

Email from Jesus
Revelation 3:7-13

Midweek Instruction
Reid Temple AME Church
Pastor Washington



What Kind of Church Does Jesus Prefer?

- Baptist
- Methodist
- Lutheran
- Catholic
- Presbyterian
- African Methodist Episcopal
- Episcopal
- Anglican



Types of Church

- Rural
- Mega
- City
- Multisite
- Independent
- Old
- New
- Church Plant

Growing Faith

- Revelation tells us the sort of Church Jesus prefers. Jesus is looking at a Church that develops faith out of its most difficult aspects of its existence.
- Developing faith includes faith in God's timing. Faith is believing an unshakeable God when everything in me trembles and quakes. Faith is the bridge between where I am and where God wants me to be.
- Jesus is looking for hope, love, truth, faithfulness under pressure and unashamed of His name.



The Church Jesus Builds

- The Church Jesus described often has little resemblance to Churches today. Mt. 16:18 Jesus tells us about the character of the Church He will build.
- The Church is built on Jesus. Jesus is the foundation. Jesus death, blood and resurrection are central to the Church. To many churches today are getting fat with a feel good gospel when they need a diet of Jesus filled reality.
- Jesus Church is a militant Church. The Church Jesus builds is not weak, but is on the move.

Church of Philadelphia



The Church of Philadelphia

- Many have called this a weak little Church but it is the only Church that doesn't receive any condemnation. This church did not just proclaim what God did, this Church was what God was doing in the world.
- If Jesus is kept at the center of who we are and what we do, Jesus will be glorified and we will grow in the Spirit as a result.
- If we make much of Jesus as a Church, Jesus will make much of us as His children.

No Words of Condemnation – Rev. 3:7-13

- It is not coincidental that the Church of Philadelphia and Smyrna were facing strong opposition because of their bold witness.
- Hard times generally make for strong churches, especially when the hard times come because the church refuses to compromise the gospel.
- The Church of Philadelphia stood as a literal doorway to the rest of Asia Minor. The church in that city was the youngest and smallest of the 7 Churches of Revelation.

A Church the Devil Can't Handle

- There are observations Jesus wants his Church to make. I know your deeds. I know you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and not denied my name.
- We are to look at the model of the Church of Philadelphia because it is a Church that the devil can't handle. If the church doesn't make disciples the church will dissolve.
- We are to look to see how to become that kind of Church. Jesus is the one who controls the activities of that Church.

Consider the Opportunity- v7-8

- These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut.
- And what He shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.
- I know you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name



Christ Opens the Doors

- Sometimes people ask, “how can I know when God has opened a door?”
- There are various ways to answer that question, but the simplest answer is, “you won’t know until you go through the door.”
- It has been my experience that sometimes the door is obvious and we just walk right through.

The Message of Doors

- We all know what a door is. It is the moveable barrier for opening and closing an entrance way.
- Doors represent either access or denial depending on whether it is open or closed.
- Doors appear in the bible 263 times. John 10:9 Jesus calls Himself the door. Rev. 3:20 Jesus standing at the door and knocking that is conviction.

The Ministry of Doors

- Open and shut doors of our lives have the ability to change the course of our lives. Acts 12:1-7, Acts 16:6-10.
- God set an open door before the Church in Philadelphia, they were weak, but they were given a glorious opportunity.
- When God opens a door we should also step through the door by faith without hesitation.

The Master of Doors

- V7-8 makes it crystal clear that Jesus is the door keeper. Jesus is the master of the doors of life.
- Jesus opens doors and closes doors as it pleases Him. Jesus holds the keys and determines which doors are opened and which doors remain closed.
- Every open door is the expression of the love of God and His activity in our lives, so is every closed door.

Jesus Opens Doors

- It is the Lord's doing to open doors. Jesus is very good at opening doors and doesn't need our help.
- Our job is to go through the doors he opens, one step at a time one foot in front of the other, going wherever Jesus may lead us.
- One door may open, and then it may close. That is okay, another door may open, that is okay. We may have to sit still for a while waiting for a door to open. That is okay because Jesus is sovereign over the doors of life and we can trust Him.



Knowing the Future

- It is a good thing we don't know the future because we couldn't handle it.
- The future with all its ups and downs, twists and turns with all the unexpected things that we don't see coming, it is all so overwhelming that if we knew what was coming, we would probably run the other way.
- Life is better lived one day at a time. Open doors are like that. God rarely shows us the big picture in advance, the open door is usually a door pushed slightly open. We still have to summon the courage to go through the door and see what's on the other side.

Christ Honors Faith, Not Strength

- V8 I know that you have little strength. Little strength and great opportunity often go hand in hand.
- Sometimes small churches think there is little they can do for the Lord. But it is all a matter of perspective. The church at Philadelphia had little strength. They didn't have much money or influential people.
- We may not be wise or eloquent as someone else, and may not have money or influence, may not be educated as well or connected, but if you can trust the Lord just as well as any one else.

Consider Our Opposition v9

- Satan hates gospel preaching and genuine gospel preaches. The door of opportunity swings on the hinges of opposition.
- When a person decides they are going to stand for Jesus, they decide to tell the community and the whole world about Jesus, there will be enemies soon enough and not all of them are outside the Church.
- Some of the fiercest critics will be found among those who listen to the preacher preach because we live in a day when people even good church people would prefer to not offend the community.

Faith

*is seeing light
with your heart
when all your eyes
see is darkness*

Kept The Faith v10

- What is it that God honors? God honors faith. What is it that God is looking for? Faith. What does God reward? Faith
- How much faith does God require? Not much, faith like a mustard seed. Just a tiny bit. Not the faith of many years and deep knowledge, but He honors the faith of a child.
- Simple faith!

You Kept My Word. You Have Not Denied My Name

- Two wonderful things are happening. Holding fast to the words of Jesus. Second, you aren't embarrassed as you hold on to the name of Jesus.
- Some people feel slight ashamed of their faith. They follow Jesus but keep it to themselves. Don't rock the boat, don't cause problems, don't stir up trouble.

You Kept My Word. You Have Not Denied My Name

- When Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica in Acts 17 it is said that “these who have turned the world upside down have come here too.”
- Could anyone say that about you? What a great thing to have said about you, that you managed to turn the world upside down.

We Have Been Vindicated – v9

- I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars-I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.
- The synagogue of Satan refers to those Jews in Philadelphia who persecuted the early believers. They saw Jesus as a threat to their way of life and hated Jesus and those who followed him.
- Jesus says they are liars and that is not all, the day will come when these hostile enemies will bow down and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. We must not be intimidated by those who have no use for Jesus.

We Will Be Protected – v10

- Since you have kept my command to endure patiently. I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.
- Sometimes the best you can do is just endure patiently. Spiritual warfare isn't all roses and rainbows.
- Sometimes it means not giving up when you feel like throwing in the towel. Our Lord makes a precious promise to these suffering saints. He looks ahead to the time of trial that will engulf the whole world before Christ comes to establish his kingdom on the earth.