



Empowering People to Change the World

The Church at Philadelphia: Law of the Open Door Part III

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The Church at Philadelphia-Church of the Open Door (part 3)

We are in the book of Revelation, studying the Church in Philadelphia—don't get too excited. We are not talking about the church in Pennsylvania but rather a church in Asia Minor...

- Looking at the 7 churches in Revelation.
- Historical meaning, local meaning, and translocal meaning.
- Gives us insight into the heart of God—heart of the church.
- We have been focused on the church in Philadelphia as it relates to the Law of the Open Door.

Rev 3:7 “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. See, 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.

Our Thesis: Law of the Open Door—We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, but Open Doors are based on works alone.

- Martin Luther: “We are saved by faith alone but not faith that is alone.”
- He says to all the churches in Revelation “I know your works.”
- We are talking about God opening doors in our lives: marriage is an open door; job opportunities are open doors; having a baby is an open door; opportunities to share our faith with others...

“He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”:

- “the key of David” is mentioned. What does that mean? Obviously a key is needed for opening locked doors. Do you know that there are locked doors? There are doors locked to you—to keep you out, to get you discouraged. Satan and demons, people, can lock you out of situations. That’s what evil is all about.
- The key of David is intimacy, a heart after God:
 - God’s love for David and David’s love for God.
 - One of the most important verses in the Bible in relation to how God opens and closes doors in our life.
 - **1 Samuel 13:14 But now your kingdom shall not continue.** (Speaking of Saul. God is shutting a door on Saul because his heart is not right. He’s not an obedience man.) **The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.** (David’s is being given an open door because of his tender heart toward God.)
 - God is searching for the right kind of hearts, the right kinds of people, leaders.
 - **2 Chronicles 16:9 - For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.**
 - This is the key to David’s success. This is the key of David, his tenderness toward God, his faithfulness in his heart. God notices that! God still notices loyal, devoted, worshipping and warring hearts.
 - What sets David apart from anyone in the Bible is not his skill, good looks, or talent. There were thousands more talented, more skilled, more gifted. David’s heart, passion, humility set him apart.
 - Two weeks ago I shared that the first work, the most important work of all in our lives is “clinging to Jesus”, abiding in Him. (John 15)

- This is intimacy—experiencing God’s love! The veil was torn in two at the cross—in the Temple this massive veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, that only the High Priest could enter.
- It was God’s special dwelling place in the midst of His people. During the Israelites’ wanderings in the wilderness, God appeared as a pillar of cloud or fire in and above the Holy of Holies.
- A thick curtain separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. This curtain, known as the “veil,” was made of fine linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn. There were figures of cherubim (angels) embroidered onto it. Cherubim, spirits who serve God, were in the presence of God to demonstrate His almighty power and majesty. They also guarded the throne of God. These cherubim were also on the innermost layer of covering of the tent. If one looked upward, they would see the cherubim figures.
- In ancient Rabbinic writings, the thickness of the veil was a handbreadth or the thickness of a man’s hand—around 4 inches
- As the veil was torn, the Holy of Holies was exposed. God’s presence was now accessible to all. Shocking as this may have been to the priests ministering in the temple that day, it is indeed good news to us as believers, because we know that Jesus’ death has atoned for our sins and made us right before God. The torn veil illustrated Jesus’ body broken for us, opening the way for us to come to God. As Jesus cried out “It is finished!” on the cross, He was indeed proclaiming that God’s redemptive plan was now complete. The age of animal offerings was over. The ultimate offering had been sacrificed.
- We can now boldly enter into God’s presence, “the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf.” (Hebrews 6:19-20)
- *“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body ...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.” (Hebrews 10:19-22)*

- When we are clinging to Jesus, worshipping Him with all of our heart; seeking His heart, you don't know it but you are actually opening doors in the 4th dimension that will eventually impact the 3^d dimension.
- I talked about contending in prayer! Without overstating what I said before, intimacy with Jesus always leads to contending, battling in prayer!

“See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength,

- I like this! Just a “little strength” is needed. Not our own strength, not in our own power—God’s power; God’s strength.
- Surrendering to God’s power, to God’s will.
- Paul in writing to Corinthians writes, “a great and effective door has opened to me, and *there are* many adversaries.”
- God will open doors that no man can shut but that doesn’t mean the doors will be easy to walk through!
- Look again at David—anointed to be king by Samuel, quite the open door, and then for the next 17 years all hell breaks loose!!
- David goes into Saul’s court, does everything Saul asked of him, and gets spears thrown at him!!
- You don’t need great strength—as a matter of fact great strength might be the last thing you need. If it’s in your own power and might, God often can’t use you.

- **2 Corinthians 12:7 - And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

“have kept my word”

King David probably spoke more about God’s Word than anyone else.

