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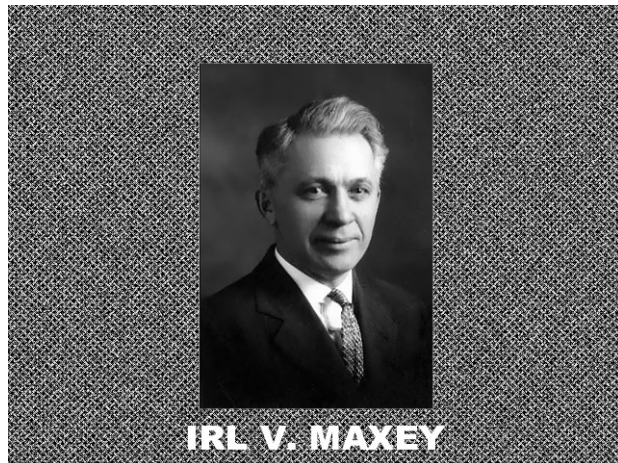
**THE GREAT DOOR
A Sermon By Irl V. Maxey**

**Digitized and Edited
By Duane V. Maxey**

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS FILE

This sermon was written on October 15, 1914, and while my father does not indicate where it was written, it is in the same notebook between two other sermons written the same year in Alicel, Oregon. In addition to that, papa mentions "us in Alicel" in the opening of the sermon. Therefore, it is most likely that this sermon was also written in Alicel.

At least in their written form, I have discovered that papa's sermons were written to move and persuade souls -- and, for the most part, were not set forth in a rigid, Point 1, Point 2, Point 3, etc. order. There is order and progression in his sermons, but he aimed at persuading souls, not at displaying an impressive outline to the minds of his hearers.

There is a very moving illustration near the end of this sermon -- one that had me in tears as I read and typed it. May God bless this sermon to the hearts of all who read it. -- Duane V. Maxey, (Ahwatukee) Phoenix, Arizona, February 9, 2006.

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You will find our text in the ninth verse of the sixteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

SERMON TEXT: -- 1 Corinthians 16:9 -- "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

Paul wished very much to see the Corinthian brethren, but felt he must stay in Ephesus, for a chance awaited him there. I feel that is literally true of us in Alicel. A great, effectual door is opened unto me.

Jesus and His disciples were walking along the road and they came to a blind man sitting by the side of the road, begging. I suppose he was on the street corner, for that is the way beggars usually did. The disciples said, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2). Jesus said, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3). He stooped and spat on the ground, mixed clay with spittle, rubbed it on the blind man's eyes, and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. (cf. John 9:6-7).

He went and washed and came forth seeing. The neighbors said this is not the same boy we used to know. Others said, Ah yes, it is the same one. Yes, he himself said, I am the same one. I was born blind and spent 42 years that way, but now I see. Oh, that was a wonderful man! -- [meaning Jesus, Who caused him to see] I would like to see him. They called him Jesus.

The old Pharisees heard of it and they would not take his word fully. They took the man to his parents and wanted them to say. His parents did not wish to do so, for they had a rule that anyone who acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah should be put out of the synagogue services. So they said, Ask the boy himself. He is of age. "Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:24-25). Jesus was the only cause for the healing of this blind man, but they cast him out.

It was in the evening when these old church members [Pharisees] had thrown out the subject of Jesus' mercy. Jesus sought him and made Himself known to him. It was when the Pharisees had cast him out that Jesus said to him, and to the Pharisees, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go

in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). This statement of Christ was made at the time shepherds were seen gathering in their sheep.

Oh, Jesus is the Great, Effectual, Eternal Door -- opened for every soul. Men have come and have done great things for the world, but they have passed. Nebuchadnezzar was a great man who ruled over a great part of the world, but he has passed away, and very few people heard of him. Cyrus the Great was a great ruler -- divided his country into cantons and left the world with some opportunities for men, but very few persons ever heard of him. Alexander the Great was a wonderful man it is said. He ruled over all the then-known world and wept because he had no more worlds to conquer, but he has passed away. Probably more people have heard of him, but how many lives are made better by his life?

"Once in a lonely manger
Hundreds of years ago
A little babe so holy
Came to this world below.
Near was the crowded city,
Bethlehem, dark and old.
Here Joseph sought for pity;
Chill was the night, and cold.
Angels ring out the sweet story,
Fear not, for lo, this morn
Jesus, the Christ of glory,
A little babe was born."

-- Author not shown -- Perhaps this was written by papa.

Ah, there in old Bethlehem in that little, insignificant country of Palestine, Jesus was born, and His fame has gone around the world. There is no country that has not heard His name, and no child today who has reached the age of accountability but what has heard of Jesus -- either in blessing or cursing.

