



# Christian Report

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## Evangelism and Discipleship

We are all probably familiar with the letters Jesus gave the Apostle John to send to the seven churches in Asia Minor recorded in the first chapters of the book of Revelation. Only two of those churches, Smyrna and Philadelphia, were commended without any rebuke or condemnation. In his letter, Jesus greeted the church at Philadelphia with the following words:

*“I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut.”* (Rev 3:8)

While our passage doesn't specifically de-

fine the “open door”, Bible commentaries tell us that the “open door” can refer to the entrance to heaven and eternal life, as well as opportunities for Christian service here on Earth, including sharing the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and merely performing good works in service to our fellow men.

Concerning personal evangelism and discipleship, it goes without saying that we should look for opportunities (open doors) to share the gospel as we go about our daily lives. The challenge for some of us is recognizing a God opened door rather than taking up an assault

position and performing a tactical ‘breaching’ operation.

I am not saying that we should be passive bystanders and keep our faith personal until the *perfect* opportunity arises (whatever that means). When God drew this prodigal back into his arms when I was an operator on a Special Forces ‘A’ Team, I knew that being open about my faith wasn't optional. That's another story.

What I am suggesting is that we examine what the Apostle Paul had to say very specifically about open doors for ministry, who it

was that opened them, and follow his lead.

During his first missionary journey, which began and finished in the Syrian city of Antioch, Paul delivered this report to the church in Antioch:

*“And when they (Paul & Co.), arrived (in Antioch) and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.”* (Acts 14:27)

During his second missionary journey, Paul wrote his first letter to the church at Corinth

*“Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. . .*

*. . . I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.”*  
(Rev 3:8)

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and spoke of the door God had opened for ministry in Ephesus:

*“I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. (1Co 16:8-9)*

As recorded in Acts 16, it was also during his second missionary journey that Paul visited and planted a church in Philippi at the home of Lydia after he had preached a message to her and some other women by a local river on the Sabbath. Listen to Paul’s record of the event:

*“One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.” (Acts 16:14)*

We don’t know the content of Paul’s message that day, but we know that God opened Lydia’s heart to hear and heed Paul’s words. Lydia was saved, baptized along with her household, and a Christian church was established in the Greek city of Philippi.

In his letter to the Christians at Colossae, written from his prison cell in Rome, Paul requested that they pray that God would open a door for declaring Christ even while he was in chains:

*“At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am*

*in prison—that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.” (Col 4:3-4)*

### What’s the Point?

First, God opens doors for the ministry and message of the gospel, as well as individual hearts to hear and respond positively to the message.

Second, when we pray for open doors and open hearts, God responds. We just need to be alert and prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks us for a reason for the hope that is in us; doing so with gentleness and respect. (1 Pet 3:14-15)

Third, while our lives and conversation can

result in opportunities to share the gospel, we might be met with resistance and slammed doors, when God opens doors and hearts, salvation follows!

Once again, remember Jesus’ promise to the church at Philadelphia:

*“Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut... I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.” Rev 3:8*



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I was serving with the US Air Force at RAF Upper Heyford in England in 1978 when I first ran into a CMF leader at the Chapel, Claudie Woosley. Ernie Miller, the first Executive Director of CMF, had visited the base a few months before and Claudie was planning on having the first Bible Study there since Ernie's visit. Claudie told me about Christian Military Fellowship and encouraged me to get involved while serving.

I also got involved with another Bible Study with members of CMF, Officers' Christian Fellowship (OCF), and the British Officers' Christian Union. I was involved in starting a young adult fellowship/worship service of mostly young enlisted members called, "Living Waters Fellowship." Towards the end of my enlistment Ernie Miller invited me to join him on a tour of American bases all throughout Europe. We visited England, Germany, Italy and Greece.

I was drawn to CMF because of its strong focus on prayer and its emphasis on reaching out to other service members. In those days I was a pretty junior rank, and I appreciated how open CMF was to people of every rank. It was a place where anyone could come, grow in their faith, and be encouraged.

