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Grounders:

Have you ever been locked out of something that you wanted to enter, but your keys were locked in that same structure? Was it your car, your house, or your office? Too often, we lock ourselves out of the kingdom of God, the effective reach of His will in our lives. This occurs in an area of life where we have chosen to maintain control. Pride is the lock on the human heart. Humility is the key. In the kingdom of God, the humble are in, and the proud are out...but we often try to pick the lock with control.

***Pride is the lock on the human heart.* Judah's King Asa discovered after 35 years of fully surrendering his heart to God (2 Chron. 15:17-19) that his heart could lock up in pride and fear. In the 36th year of his reign, Asa found his country locked in from the outside world when Baasha king of Israel fortified Ramah to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa king of Judah (2 Chron. 16:1). Asa did not want to lose his kingdom.**

***Control is the pick of fear.* Instead of humbling himself to God, Asa tried to pick the lock to God's kingdom in his life by exercising his own control. He trusted in his giftedness rather than in his godliness. Following this advancement on his kingdom, Asa gave all of the silver and gold from both the temple treasuries and his own palace to a pagan king in order to seek protection and entice that king (Aram's Ben-Hadad) to break his treaty with Israel (2 Chron. 16:2-6). He made a deal to control what he could see.**

***Humility is the key.* Enter Hanani, the seer who reminded Asa of how he had found strength in past battles when he had trusted God rather than pagan kings (2 Chron. 16:7-8). Hanani proceeded to make one of the most famous Old Testament quotes, "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chronicles 16:9). God sees the heart and strengthens those who are fully surrendered to Him.**

A lock is comprised of two concentric cylinders held together by a row of spring loaded pins. A lock's key is the perfect combination to push up each pin in order for the inner cylinder to turn and unlock. However, the lock will never open unless the key is fully surrendered into the lock and the last pin is raised.

What is your pin? What have you refused to surrender to God in lieu of maintaining your own control? Is it a relationship? Is it debt? Is it sex outside of God's will for your life? Is it your career? Is it a past hurt? Is it substance abuse? Is it religion? Is it your time, talent, or treasures? Pride is the lock on your heart. Control is the pick of fear. Humility is the key. Fully surrender what you have held back from God and experience His strength in your heart and life.

Unlocked,

Mitch