

The Church of the Open Door *Revelation 3:7-10*

INTRO:

In Galatians 6:9 we find an important warning to all of us who serve the Lord Jesus Christ, ***“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”*** In this verse, Paul exhorted us not to allow ourselves to become tired, discouraged, or despairing in our doing good things for our Savior. Sometimes the road becomes bumpy and the trials are hard to bear. As the hymn says, *we’re tempted to complain, to murmur and despair*. The principle is that we must not let the road get to us. We must keep our eyes off the circumstances and upon our Lord Jesus. This is also the point the Lord Jesus made to the church of Philadelphia.

Remember, each letter dictated to the seven churches begins with a glimpse of who the Lord is and then describes their works. Some of the letters include a solemn warning and rebuke. However, the letter to the Church of Philadelphia does not contain a reproach.

I. The Behold of Opportunity (v. 7-8)

II. The Behold Of Vindication (v. 9)

III. The Behold Of Culmination (v. 10-11)

I. The Behold of Opportunity (v. 7-8)

A. ***“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens. I know your works. [Behold], I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.’”*** (Revelation 3:7–8)

B. The word translated “see” or “Behold” in this verse means to look at this. Who is the Lord who is calling us to look? He is described in **verse 7**.

1. He is the holy one. (He who is unlike us. He is eternal, infinite, sinless, omnipotent. We are mortal, finite, sinful, weak.) He is “the true.” The one who is the ultimate reality of life. He is the possessor of the “keys of David.” (All authority is given to Him in heaven and earth.) He is the sovereign Lord of the universe. He opens and no man shuts and shuts and no man opens!

2. The message for the Church of Philadelphia is the Lord opened a door for them. This is a tremendous opportunity and blessing.

C. What does it mean that the Lord has opened a door for them? The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church about an open door before him. In **1 Corinthians 16:8-9** we read,

“I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”

This was a door of opportunity for ministry.

1. Our Lord wished the church to recognize that He had opened a door of great opportunity to minister for Him in Philadelphia.
2. Notice that He not only opened the door, no man could shut it. Only the Lord Jesus who opened the door can shut this door.

D. What made them able to take advantage of the door that Christ opened? First, they had little strength. These folks had learned to lean on the Lord and not on their own strength. They understood that if they were going to capitalize on the open door, they could not do it in the strength they possessed. They had learned the lesson of **John 15:5**;

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

They had learned without the Lord’s help, nothing of eternal value could ever be accomplished. They also had learned the principle of **Philippians 4:13**;

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

This church stands in stark contrast to the Laodicean church, who were ***“rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.”*** The Laodiceans were self-sufficient, while the Philadelphians were Savior-sufficient.

E. Secondly, they had kept His Word. The Greek word translated “kept” speaks of guarding and protecting something important. It also strongly implies obedience.

F. Third, they had not denied His name. They were faithful. They held on to the Lord and confessed Him before men, even when the price of confession was severe. Are we willing to own Him in the everyday flow of life? Even when owning Him is not the most popular thing to do? Will all who come behind us find us faithful?

II. The Behold Of Vindication (v. 9)

“Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—[behold] I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.” (Revelation 3:9)

A. Next we find the “behold” of vindication. Whenever there is an open door, you can count on it, you will always find adversaries. Satan does not ever leave God's work go on without opposition. This is the Lord's answer to the adversaries.

B. Behold! Look at this! I will make those who pretend to be my people and are not bow at your feet. The word rendered ***“worship”*** is a word that means to prostrate oneself. This is the posture of worship, but it is also the posture of defeat. Our Lord Jesus promised the

Philadelphian church those who oppose God' work will not succeed. He will give victory over the adversaries. God will vindicate His own people and His work.

III. The Behold Of Culmination (v. 10-12)

“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.” (Revelation 3:10-12)

A. There is one last “behold” we need to see. This one you won't find in the new translations It is the “behold” in **verses 10-12**, the “behold” of Culmination. The promise the church of Philadelphia will be delivered from some earth wide devastation could refer to some judgment in history (perhaps the fall of the Roman Empire, the coming of the Turks, etc.)

B. For the believer who reads this today, it can be applied to the catching away described in **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**.

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.”

The question is are we ready?

1. Do you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior? If you don't, receive Him today.
2. If we know Him, are we busy working with the Lord in accomplishing His work? Are we obedient to His Word? Are we faithful to own Him? Let us be ready when Jesus comes.
3. Until then, let us remember the Apostle Paul's exhorted us to do. **(Galatians 6:9)**
“Do not become weary in well doing for in due time you will reap if you do not give up.”