Jesus is so great because of the extent of his influence -- great again because of duration: 1909 years have passed, and still His name endures. Men have said the next generation will find the name and followers of Jesus gone, but still He endures, and shall endure till the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdoms of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last, I would say He was great because of the ambition of the Man. Isaiah said God would divide Him a portion with the great: -- Isaiah 53:12 -- "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

I am sure He is great because of His ambition. What was the ambition of Nebuchadnezzar? -- to domineer over mankind, and he lost his reason, slept under the open sky in dew till his locks were brushy and his finger-nails were like the claws of an animal. Ah, all men become animal-like who seek to domineer their brothers.

See the ambition of Alexander, conquering worlds and making slaves of men, but the ambition of Jesus was entirely different. His was not to make as many men as possible tributary to Him, but rather His ambition was to make His life tributary to as many men as possible. This was the ambition that was necessary to save the world. He willingly surrendered his life that all might live.

Oh what a Great Door Jesus is for everyone under the heavens -- great because He is a Door that is open to the whole world. The whole world could be saved in a moment if they would, because this Door is opened and no one can close it against you. (cf. Rev. 3:7).

Now, follow me as I briefly sketch to you how this Door was opened to the world.

God chose a man to make a nation, and by that nation to show to the world He was, and to save the world through that nation. You remember how God gave Abraham one son, Isaac. [Ishmael not being a God-given son] Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob was chosen, and he and his posterity sojourned in Egypt for 430 years while God was preparing the way.

God raised up Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and to tell them how to live. Out of Egypt they swept -- probably 10 million strong. What a great task to tell all of those people what to do. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law told him how to separate the company into companies of 50 and 100 and appoint leaders. Tell the leaders, and let them tell the people. This was done.

Soon, however, a more perfect way was given. Moses was called to Mount Sinai and there given by God the code -- the Decalogue. Men could then commit God's commandments to memory, but found that they broke this law. And, God made provision for those who broke the law by means of sacrifices which the guilty should bring.

Then, in the fullness of time, Jesus came as the one Who kept the law, hence needing to make no atonement for Himself but giving His life as an atonement for those who broke the law. Thus, the Door of salvation was freely opened to every soul to come at any time and at all places. Finally, the Holy Ghost comes and writes those laws on men's hearts who believe the law of love, fulfilling the Decalogue.

But, says someone, surely I have been so great a sinner God will not receive me. Ah, God will not turn you away!

Once a girl lived in the state of Illinois who had Christian parentage. her father died and left her with her mother as sole companion. She became restless and wanted to leave home. She wanted to be as other girls. She complained that she had not the privilege to dress as she wished and as other girls.

After much persuasion her mother let her go. Soon she drifted into the current of sin as a boat loosed from its moorings floats on the wave. Only just a few short months -- the society, the card table, the dance, the ball, and prostitution finds her in a reform school, just across the Illinois state line in Indiana.

Now she had time to reflect. Oh that she could now roll away the dark cloud from her life! She had been a good, obedient girl at the reform school and they would let her out on parole. Oh how she wished to see her mother, but she thought: Mother will not receive me.

At last she concluded to go home, but wanted it to be on a moonlight night. The night came, and she sped away -- only about 50 or 60 miles to the old home place. Her heart was so heavy as she walked the short distance to the old home place. She went to the barn where she used to hitch up old Bob. Happy memories of past days of glee in driving the old horse came to mind, but again she thought: Oh, I would like to see mother!

At this thought the dark cloud of her past months of sinful life rolled around her and the disgrace muttered its thunderous peals: No, she could not face her mother! Surely her mother would turn upon her in scorn. She said to herself: I will just go and touch the old pump-handle and then go back to the station.

After doing this she said: Oh, I want to see mother, but she will not receive me. She went to the door, just to put her hand on it, and then depart, but the temptation was too much for her. So, she turned the knob and walked in. Just a little ways on ahead was her mother kneeling prayer.

The light was turned down, but hearing the noise her mother arose and turned up the lamp-light -- and said, "Oh, it is my daughter!" Locked in each other's embrace, the girl said, "Mother, why was the door unlocked? When I was home the door was always locked at this time of night."

"Oh," said her mother, "as long as you have been gone I have always kept it unlocked and open for you to come back. I thought you might want to come back."

Oh! dear people! that is a mother's love -- but what think you a Heavenly Father's love will not do for you?! Oh, His Door is opened for every sinful soul! He yearns for you to come back! Come back, and know that the Door is wide open!

Then this Door is effectual. He completely changes our nature. We are really new creatures in Him. The things we once hated we love now, and the things we used to love we despise now.

I once knew a man that never used to take his wife to town. I saw him come to the altar at old Pleasant Grove, and he was wonderfully saved. The next Saturday he took his wife to town. It makes the husband the kind he should be. It makes the wife what she should be, and surely it makes children what they should be.

Oh yes, this Door is also effectual in that it saves for Glory. Oh, come to the Great, Open Door and let Him save you completely!

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THE END OF THIS SERMON