They were made to give the householder a few extra minutes to hide anything incriminating before an unwelcome official broke their way in. (*I was never sure if this was really the reason or just a story to un-nerve new-comers!*)

However, this experience with the doors was the exact opposite of the welcome we received from our Russian Salvation Army friends and a great number of the people on the street. Many times we were grateful for the assistance we were given by locals as we adjusted to the new language, the new alphabet on the public notices, new customs and new ways of doing business.

We will never forget the kindness of a lady on a Saturday afternoon early in our stay. We had been told by friends that if we got a certain bus in this particular street, counted 23 stops and then got off, we would be outside the doors of a large shopping mall. So on one of our free days, we duly waited at the stop. Several minutes went by and then this rather elderly lady approached us and with a smile began to carefully mime someone climbing up some steps.

"Yes, or Da," we said 'autoboos!' 'Ah,' she said and pointed further down the street to where some other people were.

What had looked like the bus stop was not the right place, you had to wait for the bus opposite a small notice hanging from the power line in the middle of the street rather than at the shelter.

We followed her back. Then she said 'ASHAN?' the name of a large complex of shops. 'Da,' we said. 'Oh,' she said again and took us both by the hand and guided us across the road to the other side. We had been on the wrong side of the road and would have gone 26 stops in the wrong direction!

Being a newcomer or immigrant is exciting but it can also be a confusing and exhausting experience. Then, if the normal challenges of working with a different language, different customs, forms, processes and new unwritten social norms is overlaid with the experiences of trauma and loss that refugees bring with them as they settle into their new country, the energy and resourcefulness needed is more than doubled.

Scripture includes a number of passages where God expresses His deep love for the foreigner, the refugee, the displaced or socially unacceptable group of people and instructs us to extend an open door of welcome to them. This can happen in a big organised way or through an offer of help to someone we meet in our everyday life, as we experienced in our early days in Moscow.

Often the door of welcome is simply a smile or not getting agitated with the person in front of you in a checkout queue who is finding the currency or payment machine a challenge. Your friendly smile and gift of patience might be giving them the boost that they need to continue their daily effort of making your country their new home.

There is another Door of Welcome in the Bible that God speaks about. I call it the 'Welcome Back' Door.

Jesus describes it in His story of the Lost Son. It is firstly the open gate of the family's farm where the father waits in hope for his son's return and then it is the father's wide open arms that receive him back. These arms not only open the way for the young man to seek and receive forgiveness from the very people he had mistreated but offer the extra element of restoration.

What a challenge to us all. Becoming this door of welcome involves us in asking God to heal our hearts and lead us to the place of accepting back into our lives people who have hurt us or the people we love. People who, like the lost son, are loved by God our Father.

For this Door, I'm grateful for the truth in Philippians 2:13 ***"For it is God who is at work within us both to give you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him."*** They show that the key to this door is to allow God to work within us to bring about an attitude of forgiveness and the ability to welcome back our one who has been lost.



The Stable Door

Wendy-Sue Swann & Lynette Rushbrook

Introduction

The world will entice us with many things to get us to open our hearts door and let the devil in. Christmas is a great time to remind us that if we open the stable door and let Jesus in, life is more than we could ever imagine.

Jokes (USB)

The Christmas prayer, One Farmer, Blackmail

Décor

Christmas Decorations – Pictures of Stable Doors – Manger Scene

Participation Ideas (USB)

Door Decorations; Keys for Santa

Readings (USB)

Christmas present responses, One Door and Only One

Competitions (USB)

Father Christmas Word Quiz

Quotes

The world needs a stable influence

True love was born in a stable

Are you part of the *inn* crowd or are you one of the *stable* few

Each one of us has an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus

Songs

Any Christmas Carol/Song

The Stable Door – (USB) – “Joy of Christmas” by The International Staff Band – Track 6

HLSB chorus 38 *Swing wide the door of your heart*

Scripture

🔑 Matthew 2:1-7

🔑 Psalm 121

🔑 John 10:7-18

Devotions

The devil is like a door-to-door salesman. He comes knocking at your hearts door wanting to sell you the type of life he has for you.

