

4 - Keys of the Kingdom
Pastor Joe Oakley - GFC - 3/2/25

We are in a series entitled Seize the Kingdom and last week I introduced the concept of keys of the kingdom of God. We saw that the keys of the kingdom are not given only to special people in God's kingdom – they are given to every single citizen of His kingdom.

I'm preaching a sermon today called The Keys of the Kingdom. Our main verse is found in Matthew 16:19 where Jesus said-

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

In one of the most important passages in the Bible about the church – Jesus said He was giving us the keys of the kingdom. Yet, if I asked you what those keys are – would you know?

In our house we have a key rack just inside the garage door. We hang our keys there when we walk in the house so we don't waste time looking for them when we're ready to leave. Over the years we've lived in that house, many keys to various locks had accumulated on that rack. Awhile back Pastor Deb and I were doing a deep cleaning of our house.

One of the things we did was to go through the keys on that rack and there were many keys hanging there that we were clueless about. We didn't know what locks they went to – maybe to something we no longer had or to a lock that had been broken and fixed and now used a different key.

What I discovered was this – having a key that I could not identify or match to a lock is as useless as not having a key at all. What good are keys you cannot use? That is the exact problem many Christians face today. We have a bunch of keys to the kingdom of God that we don't know how to use. We have the keys, but we don't know which key unlocks which lock. That's why I'm teaching you how to use the keys of the kingdom of God. First we need to define the word "keys."

1- Definitions of Keys-

There are five basic definitions of the word Key -

1. A piece of metal used to open or lock a door
2. A set of answers for a test – known as "the answer key"
3. The thing that will do the most to help you achieve something
 "proper planning is the key to success."
4. The thing that provides understanding to a subject –
 "The key to his behavior was his unhappy childhood."

5. Something that provides a solution to a problem –
 “The key to our scientific breakthrough was our research team.”

I want you to understand that the keys of the kingdom provide all of these things for us. The Keys of the Kingdom:

- open and close doors in life
- provide answers for the tests of life
- help us succeed in life
- provide the understanding we need in life
- provide solutions to the problems of life

2- How Keys Work

What do keys do? Lock or unlock. Bind or loose. Open or close. **Biblically, keys represent three things: authority, access and knowledge.**

Keys work by giving us authority to open or to close. Not everyone who works in business is a key holder. Only those with authority. The main thing I want you to see is that by giving us the keys to the kingdom, Jesus gave us authority to rule and reign on the earth.

Keys work by providing access. A key gives you instant access to everything that key opens. That access gives us freedom. When you have the keys, you are free to come and go as you please.

I remember when Deb and I bought our house. When it was finished we wanted to start moving our stuff in. But the deal had not closed yet, and until the deal closed and funded – that house was not ours. So the builder refused to give us the key until we actually owned it. Once we owned it – we were given the key. That gave us free access to the house. We could open and close it at will. Likewise, **the keys of the kingdom give us instant access to all the resources of heaven!**

Keys also represent knowledge. They are the laws and principles of the kingdom of God. But we must not just know the word – we must be doers of the word. That’s because **keys activate function.**

Have you ever locked your keys in your car? I have and it’s very frustrating. There sits a perfectly good car, in working order, full of gas, ready to take you anywhere you want to go. But without the keys, you cannot start the car!

It’s the same way with the kingdom of God. It’s always there, in working order, full of power, but without the keys of the kingdom, you go nowhere!

Keys cannot be substituted by need, feelings or wishful thinking. If you are locked out of your car, you are going nowhere. No matter how much you need to move.

No matter how bad you feel about not moving. No matter how much you wish you were moving – you're going nowhere without keys.

It's the same way in the kingdom of God. Just needing something is not enough! No matter how much desire for good you have or how bad you feel about where you are in life – you'll go nowhere without keys. **Keys are the key to the kingdom of God!**

There are **six major keys mentioned in the Bible:**

1. The Key of David
2. The Key to Death
3. The Key to Hell
4. The Key of Knowledge
5. The Key of Binding
6. The Key of Loosing

Jesus holds the first three keys and believers hold the last three keys.

