

Nyack College Day of Prayer

Revelation 3:8

*See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.
I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not
denied my name.*

Throughout my ministry God has given me great opportunities and open doors that were unexpected. While I was serving as a pastor in Pitman, New Jersey I received an invitation from Nyack College, my alma mater, to be the keynote speaker to the men on their Day of Prayer. It was an awesome responsibility and privilege. I was excited about it but I was also nervous. I was going back to the college where I spent six years and would be preaching to the male student body. There was a well known popular women's lecturer and author who was speaking to the women on that Day of Prayer.

I think it helped that I was acquainted with the dean of students who was in charge of scheduling speakers for that day. He knew of me and I had received high recommendations that I would be a good speaker for the Day of Prayer.

We gathered together in the chapel for the service. The men filled the seats. It was crowded. People were everywhere, even up in the balcony. There were professors who had taught me when I was in college, men from Alliance Theological Seminary, along with missionaries and pastors.

The service began with a wonderful time of worship. When the time came for me to speak the dean introduced me and turned the platform over to me. I chose to speak on spiritual warfare using Ephesians 6:12 as the text. I told some stories about spiritual warfare and demonic activity and about the difficulties we faced in Brazil. I also shared some personal struggles with demonic oppression. I don't remember exactly what I said but while I was speaking I sensed the Lord anointing my heart and lips to speak clearly. I could see that men were wrapped up in what I was saying and they seemed to be very responsive.

Of course, I was conscious it wasn't my service. I was just speaker for the hour. The instructions were that when I was finished preaching I would sit down and they would close the service. When I came to the end of my message I finished, turned to the dean of students and asked if he would come to close the service, He paused and stood at the podium for a moment then turned around to me and said, "Dick, I think you need to close the service. You need to give an invitation." Not knowing what else to do, I stood up and just looked at the men and said, "If any of you need to get some things right with God, or if you need to seek the Lord for His deliverance, the altar is open. I will be glad to pray with you."

That's all I said and I sat down. They played a closing song but even before the song began men started to move to the altar. Some students ran to the altar. The altar was filled. They were double lined around the front of the sanctuary. They were in the front pews. They were praying together in small groups of students around the room.

They lined up as I began to pray for students. I would ask them what I should pray for, then lay hands on them and pray. I prayed for one person after another. I was unaware of time passing but finally the dean of students interrupted my prayer time. He grabbed my arm and said, "Dick you're going to overwhelm yourself. You need to stop. You need to go take a break and get lunch. You've been here two hours praying with students."

I was amazed. I didn't sense that two hours had gone by. It was a wonderful and thrilling moment in my life and ministry to have a part in what God was doing in the lives of these young people.

It was many years later while I was serving in Pennsylvania that one of those students happened to be there visiting. He actually grew up in Grove City and he was now a missionary for the Christian Missionary Alliance in Russia. He came to visit his parents and his old home church. I introduced myself and he said. "I know who you are. I was at Nyack when you preached the Day of Prayer. I can tell you exactly what you preached and give your entire outline. He remembered the movement of the Spirit in that place and he said he was so impacted that day that he knew God's hand was on my life.