He is trained to sell

You are not trained to resist. He knows his product well and he knows exactly what to say. He could sell ice to Eskimos.

He creates need where none exists

If you *really* need something, you already know it. He will tell you that your life is not the same without the things he can offer you. If you allow yourself to be pitched, the salesmen (*devil*) will create a need you didn't know you had. You can read the Bible and do the research on your own, and find out his lying.

He preys on fear and ignorance

The devil feeds on fear and ignorance; he wants you to feel afraid of what you will be missing if you don't buy his lifestyle. He wants you to feel like you need to keep up with the Joneses.

He uses high-pressure tactics

He will try to create a sense of urgency: 'If you don't do it today it may be too late', 'Life is short, and you need to do it now.' Don't let the perceived shortage of time influence you.

It's all well and good to know how the devil (salesman) works, but what can you do to resist? Here are some effective techniques for handling the devil (door-to-door salesmen).

Don't answer the door

The best way to resist *any* form of marketing is to avoid it altogether. Don't let the devil in. Don't open your heart to any of his tempting draw cards.

Don't let him inside

If you do open your hearts door to find the devil, don't let him inside. Once he's in, he has the advantage and he knows this. He doesn't care about you he doesn't want what's best for you. Keep him outside.

Don't listen to the presentation

Most sales pitches are constructed to get you answering questions (*usually with a 'yes'*) as soon as possible. His presentations can be sweet, they seem harmless and really good, but they're not. Don't fall for it. Remember he doesn't care about you.

Get a big dog

'No soliciting' signs don't work. The devil ignores them or pretends not to see them. But it's difficult to ignore a large, snarling animal. While Jesus is not anything like a large snarling animal, the effect is much better if you have Jesus in your heart answering the door with you, the devil will not hang around long enough to try and sell you anything.

The devil will try anything to get you to open your heart and listen to him and think about what life would be like if you followed him. However he



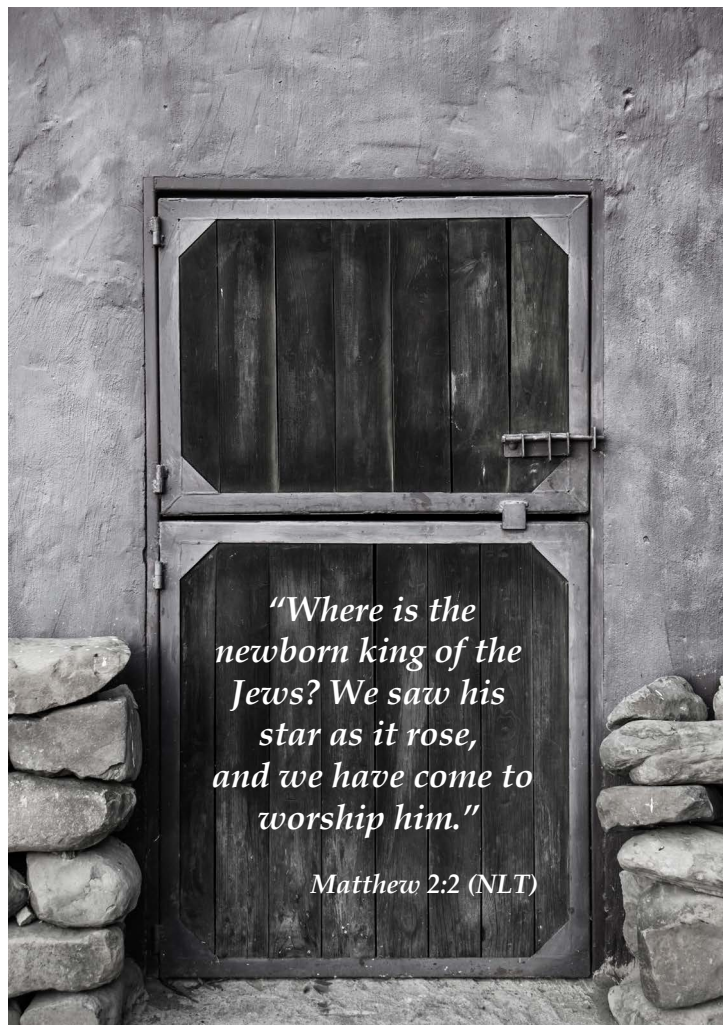
only tells half-truths, the life he tries to sell is full of misery and heartache.

