

# Gatekeepers

by Dick Brogden

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*As gatekeepers, we must keep sin out and draw people into the presence of God through praise and verbal exaltation.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 118:19

**Topics:** "Spiritual Leadership", "Praise Worship"

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## Description

Dick Brogden preaches on the spiritual function of gatekeeping, emphasizing the responsibility of spiritual leaders to keep evil out and usher people into God's presence. He highlights the importance of leaders maintaining a high standard to protect their followers from the destructive effects of sin. Brogden also stresses the individual responsibility of each person to enter God's presence through praise, noting that praise is a key element in drawing closer to Jesus and combating unbelief.

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## Transcript

In 1 Chronicles 9 we are told that gatekeeping was a trusted office. Faithful men lived all around the temple and were given the responsibility of preserving holy worship. Tasks varied-some cleaned, some sang, some cooked ["the trusted office of things that were baked in pans" (v. 31)]-but they all united in two main priorities: Keeping evil out and ushering people into the presence of God.

The official office of gatekeeping has passed away but the spiritual function remains. Those in spiritual leadership still function as gatekeepers. They still bear the responsibility to keep evil out (of a team, family, congregation) even while welcoming God's people into His presence. When a leader allows sin into his life, it tends to run amuck among his followers and destroys the vulnerable ones. Spiritual leaders are held to a higher standard, for when they lapse the damage is not contained to their souls-those they have led are also savaged. Do not deceive yourself. The evil you let into your heart will leap from you to your vulnerable ones.

The obligations on a leader (and ramifications on his followers) do not however excuse the followers. Each person is responsible before God to enter His presence. Praise gets you in; unbelief keeps you out.

"Open to me the gates of righteousness, and I will go through them. And I will praise the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord" (Psalm 118:19-20). We can learn something from Muslims in this regard. There is one ubiquitous expression Muslims use: "Al Hamdu Lillah!" It means "Praise be to God." Muslims declare this when they are happy or when they hear sad news. It can be the answer to most any question. If the

unconverted can continually proffer praise, how much more those who have been brought near by the blood of Jesus? Praise in worship settings should be the minority report-in that most of our time is not spent in collective worship but in the marketplace. We should be constant in our verbal praise of Jesus. The person who is constantly praising the Lord is constantly walking towards His presence. Let verbal praise merely be the punctuation on a life that continually magnifies the Lord-out loud!

"So we see that they could not enter [His rest] because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19). If praise keeps you pressing towards God's presence, unbelief marches you away. When we believe, we extol. When we don't believe, we muzzle ourselves and cease declaring the manifold majesties of Jesus. When we stop verbally exalting Jesus, something in our spirit begins to wither and shrink. Verbal witness then is crucial-not just for the hearer but also for the speaker. As we constantly exalt Jesus, it builds something in our own faith. Praise and proclamation draw us to the presence of Jesus. A muted Christianity is a starving Christianity-and it will eventually die. The primary indicator of unbelief is a lack of praise and verbal exaltation of Jesus. Gatekeepers: keep the sin out, draw the seeking heart in through praise

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