

“THE CHURCH OF THE OPEN DOOR”
Revelation 3:7-13—The Church of Philadelphia
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INTRODUCTION

As a Local church, the open doors we should fervently desire and pray for are open doors for missionary work and evangelism—spreading the gospel, reaching souls for Christ, baptizing more believers, and adding more to the church.

We live in a prosperous and growing area; we have **many opportunities** all around us.

- There are many un-churched people all around us.
- There are many looking for a good church.
- There are many members of cults who need to be lovingly shown the truth and led to Christ.
- **We are in the very midst of a fruitful mission field “white unto harvest”—and are we apathetic?**

Are we looking for and praying for such opportunities, or are we too caught up in our own issues?

We are going to have to answer to the Lord some day for how we deal with our opportunities!

WE MUST WALK THROUGH THE OPEN DOORS GOD HAS GIVEN US—AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A CHURCH!

I. GODLY CHARACTER (8b, 10a)

Their godly character corresponds to the Lord’s character (7a)

“Holy” means “separate to God, pure”; “true” means “genuine, true, faithful.” Contrast the false synagogue of Satan mentioned in verse nine.

A. True (v. 8)

“kept my word” – includes obedience

“not denied my name” – confess Christ

B. Holy (v. 10)

“Kept the word of my (Christ’s) endurance.” They have endured suffering as he has, and they have come out pure.

“Loved” by Christ (v. 9)

II. GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY (8a)

A. The Person Giving The Opportunity

This opportunity of theirs corresponds to the Lord’s nature as the one who has “the key of David” (7b). [See *Isaiah 22:15 – 23—Shebna and Eliakim*]

“I have set before you an ‘open door.’

B. Those Receiving The Opportunity – the believers in the church and the church itself.

1. Entrance into the kingdom

2. Opportunities in the kingdom (I Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Col. 4:3)

How we need open doors and we need to use them!

No one can shut; but are we going through those doors?

III. GRIEVOUS OPPOSITION (9) [compare the church of Smyrna]

A. You “have a little power” – poverty, persecution, a small group of believers.

This statement is not a rebuke, nor does it list a fault of this church.

- B. The “synagogue of Satan” was opposing them (cf. 2:9; and see Romans to: 28 – 29).
- IV. GREAT RESPONSIBILITY (v. 11) “I am coming quickly” – i.e. soon. “Hold fast what you have.”
 “Let no one take your crown”! [Our opponents, Satan, our flesh]
 To lose one’s crown is to lose one’s reward.
- V. GRAND REWARD (9, 10, 12)
- A. Vindication Before Their Foes (9b)
1. The counterfeit Jewish opponents will calm to bow at the feet (in submission) of these Christians someday.
 2. They will acknowledge that God has loved the Christians (and that they were wrong).
 3. There is some present fulfillment, but the fulfillment primarily occurs at the return of Christ.
 4. Notice the reversal of roles from the Old Testament preeminence of Jews.
- B. Deliverance from the Hour of Testing (v. 10) – “you have kept... I will keep”.
1. Identity: although there may have been some contemporary fulfillment for this church in the first century, the primary fulfillment occurs during the “tribulation period” described in Matthew, Daniel, Revelation, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. This book of Revelation is replete with the description of a great hour of testing coming upon the earth.
 2. Extent: “earth dwellers” – these are the unsaved who are under God’s wrath. Literally they are those who are the inhabitants on the earth.
 3. Purpose: “to test them” – most are further hardened by the testing.
- C. Security in the Coming Age (12)
1. A pillar in the heavenly “Temple” [that means they will have a *beautiful and useful* part in the heavenly Temple; they will also help *uphold the standard of righteousness* and be supportive of all that takes place in that Temple. The concept of a pillar likewise suggests *permanency and security*.
 2. They will “not go out anymore.” [Compare the previous earthquake mentioned above.]
 3. They will have a threefold name: [notice the words “my God” four times in this verse]
 - “of my God”-- the impress of God’s character and ownership.
 - “city of my God”-- their character will conform to the nature of the heavenly city.
 - “Jesus’ new name”-- as the exalted one with both divine and human nature; their character will be formed according to his character.

CONCLUSION

Yes, this church of Philadelphia had godly character, a golden opportunity, grievous opposition, great responsibility, and a grand reward awaiting them.

We can expect the same.

The Lord promises to “keep us from the hour”; he promises to give us “an open door.”

But, “hold fast lest you lose your crown.”

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