This is why what happened behind those stable doors many years ago is so important. God knew we were hopeless without Him, He knew we were not able to resist the devil without His help.

The only door we should be opening is the stable door, the door that leads us to Jesus. Listen and think about the life we would have if we allowed Him into our lives.

This devotion was based on an article from the following website:
www.getrichslowly.org/blog/2008/02/17/effective-techniques-for-handling-door-to-door-salesmen/

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Unlock and Protect

Joanne Smith

Craft

Buy one small cardboard 'treasure chest' per person from Spotlight or craft stores.

Use one of the following options to decorate them:

- 🔑 Decoupage
- 🔑 Painting
- 🔑 Pressed flowers
- 🔑 Scrapbooking papers and embellishments
- 🔑 Ask each person to bring in some printed photographs to use

Five small cards per person – On the cards, each person should...

1. Write a possession that you treasure
2. Write a memory that you treasure
3. Write the name of a person that you treasure
4. Write an activity that you treasure
5. Write a spiritual truth or lesson that you treasure

One cardboard key per person

On the key write something you can do to unlock the richness of the thing you treasure. *(For example, unlock the richness of a relationship by planning a special outing together; unlock the richness of a possession by taking time to enjoy it or share it with someone else; unlock the richness of a memory by sharing it with a friend.)*

Place the cards and key into the treasure chest.

Devotion

When I was a child I had a small collection of keys that I considered invaluable. One key unlocked my money box, which rarely contained more than fifty cents. But with fifty cents I could buy enough lollies to make myself feel truly ill. A second key unlocked my diary. My diary contained page after page of secret thoughts and feelings, written in code where possible in case of discovery by one of my sisters. This was a place where I could imagine and dream without boundaries. A third key unlocked my jewellery box – a cache of rare treasures, collected throughout my adventures. It contained a broken clown brooch, a piece of pink shell, a blue coral necklace, a pink bangle and a few assorted beads.





The keys that I cherished had no inherent value. As a piece of metal they were worthless. They became precious only because they could both protect and unlock these things that I treasured.

"I want you to know what a struggle I am going through for you, for God's people at Laodicea, and for all of those followers who have never met me. ²I do it to encourage them. Then as their hearts are joined together in love, they will be wonderfully blessed with complete understanding. And they will truly know Christ. Not only is He the key to God's mystery, ³but all wisdom and knowledge are hidden away in Him. ⁴I tell you these things to keep you from being fooled by fancy talk. ⁵Even though I am not with you, I keep thinking about you. I am glad to know that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong."
Colossians 2: 1-5 (CEV)

Christ is the key to God's mystery. By knowing Him we can unlock the mysteries of God. We can understand God better. Christ also protects all wisdom and knowledge. He holds it for us until we are ready to receive it. With this knowledge we are able to live safe and worthwhile lives.

Quotes (USB)

Make a 'wall of doors' by printing or writing quotes about doors onto the back of printed door shapes. Stick the doors onto a large sheet of cardboard with blu-tack. Invite people to come and remove a door and read the quote. The door can then be replaced with the quote side facing out.

Unlocking Prayer Stations

Carol Smith

Captivated by the Word 2015 Prayer Stations

This is a list of themes and titles used for the prayer stations at the 2015 Captivated by the Word. *(All the details are on the USB)*

1. What mask?
2. Love God with all your soul.
3. Love God with all you mind – memorization.
4. Gripping hands.
5. Burdens.
6. Ordinary attempts.
7. Drawing hope.
8. Conversations with God.
9. Doodle prayers.
10. Gold bowls.
11. Identity in Christ.
12. Lighting the world.
13. Names of God.
14. Water and Spirit.
15. Who am I?
16. Floor plan.
17. Be Still.
18. Grace and holey-ness.
19. Lost sheep.
20. Photography and relationships.
21. Praying the Psalms.
22. Transformation.



