

The Faithful Church

The Church at Philadelphia

Revelation 3:7-13 the church at Philadelphia (which means brotherly love) was a very special church.

Pastor Chris this morning spoke about the church at Ephesus (**Revelation 2:1-7**) the church who had left their first love. (The Loveless Church) They had forgotten about loving God with all their hearts. And here we meet the church of brotherly love. This church has maintained its first love and as such is seen as the faithful church.

The church at Philadelphia did not lose its first love and remained faithful to God and to share God's love hence the name. It proves the point when you love God as you should and remain in love you will also remain faithful to Him and His word and to the call. The church at Philadelphia was one of the seven churches and it didn't receive any criticism, condemnation, or blame from Christ.

Revelation 3:9 Jesus said that the day would come when all will know that *"I have loved thee"*. This was a favorite church of Jesus.

The Door

Revelation 3:8 Jesus declared to this church that He has opened the door and no man can shut it. When He opens the door, we cannot shut it, and vice versa. We need to see why it is so important for us to get on God's time schedule. When a door of opportunity opens it is for a specific time. We have to learn to move with God when He says move. When God opens a door for us, we had better go through it. It is vital to respond as God gives us opportunity. This is significant for us today because we have an open door.

Revelation 3:8 in this verse Jesus is saying literally, *"I have given you a door which I myself have opened for you."* This opportunity of the open door was a special gift and privilege. It is something none of the other churches were given.

So what is the door? Revelation 3:8 in this verse Jesus is saying literally, *"I have given you a door which I myself have opened for you."*

- If we think about the idea of a door we see that it is about an opening into another area.
- We can go in and out.
- We can go from this room to that room.
- We can go from this area to that area.

Here in Revelation we go from one level of ministry or influence to another level.

If we look at the reference to the "door" and "open door" in the New Testament, we will discover that the open door was and is the right to preach the gospel, the right to evangelize the world. Many people believe that these seven churches represent the history of the church.

The Church of Philadelphia represents the present age.

It is the age we call the age of grace, the age of the open door, the age when we can preach the gospel. Jesus said the door is wide open. The tense of the verb indicates that the door is open and remains open. It is open until God shuts it. Jesus Christ controls the doors of opportunity to preach the gospel to the nations.

He opens a door of opportunity to his churches; he opens a door of utterance to his ministers; he opens a door of entrance, He opens the heart.

Deliverance

Revelation 3:9-10 Look at the opposition this church endured yet they remained in love with God and faithful to the call. Apparently, the church of Philadelphia and the church at Smyrna were under heavy attack from the Jewish community. Jesus said they were people who claimed to be Jews, but they were not even good Jews.

- They assaulted the character of the Christians and lied about them.
- Many times the property of early Christians was seized.
- They lost their jobs
- Their names were condemned.
- Lies and slander were spread about them that destroyed their reputations.

It may be a long time coming and it may not be on our time schedule. When you and I keep our first love and remain faithful and persevere we will be vindicated and preserved.

Christ's return

Revelation 3:11-13 in this section of the letter to the church at Philadelphia Jesus speaks to the church to remind these saints of the wonderful promise of his return. This church remained with their first love they never lost it, they remained faithful, which means they preached the gospel wherever they were.

The church that is going and growing is the one that is looking for the return of Christ. **Revelation 3:11** the crown that he mentions here is not salvation. It does not mean that someone can take our salvation away from us.

Our crown is our reward; we get that reward by our works. We are saved by faith but we are rewarded because of works.

Revelation 3:11 Jesus said, *"Hold fast what you have, and do not let anybody take your crown."* **Hebrews 10:19-25** hold fast to your profession of faith, your trust in Christ, and your relationship to Him. Hold it fast so that no person or thing will take your crown. In other words, do not let anything get between you and your relationship with God maintain and grow your first love and let that flood out in faithfulness to a dying world.

In closing

There is one question I want you to ask yourself. *"Is our church fulfilling the responsibility of evangelizing our community and are you fulfilling your part within the body of believers here at Cornerstone, to evangelize our community."*

An open door lies before us. Are we going through it to reach these people who are without Christ? It is as easy as taking your fishing pole and heading out to the lake to go fishing for fish. If we want to evangelize our community we need to go fishing. **Mark 16:15-20** after Jesus ratified the New Covenant, He instructed the Church to preach the gospel to lay hands on the sick etc in His name. **Mark 16:17-18** the enormity of Christianity is that God manifests Himself to the world through the believer. **Mark 16:20** we see that the Holy Ghost works with the believer confirming His Word (the Covenant) by healing the sick.

We confirm the covenants of God when we go about honouring the Word of God.