

## "I'LL TAKE WHAT'S BEHIND DOOR # \_\_\_\_\_"

**TEXT:** 1 Cor.16:9

**INTRO.:** A. Graduation is both an end & a beginning. That is why it is referred to as both "Graduation" - an end, and "Commencement" - a beginning. The graduates will be rewarded for their diligence in completing the required courses. But they now have a greater challenge before them. What will they do now? High school is past, their life is future.

B. Paul reached a point in his life where he stood before what he called "**a great door.**" The Lord, speaking to the 7 churches of the Revelation, told the church at Philadelphia: "I have set before thee **an open door...**" These graduates have several "doors" before them. The question is what is behind these "doors?" Tragedy, blessing, happiness, sorrow...?

### **I. ...BEHIND DOOR #1: OPPORTUNITY**

A. Opportunity For Secular Success:

1. Surely the business world needs Christians in strategic places.
2. There is nothing inherently wrong w/secular success.
3. But for the believer, that alone will never satisfy him nor satisfy his Savior.

**1 Cor.10:31** Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, *do all to the glory of God.*

**ILLUS.:** If you succeed in the secular world, that is good, but if you do so at the expense of your testimony, or at the expense of the Lord's work, that is wrong.

B. Opportunity for Spiritual Success:

1. A giant decision needs to be made w/in the next year or two for the grads.
2. They must allow the Lord to speak to them about full-time service while they prepare for the future.
3. They should carefully & prayerfully consider Christ's claims on their lives.

**III. ...BEHIND DOOR #2: SERVICE**

A. Service In The Local Church:

1. Regardless of what opportunity you choose, as a believer you must find a place of service w/in the local assembly.
2. Whether you are a bus capt., a S.S. teacher, a C-Club worker, a nursery wrkr., a children's church leader...you must serve w/in the local church.
3. Every believer, regardless of where you choose to serve, must also be active in soul-winning... "getting the Bride."

**ILLUS.:** Organize fire dept.

B. Service To The Local Church:

1. The other area of service is the higher level...but serve here there must be a special calling.
2. You may be called to full time service as a pastor, evangelist-missionary, Christian school teacher, pastor's wife, church secty., etc. & if you are called you must consider that calling a priority over anything else you may have talents or skills or inclination for.
3. In fact I have discovered that whatever talents I may have had before going full-time, I have been able to adapt & use after that call.

**III. ...BEHIND DOOR #3: MINISTRY**

**ILLUS.:** Someone is sitting there asking: "What's the difference between 'service' & 'ministry'?" The answer is that anyone can serve the Lord...part or full time, but few really have a ministry.

A. Service Deals With Position:

1. There are many folks who "serve" in some capacity who don't have a real ministry to others... "others" being the key word.

## B. Ministry Deals With People:

1. You can be a preacher, but not be a pastor.
2. You can be a missionary to a place & never have a ministry with the people.
3. A call to serve should include a ministry, but it doesn't always work that way.

**ILLUS.:** Jesus is the outstanding Example, as usual. The key to His popularity with the people is that unlike those who were "serving" in the religion of Judaism, He "saw the people, and was ***moved with compassion.***" Jesus was people oriented. He saw their needs, their hurts, their plight, their condition. "Compassion: sympathy or sorrow for the distress or misfortune of others w/the desire to help." It is one thing to want to serve the Lord & another to want to be a blessing to others. Jesus said:

***"Inasmuch as ye have done it (whatever is needed) unto one of the least of these...ye have done it unto Me."*** Mt.25:40 In other words ministry begins where service leaves off & there is no true service w/out ministry.

**CONCL.:** These are your choices. Which will you choose? That which is **"BEHIND DOOR #1,#2 or #3?!"** ***Opportunity, Service or Ministry?*** Why not choose all 3?!