3- The Keys Jesus Holds

The Keys to Hell and Death –

In Revelation 1:17-18 Jesus said-

I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Only Jesus has the power over death and hell. He has the only key – but He can give it to others. For instance, Revelation 20:1-3 says:

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended.

I love that passage – because so many people think Satan is so strong. But when the end comes – it only takes one angel with a key to throw him into the abyss.

Jesus has also given us the key of authority over the devil!

Jesus holds the keys of death and hell and he also holds the key of David, which is the ultimate authority to bind and loose. Revelation 3:7 says:

These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open.

What is the key of David? People speculate it is something David was known for, like praise and worship - and there's truth to that.

But we must look to the Scripture for understanding. Isaiah 22:22 talks about the chief overseer of the king's palace. It says:

I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

King David built a palace on Mount Zion; and as you can imagine, not just anyone had a key to that house. Whoever had those keys had authority in the government. They must have been very trustworthy because they had access to the king's treasures and armory and food and family – and they had access to the king himself!

Just as King David was the highest authority in Israel, so is Jesus the highest authority in the kingdom of heaven.

Think about it, King David could shut or open the kingdom of Israel to whomever he pleased. Likewise, the kingdom of God is under the control of Christ. He can open it to whomever He pleases and shut it to whom He will. His decisions will stand forever and none can reverse them.

When Jesus opens a door, no one can shut it. When He closes a door, no one can open it. What are the doors He opens?

- Acts 16:14 says He opens the door of people's hearts
- Revelation 4:1 says He opens the door to heaven
- Colossians 4:3 says He opens doors to speak His word
- Luke 24:45 says He opens our understanding of the Scriptures
- Acts 14:27 says He opens the door to faith
- 1 Cor. 16:9 says He opens the door to ministry

In that passage the apostle Paul said-

A great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

When God opens the door to you, it doesn't matter who opposes you!

When God opens a door, no one can shut it!

No devil in hell or no circumstance on earth can shut what God opens!

What are the doors Jesus closes? Doors to those who try to go around the narrow way. Jesus said He was the only way of salvation - the only way to enter the kingdom of heaven. But many people think they can get in some other way.

I preached on that last week and showed you that people try to enter the kingdom of heaven by good works, religion, power or prestige, by their own wisdom or they believe they will get into heaven because God loves them. But Jesus said in John 3 that only those who are born again will enter the kingdom of heaven! Only those who repent of their sins and place their faith in Jesus Christ will be saved! Those who try to enter in another way will find the door locked!

Jesus holds that key to the kingdom of heaven – not Moses or Mohammed – not Buddha or Bahai – not Confucius or anyone else! Only Jesus! Jesus holds the key of David and the keys to death and Hell.

4- The Keys Believers Hold

Believers hold the Key of Knowledge – the Key of Binding and Key of Loosing. The key of knowledge is mentioned in Luke 11:52

Woe to you experts in the law because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.

Jesus gives us power to shut or open the gospel of truth to people. So He rebuked religious teachers who withheld truth or distorted truth.

Our ministry is to preach the word. We should use the key of knowledge to explain to people the will of God according to the word of God. That's why Jesus told Paul in Acts 26:17-18

I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God's people.

Jesus wants their eyes open, but He gave us the key of knowledge. That includes the ministry of speaking His truth to others, but the key of knowledge is also knowing His word and His principles for ourselves.

Believers also have the keys of binding and loosing. Bind means: to tie up, make unmovable, stop, put an end to, forbid, refuse to allow. Loose means to: unfasten, unbind, untie, release, pardon, and forgive. **One of our ministries is to set captives free.** Things people need to be loosed from include: demons, curses, sins of the fathers, deception, false teaching, soul ties, unhealthy relationships, addictions, any bondage.

The main thing Jesus is talking about is binding the enemy. He said in Matthew 12:28-29:

If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man?

