

# Opening Lesson

## Lesson 1

### Introduction:

#### A. Define **opening**:

1. *to enter upon: begin.*
2. *to move from closed position; to make more discerning or responsive.*

#### B. In this class, we want to have an opening of our

1. Bible.

Your word *is* a lamp to my feet  
And a light to my path.

The entrance of Your words gives light;  
It gives understanding to the simple (Psalm 119:105, 130, NKJV).

2. Mind.

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.

“For in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring’” (Acts 17:11, 28).

3. Eyes.

“For the hearts of this people have grown dull.  
Their ears are hard of hearing,  
And their eyes they have closed,  
Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears,  
Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,  
So that I should heal them” (Matthew 13:15).

4. Ears.

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Matthew 11:15).

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”  
(Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29).

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(Revelation 3:6, 13, 22).

If anyone has an ear, let him hear (Revelation 13:9).

5. Heart.

“For the hearts of this people have grown dull.  
Their ears are hard of hearing,  
And their eyes they have closed,  
Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears,  
Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,  
So that I should heal them” (Matthew 13:15).

C. To do a good job of helping others, I need to:

1. Listen to God.
2. Listen to myself.
3. Listen to others.

## I. LISTEN TO GOD.

## A. God is the supreme authority.

Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil.

Do not be rash with your mouth,  
And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God.  
For God *is* in heaven, and you on earth;  
Therefore let your words be few (Ecclesiastes 5:1, 2).

## B. God speaks through His word.

But as it is written:

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,  
Nor have entered into the heart of man  
The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:9-13).

## C. His thoughts are great!

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

“For who has known the mind of the LORD?  
Or who has become His counselor?  
Or who has first given to Him  
And it shall be repaid to him?”

For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever.  
Amen (Romans 11:33-36).

## II. LISTEN TO MYSELF.

Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things (2 Timothy 2:7, NIV).

- A. How do we listen to ourselves?
- B. Am I weak enough to help others?
  - 1. At this time, do I need to minister or do I need to be served? Some people are not ready to help others. They have so many problems on a particular day, which they have not worked through, that when they supposedly *visit*, they are actually looking for someone to help them. They unload their problems on others.
  - 2. How can I get strong enough to minister?
    - a. By being weak.

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

- b. By being weak enough to ask for help.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Matthew 7:7, 8).

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2).

- c. By being weak enough to know I am helpless.

"Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I *am* a little child; I do not know *how* to go out or come in. And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to

judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

The speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing (1 Kings 3:7-10).

d. I won't always know what to say.

"Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3).

e. I won't always be able to *cheer people up*.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick,  
But *when* the desire comes, *it is* a tree of life (Proverbs 13:12).

C. Am I strong enough to help others?

1. Am I aware of the wisdom I have now and have available by learning from myself?

Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,  
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom (Psalm 51:6).

2. When I was in a similar situation, how did I feel; what did I need?

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted (Galatians 6:1).

a. Do I believe (understand) what I sing?

*Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.*

b. Do I believe what the Bible says?

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8).

3. Could I ever be in a similar situation in the future?

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Corinthians 10:12).

4. How would I feel; what would I need; how would I want to be treated?

“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

- D. To treat strangers right, I need the heart of a stranger.

“Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9).

- E. I need to learn from my experience.

1. I read what the Bible says.

So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17).

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

2. I observe that what the Bible says corresponds to reality.

I have been young, and *now* am old;  
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,  
Nor his descendants begging bread (Psalm 37:25).

- 3.

*Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust Him more.*

### III. LISTEN TO OTHERS.

A. To understand from their understanding, comments, and insights.

So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him (Acts 8:30, 31).

B. To learn from their good examples.

1. Jesus.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

2. Others. Hebrews 11

- a. Abel.
- b. Enoch.
- c. Noah.
- d. Abraham.
- e. Sarah.
- f. Isaac.
- g. Jacob.
- h. Moses.
- i. Others.

C. To learn from other's bad examples.

1. Lot's wife.

"Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32).

2. Disobedient Israelites. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

D. To learn from things, places, and events.

1. A fallen fence covered with weeds.

I went by the field of the lazy *man*,  
And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding;  
And there it was, all overgrown with thorns;

Its surface was covered with nettles;  
Its stone wall was broken down.  
When I saw *it*, I considered *it* well;  
I looked on *it and* received instruction:  
A little sleep, a little slumber,  
A little folding of the hands to rest;  
So shall your poverty come *like* a prowler,  
And your need like an armed man (Proverbs 24:30-34).

2. Matthew 6.
  - a. Birds.

“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”  
(Matthew 6:26).

- b. Grass. Matthew 6:28-34
3. Matthew 13.
  - a. A farmer. Matthew 13:3-9,18-23
  - b. One small seed. Matthew 13:31, 32
  - c. Yeast. Matthew 13:33
  - d. Hidden treasure. Matthew 13:44
  - e. A valuable pearl. Matthew 13:45, 46
  - f. Fishing. Matthew 13:47-50

#### Conclusion:

- A. What have you learned from this *opening* lesson?
- B. What might you be able to learn, using the principles we have discussed:
  1. In your family?
  2. On your job?
  3. Driving down the highway?
  4. During leisure time?
  5. Serving others?
  6. Being a leader?