- “I have Hidden the Word of God in my heart that I might not sin against thee.”
- “Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path.”
- Over and over again, he speaks of God’s Word being so important to him.
- Psalms 138:2 - I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name. For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name.
- You can do all kinds of things with the name of God...I mean today we have the:
 - “Man’s Bible”, the “Women’s Bible.”,
 - “Mother’s Bible.”
 - “Teen Bible.”
 - “Outdoorsmen Bible.”
 - “Queen James Bible.”
- Politically correct Bible now! He’s not just “Father God”, He’s “Mother God.”
- We now have this impudent, anemic Jesus who approves of any alternative lifestyle...He didn’t really talk about coming back and judging the earth someday.

- You shouldn't talk about sin, because that just really messes up people's self image.
- You shouldn't talk about gender because Jesus just keeps have component malfunctions.
- Look what they have done with the name of Jesus.
 - "Jesus" is a curse word...at work, someone blows it and they shout "Jesus"...
 - Why don't they ever say "Oh Buddah!"
 - "Oh Harri Krishna!"
- "For You have magnified Your word above all Your name"
 - It is the Word of God that the Dictatorships and Communist gov'ts confiscate.
 - It is the Word that interprets the name.
 - The Jesus we believe in is the Jesus of the Bible! We don't believe in the politically correct, anemic Jesus of our culture.
 - We believe in Jesus, the Savior of the world, the King of glory, the one who was born of a virgin, who lived a sinless life, who died for the sins of the world, rose again on the third day, who is coming back to judge this earth in power Jesus!!!
 - That's the Jesus we believe in.
 - You can say that Jesus was not born of a virgin! You can say that Jesus didn't rise from the grave! You can say it all you want...but don't tell us that the Bible doesn't teach it.
 - At a First Grade reading level you can see that Jesus was born of a virgin...that Jesus rose from the grave.
 - I can't imagine watching the CNN and FoxNews without the Bible.

- I am so excited that I can know the news before it comes out by reading this Book.
- I am so glad that “the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” NKJV

“You have not denied My name.”

- You have not denied your witness with others.
- You have not turned your back on Jesus.
- Luke 12:8-9 - Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. 9 But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. NKJV
- But Peter denied Jesus!! Yes He did and all of us have denied Jesus’ name, and there is forgiveness.
- Revelation 12:11 - And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. NKJV
- Your testimony is very important.
- You are opening the heavens, opening doors over your life when you share your faith in Christ.
- You are opening doors when you acknowledge openly and winsomely that you are a follower of Jesus.

Vs. 9

Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

- A very difficult passage because we know that all through the Bible God promises to bless Israel, to bless those who bless Israel.

- The Bible is adamant in being against all anti-semitism.
- Historically we know that this is a Synagogue that is hell bent on persecuting the believers in Philadelphia, not in the name of God or the Bible...
- Isaiah prophecies that someday all the nations of the world will come to Jerusalem and bow down and acknowledge the Jewish nation and the Messiah.
- Before that day that day the Jews will acknowledge Christ as their Messiah.

Vs. 10

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.

- We are going to be spared the evil, The Great Tribulation, that is coming upon the earth.
- And there is a divide between the pre-tribulationists, mid, and post-tribulationists over that what it means.
- If this is new to you, you need to know that I have studied this ad nauseum and read books and read commentaries and I am a “pre-tribulationist.”
- I believe God will lift us out of this world before the great tribulation comes.
- But there are post-tribulationist who believe that the church will go through the tribulation and Christ will come back after that.
- The mid-tribulationist believes we will be taken out half-way through the tribulation.
- I believe that this passage is speaking of Christ taking us to heaven before the great tribulation.
- This is just not what the word means, there is no protecting, preserving through the great tribulation.

- We will be “kept” from the Great Tribulation...we will be kept from THE HOUR, definite article! That will “test” the whole earth! This will be global judgment in nature.
- “those who dwell on the earth” or “earth dwellers” is used 10x in the Revelation, always speaking of non-believers.
- So, I believe that He will take us out. We will be preserved.
- We will soon see that from Revelation 4 onward the church is never mentioned again...Rev. 4 gives us a “type” of the rapture as John is taken up into heaven.
- Pray for Pre-Tribulation but Prepare for Mid and Post!

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 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.13 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

- We don't have to be more than we are because He is all that we need.
- Jesus is the overcomer! Thus, we are overcomers! The Lord is going to make you a pillar in the Temple of God.
- There were these two large pillars at Solomon's Temple. One was Boaz and the other was Jason. Boaz means to strengthen and Jason means to establish.
- Certainly for a church with a little strength, what a comfort to know that God is going to strengthen and establish them.
- God will establish this church if we will remain faithful.
- But this is not just the Temple Present but in the Holy of Holies. This is in the Holy of Holies in the Temple...His presence will be with us.

- We will never lose the presence of God ever again!! This is the key of David—intimacy with Jesus.
- If we remain faithful He will establish this Church, establish you with a new name, a new city, a new address—resident of the city .