



ACTS ONE EIGHT

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." ACTS 1:8

The Open Door

Paul wrote, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ." Colossians 4:2-3.

The online mission field. The Internet has dramatically changed lives throughout much of our world ... changed the way we communicate, learn, play, shop, get news, build relationships, and find information. In addition, it has changed how we perceive our spiritual experience and development. The CyberAtlas Stats Toolbox reports estimates of the 2003 online population at 580 to 655 million worldwide (cyberatlas.internet.com). It also reports estimates of growth (from 22% to 44%) to 709.1 to 945 million in 2004. USA Today reported that over 25% of those online have searched for religious content. Jesus said, "*Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest*", John 4:35. There is a massive field for ministry open through the Internet. A new generation is emerging that will never know life without a personal connection to the Internet. We must lift up our eyes and hearts to look on this expansive opportunity. This borderless electronic mission field is particularly suited for effective and efficient obedience to the Great Commission to "*make disciples of all the nations*". The Internet provides a worldwide 24/7 open door.

Internet Populations. Global Reach (www.greach.com/globstats/) estimates the top ten online populations by native language to be as follows. Since many multi-lingual people outside of English-speaking countries are fluent in English, the actual English-speaking online population is larger than the number of native English-speakers reported below.

English	230,600,000
Chinese	68,400,000
Japanese	61,400,000
Spanish	47,200,000
German	42,000,000
Korean	28,300,000
Italian	24,000,000
French	22,000,000
Russian	18,400,000
Dutch	12,400,000

Conclusions. Internet statistics can hardly keep up with the proliferation of its use. Growth often exceeds projections before statistics can be published. The Internet provides an immense and growing ministry opportunity. The online population is an open mission field in which many of the remotest parts of the earth are now in digital arm's reach. The Internet is an effective and efficient means of discipling and evangelism ... 24/7 throughout the online world. The door of opportunity is opening wider each day as more and more people come online in Cyberspace.