We are to bind Satan and his demons and loose his possessions. What are his possessions? Those he is holding in bondage. The heart of every unconverted sinner is the devil's palace, where he resides and where he rules; he works in the children of disobedience. The devil, as a strong man armed, does everything he can to keep this palace secure for himself, and to fortify it against Christ.

But the preaching of the gospel disturbs the peace of the devil's palace. The truth sets the captives free! Satan is a strong man, but our Lord Jesus is stronger. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world!

Our role in this is to use the keys of binding and loosing to bind the strong man and free the captives. We do this through prayer, intercession and spiritual warfare.

We have the power to bind and loose. We have the keys of the kingdom. And those keys are not just for others, but for us. We need to know what to bind and what to loose in our own lives.

2 Kings 20:12-17 tells the story of how the King of Babylon sent messengers to King Hezekiah when he was sick. They brought presents, but they were really there as spies. Verse 13 says that:

Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures - the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all his armory - all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

The prophet Isaiah rebuked Hezekiah for showing them everything in his kingdom because they would come back to take it in the future.

What I want to show you from this story is what things were under lock and key in the kingdom. There were three main storerooms: the king's treasury, the king's armory and the king's apothecary. They held the king's wealth, the king's weapons and the king's anointing.

Hezekiah got rebuked for opening doors that should've been kept closed. In the natural, a kingdom never reveals all its assets, weapons or power. The US government is always working on secret weapons. Always trying to stay ahead of other governments. In worldly kingdoms, certain things are kept under lock and key so enemies can't steal them. You must have top secret clearance to access certain places and certain information.

But here's what I love - in the kingdom of God – all citizens have all the keys to the kingdom! All citizens of God's kingdom have clearance for all information. All citizens of God's kingdom have an all-access pass to everything. And **God expects us to use those keys!**

I told you earlier how businesses do not give everyone a key. But in the kingdom of God – our King has given everyone in His kingdom the keys to the kingdom. When I managed a store, I gave certain trustworthy people keys to open and close the door. On the days I opened or closed, I used the keys. But on the days someone else was scheduled to open the store, I did not want them calling me to

come in and open up. I wanted them to open the store – that’s why I gave them a key.

And many of us are waiting around for God to open or close a door and I believe He’s saying to us “I gave you the keys of the kingdom... so use them!” Those keys give us access to the King’s treasury, the King’s armory and the King’s anointing.

So – whenever we have a need – we use the keys of the kingdom to access the wealth of heaven. That’s why Philippians 4:19 says

My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

God will supply how many needs? All!
 How will He supply? According to His riches!
 And where are those riches? In glory!
 The keys of the kingdom unlock the treasures of God in heaven!

They also unlock the King’s armory! So whenever the devil attacks – you can access the armor of God and overcome every attack of the evil one.

And the keys of the kingdom give us access to God’s anointing. So – when you’re feeling weak – use those keys to tap into God’s power – it’s the power of the Holy Spirit. So I encourage you today to begin using the keys of the kingdom of God.

- When we’re sick, we have a key called the blood of Jesus.
- When we need wisdom, we have a key called prayer.
- When we feel like we aren’t good enough, we have a key called the grace of God.
- When we need direction, we have a key called the word of God.
- When we feel alone, we have the keys of the presence of God and the family of God.
- When the enemy attacks, we have a key called the name of Jesus.
- When we’ve been hurt by other people, we have a key called forgiveness.
- When we’re depressed, we have a key called the garment of praise.
- When we feel condemnation, we have a key called the righteousness of God.
- When we’re afraid, we have a key called faith!
- When we have a need, we have a key called tithes and offerings that causes God to open up the windows of heaven and pour out blessing!

You have the keys to the kingdom and you can access the wealth of heaven, the wisdom of heaven and the power and anointing of God! You have access into the very throne room of God! You have the authority to overcome the evil one!

You have the keys to the kingdom... so start using them in Jesus’ name!