

**Open Heaven / Week 1- “Open Hearts”**  
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**(Leader’s Guide)**

**11/6/22**

**Main Idea:** This week, we launch a new series called “Open Heaven.” We believe that if we live with Open Hearts and Open Hands, God will Open Heaven, and that an Open Heaven is an overflow of His goodness and presence. This week we’ll see how to live with Open Hearts so we can then experience an Open Heaven.

**Opening Discussion:** Is your heart (your soul) in a good place or in not such a good place today? Explain.

**Read: Matthew 6:9-10**

1. **Why do you think Jesus told us to pray these verses (prayer) to our Father in heaven?**
  - a. *Answers will vary*
  - b. Our greatest Blessing is the gift that He is.
  - c. An Open heaven is an overflow of God’s presence
  - d. God wants this for us! He wants His Kingdom to be on earth as it is in heaven.
  - e. Our church leaders have been intentionally planning, thinking, and praying that God will open heaven over our lives and that we would live in the overflow of God’s goodness & presence.
  - f. We should pray for and believe that the realities of Heaven will become the realities of our city- through this church, through our lives, through our families, & through our calling.

**Read Psalm 144:5; Isaiah 64:1; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 4:1**

2. **From these passages, what does “Open Heaven” look like?**
  - a. *Answers will vary*
  - b. We should pray this for our entire church body- for every single person.
  - c. It was an Open Heaven over Jesus as he participated in the baptism of water for our sins. Jesus showed us that he stands on our behalf for our sins.
  - d. The heavens were split (torn), & it was a violent tearing open of the heavens
  - e. Sin separates us from God, but because God loves us he sent his Son, Jesus, to die on a cross for us to pay for our sins, so that that gap can be closed and we can have a relationship with God.
  - f. There is the baptism in water, but also the baptism of the HOLY SPIRIT.
  - g. So from this point on now Jesus is lead, driven, and guided by the Holy Spirit. He is also empowered by the spirit to begin the ministry God has given him.
  - h. WHEN THE HEAVENS ARE OPENED, THE SPIRIT COMES DOWN and:
    - i. Touches us,

- ii. Empowers us,
- iii. Changes us
- iv. Moves us forward as we step into calling and purpose!
- i. IN ORDER TO LIVE UNDER AN OPEN HEAVEN, YOU NEED TO LIVE WITH AN OPEN HEART.
- j. The Kingdom of God is in our midst. (Luke 17:20-21)
- k. God is the great physician, and if you would allow him to work in your heart, you will begin to experience the realities of heaven here on earth and live to experience the fullness of life that he only gives. (John 10:10)

**Read: Ezekiel 36:26; Matthew 4:17, 23; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5**

**3. How do we need to change our thinking so we can live with an Open Heart and experience an Open Heaven?**

- a. *Answers will vary*
- b. We need to repent, which means to think differently and reconsider- especially about the Kingdom of Heaven:
  - i. Heaven isn't just for after we die- it's for now!
  - ii. Jesus has already come to earth and dwelt among us, so Heaven has already opened and His Kingdom has already been here. . (John 1:14)
  - iii. God wants us to do the things Jesus did- to preach the Good News & heal the sick- There are many kinds of sicknesses that need to be healed!
- c. Living under Open Heaven IS NOT A MATTER OF TALK, IT'S A MATTER OF POWER.- To give your heart to Jesus and walk with him is to be introduced to a whole new way of living- a supernatural life where he has empowered you to do what you could never do on your own. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

**Read: Mark 1:10; Acts 10:38; Acts 1:4-8**

**4. How is having an Open Heart dependent on the Holy Spirit?**

- a. Following this moment Jesus begins his ministry; and he's preaching, healing, performing miracles, raising the dead. (Mark 1:10)
- b. JESUS WAITED FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT THEN HE BEGAN HIS MINISTRY
- c. HE WAS ANOINTED AND THEN WENT AROUND DOING GOOD! (Acts 10:38)
- d. Jesus was fully God and fully human, so he knew what it's like to experience fatigue, hunger, pain, temptation, so he showed us that there is no possible way we could go through this life without the power of the Holy Spirit.
- e. WE ARE NOT SAVED TO BE SPECTATORS- WE WERE CREATED TO BE FILLED WITH GOD'S POWER. ((2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

**Read: John 1:32-33; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; Psalm 139:23-24**

**5. In what ways does having an Open Heart require a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit?**

- a. We have a responsibility to keep in step with the spirit. (Galatians 5:22-26)
- b. The Holy Spirit is a person, the 3rd Person of the Triune God, so we don't
- c. want to offend the Holy Spirit!
- d. We should value the Holy Spirit's presence in our life. (John 14:25-27)
- e. The more we value the Holy Spirit's presence, the more we will experience His power working in us and through us. (Romans 15:13)
- f. We should walk through life with an awareness that the Lord's presence is in our lives. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- g. In our interaction with the Holy Spirit, we are not to grieve nor quench the Spirit.
- h. We should walk in purity & power- they are the legs on which we stand.
  - i. Grieving the Spirit has to do with purity- purity is getting up when you fall as you keep trying to live the way God intended you to live with help from the Holy Spirit.
  - ii. Quenching the Spirit has to do with power- we want to keep His power working in and through us.
- i. GRACE THAT DOESN'T LEAD TO HOLINESS ISN'T REALLY GRACE AT ALL.
- j. We should be so close to the Holy Spirit that as he leads us, we will have the insight, the intuition, and the power to confront the impossibilities that we and others face in our lives.
- k. God's will is for you to be filled with the Spirit, so we should pray that everyone in our church body is filled with the Holy Spirit.
- l. We need to pray that we aren't offending God (Psalm 139:23-24)
- m. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." (Matthew 5:8)

**Next Steps:** *These questions are designed to help you move towards action. With this week's message "Open Heaven / Open Hearts" in mind:*

1. How can we **CONNECT** to God, His Church, and each other?
2. How can we **GROW** more in our faith in God, His Word and in His Church?
3. How can we **GO** love, serve, and help others?