

## My Story

- ✓ “Please, open the door!”
- ✓ Those were the words I heard that night
- ✓ Mary, John Mark’s mother had sent me to answer the door
- ✓ We were praying at the time—oh we were praying all day and all night
- ✓ See, James, our fearless leader of the Jerusalem church had been killed with the sword by Herod
- ✓ Now, we feared for Peter
- ✓ He had been arrested
- ✓ And without hesitation—we went to praying
- ✓ I learned something about prayer that night I had never known before
- ✓ Prayer is not so much asking God for what we want, but more importantly it is asking God for what He wants
- ✓ Our leaders had told us, they too, and the rest of us, would face persecution, just as Jesus had
- ✓ So, we were asking God, “Is this your will, Lord? Please, open the door of your will to us.”
- ✓ We would be at peace if all this was God’s will
- ✓ You see, every day I served at Mary’s home, I learned what true service was about too
- ✓ It’s not what I want to do, it’s what the head of the house wants that matters
- ✓ This, I was learning, is how the church works too
- ✓ We had to pray and follow God’s leading—and sometimes His leading was right straight into trouble and past it

- ✓ Cause we have to obey God first and then mankind
- ✓ So, let me tell you about that night I tried to answer the door
- ✓ Our prayers and songs of praise were filling us with comfort and hope
- ✓ Our faith was strong—but the clock was ticking
- ✓ At sunrise, Herod would call for Peter and unless something miraculous happened...
- ✓ Peter too would go the way of James, John's older brother
- ✓ We kept knocking on Heaven's door—we kept our prayers going up
- ✓ I brought fresh jugs of water—trays of unleavened bread
- ✓ Our bread and water were sure—our faith was something we wanted to be sure too
- ✓ We were putting Peter and ourselves in God's hands
- ✓ Then, just before midnight a knock on the door of Mary's home
- ✓ Prayers for sure did not cease, but I slipped out quietly to see who might be at the door at such an hour
- ✓ I stepped up to the door, began to open it and thought better...Mary had taught me to show caution in these times
- ✓ Best listen first, and open second
- ✓ When I listened I heard a familiar voice
- ✓ A voice that was unmistakable
- ✓ It was what we all had begun to nickname—the Pentecost Voice (clear throat)
- ✓ It was clearly Peter's voice—Simon Peter
- ✓ One of Jesus' closest disciples

- ✓ I thought though, he's in prison, heavily guarded tonight
- ✓ That couldn't be Peter!
- ✓ But it was his voice!
- ✓ So elated was I, I turned and hastily returned to the prayer room
- ✓ Without interrupting, I passed the word to Mary
- ✓ "It's the sound of Peter's voice at the door...Peter's standing at the door!"
- ✓ Mary asked for a pause in the prayers and reported my words to the fellowship group
- ✓ They looked at me, my eyes were shining, my countenance glowing
- ✓ Whispers carried across the room—
  - a. She's just hearing things
  - b. It's must be his angel
  - c. Rhoda, she must be out of her mind
- ✓ I felt a sense of ridicule and scorn
- ✓ Then I said, "Maybe we should just open the door and see?"
- ✓ Looks of alarm and fear marked the faces of those still kneeling around the room
- ✓ But the knocking at the door continued
- ✓ Finally, I think it was John Mark, Mary's son who said, "Let's open the door and see whether it's Peter...We've been praying for his release. Why not act upon our requests, believe, and open the door."
- ✓ We did just that—we finally opened the door and there, there was, Peter!
- ✓ We were amazed! We let our gasps, shrieks of joy and elation

- ✓ Peter motioned for quiet—and once inside shared the story of his release
- ✓ The story of our answered prayers
- ✓ I, Rhoda, will always be linked with this story and the unopened door
- ✓ But I would like to tell you that although it took me and the fellowship group some time—we eventually opened the door
- ✓ I will always remember that night and the utter thrill of Peter’s voice and then the downright ecstasy inside our hearts when we finally opened the door
- ✓ There’s a lesson here for us all in our faith journey
- ✓ Very clear needs present themselves in our lives
- ✓ We are praying for answers and God is setting about to provide the answers
- ✓ Could it be? That Someone is clearly knocking and we’ve even gone to the door—heard a familiar voice—thrilled at the sound, but left the door unopened?
- ✓ What if—
  - A. You don’t go to the door?
  - ✓ B. You never act on your prayers and faith?
  - ✓ C. You miss the answer to your many prayers?
  - ✓ D. Is your “Peter” left outside, to go where someone else will open their door, who is praying too?
- ✓ I will never forget Peter’s words that night as those in the group returned with me to the door, and this is what we heard... “Please open the door.” – Rhoda