

The Supernatural Power of a Transformed Mind

Study Guide

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RETHINKING THE BELIEVER'S MANDATE

This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!
(GENESIS 28:17)

In Genesis 28:17, Jacob uses language that finds fulfillment in a corresponding New Testament reality. Today, I want us to look at this concept, the gate of heaven. This is not some new way to salvation; Jesus was, is, and forever will be the only gateway to Heaven. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. This is not about getting to Jesus, but more so about getting Jesus to the world. Once we receive Christ, we actually became the gate of heaven on the earth. This all starts in our minds—specifically, what we think about the gravity of what we received at salvation and who we became as God's dwelling place.

In this context and elsewhere in the Bible, "gate" seems to mark a place of transition and access. In the natural you might walk through a gate to go from your front yard to the sidewalk, or from your backyard to your driveway. In the same way, when we talk about the Church being the gate of heaven, we are referring to the place where the reality of His dominion becomes available for all of mankind—His world invades ours!

Now here is where our thinking demands a significant adjustment. In Matthew 16:18-19, Jesus introduces the reality of the "gates of hell." For so many of us, we have this picture of the Church as a group of people locked inside a compound, shoulders against the gate, trying to hold the fort as the devil and his powerful minions beat against it. We see the Church in a posture of fear and weakness, trying to protect what we have until God comes and rescues us from the big, bad devil. This perspective is the breeding ground for escapist theology, where we are just holding on until Jesus comes back to take us away from a planet on a path to destruction. This is the exact opposite of how we need to embrace our identity as the house of God, the gate of heaven. If anything, we are \ God's ambassadors of restoration, wholeness and healing. The very people who actually carry the solutions to the problems that confront this planet cannot afford to hide away, waiting for it all to end.

We also cannot afford to stop short of Jesus' powerful assurance, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (the church)." We are not living on the defensive, but the offense. As the gate of heaven, we are not simply holding up these huge iron doors, shielding and protecting us from every assault of the devil; we are opening the gates and releasing the increase of Heaven's transformative dominion on earth.

TRANSFORMATION THOUGHT

As the body of Christ, we are the gate of heaven on the earth—carrying divine solutions to the problems that humanity is facing.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What does this reality look like to you—the church as the "gate of heaven"?
2. Why is it important for us to think about the church in the correct way when it comes to being the "gate of Heaven" and responding to the "gates of hell"?

TRANSFORMATION PRAYER

Father, I step into my identity as the gate of Your world on the earth. I am a point of access. I do not live my life on the defense against the enemy, but because of the Holy Spirit living in me, I release the love, presence, and power of Jesus into every situation and circumstance I come across. Increase Your reign and rule through my life.