After I returned to Colorado, I began volunteering with CMF at the home office. Ernie no-

ticed my dedication to prayer and asked if I would help with the Battle Plan, CMF's monthly prayer calendar. It was a privilege to help support the prayer ministry of CMF in that way.

Over the years my involvement with CMF continued to grow, and so did my relationship with Christ. The ministry became an important part of my life and my walk with the Lord.



*Stock Photo from Internet.*

I've now been connected with CMF since 1978, and I've greatly appreciated the opportunity to serve both the Lord and the military community at the same time.

— *MSgt. Greg Holm, ANG (Ret) - Prayer and Encouragement Ministry*

### **Our Ministry is Growing!**

*We have asked the Lord for greater opportunities to serve—and He has answered. God is opening doors for more ministry, bringing more people for us to reach with the hope of Jesus, and even raising up additional laborers for the harvest.*

*We praise the Lord of the Harvest for His generosity and for entrusting us with His precious sons and daughters. As this work continues to grow, we humbly ask you to keep CMF in your prayers and to prayerfully consider supporting this mission as we work together to fulfill the Great Commission.*

Every day, thousands of men and women in uniform wake up in places most of us will never see. Some serve on ships far from home. Others stand watch on remote bases, fly missions through the night, or prepare quietly for assignments that few will ever hear about.

Behind each uniform is a story—a young airman learning to lead, a Marine far from family, a sailor navigating long deployments, or a soldier carrying both duty and uncertainty. But there is something every one of us can do for them. We can pray.

Scripture reminds us that prayer is not a small thing. It is powerful. It is the way God invites His people to participate in His work in the world. When we pray for those serving in the military, we ask the Lord to surround them with His presence, strengthen their faith, and guard their hearts in environments that can often be spiritually challenging.

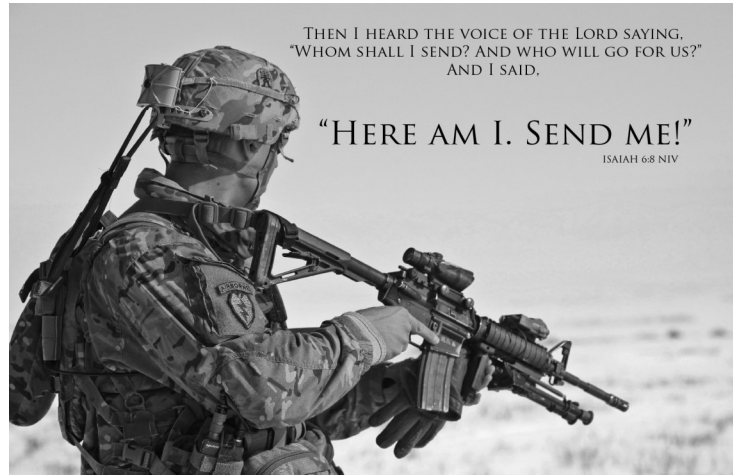
Military life can be isolating. Many service members are stationed far from home and separated from the support systems that once anchored their faith. Long hours, demanding responsibilities, and the pressures of service can weigh heavily on both service members and their families.

Yet God sees every one of them.

He knows the sailor standing watch at midnight. He knows the airman sitting quietly in a dorm room far from home.

He knows the Marine training in the desert heat. He knows the soldier asking quiet questions about life, purpose, and faith.

And He hears the prayers offered on their behalf.



Throughout its history, Christian Military Fellowship has believed that prayer is one of the most powerful ways we can serve those who serve our nation. Behind every Bible study, every moment of encouragement, and every conversation about

Christ is a foundation of prayer from faithful believers.

As you read this issue of *The Christian Report*, we invite you to pray for those currently serving in uniform. Pray that God would strengthen their faith, raise up Christian leaders within the ranks, and bring many to the saving hope found in Jesus Christ.

The harvest is still plentiful—even within the military.

“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

— James 5:16

*Thank you for standing with us in prayer.*

## CHRISTIAN MILITARY FELLOWSHIP

An Indigenous Ministry • Discipleship • Prayer • Community • Support • Encouraging Men and Women in the United States Armed Forces, and their families, to love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

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