

“The Church of the Open Door”

(Rev. 3:7-13)

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I. Introduction

A. Missions & the days of the open door

1. *William Carey*

- a. English shoe cobbler
- b. Burdened for the lost of India
- c. Pleaded their need before the Baptist hierarchy

- Moderator’s words

“Sit down, young man, sit down. When God wants to convert the heathen, He will do it without your help or mine”

- d. He went anyway in 1792
 - Founded mission 18 miles up the Ganges River
 - Under Danish jurisdiction
- e. Founded the present-day “Faith Missionary Movement”
- f. Opened up the world!
 - Doors flew open!

2. *Adoniram Judson*

- a. First American foreign missionary in 1813
- b. Thrown out of India

1. Went to Rangoon, Burma
2. Six years without a convert
- c. Lived to see thousands come to Christ

B. In the 1800's missionaries started to pour out

1. Others went to:
 - a. Africa
 - b. China
 - c. Japan
 - d. Korea
 - e. South America
 - f. Islands of the Sea
2. Some have called it the time of the "Open Door"

C. Today, Philadelphia....the Church of the "Open Door"

1. One of the Seven Churches of Revelation (Rev. 3:7-13)
2. Represents all those churches having a heart to reach the lost

II. Review

A. The Seven Churches

1. Ephesus
2. Smyrna
3. Pergamum
4. Thyatira
5. Sardis
6. Philadelphia

- a. The missionary Church

III. Text

A. Author (v.7)

1. Description of Jesus Christ

2. Several attributes

- a. ***“Holy”***

1. “hagios”
2. (Isa. 6:3)—“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts”

- b. ***“True”***

1. “ale thinos”

*The very definition of truth

- c. ***“who holds the key of David”***

1. Quotes from Isa. 22:22

“The Key of the House of David I will lay on his shoulder; so he shall open and no one shall shut; and he shall shut, and no one shall open.”

2. Isaiah was referring to Eliakim

- He was the right-hand man of King Hezekiah
- He determined who was allowed into the presence of the King
- He held the keys

3. Jesus holds the key to God’s presence

(John 14:6)—“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

4. That's how you get to Heaven

- He unlocked Salvation for all who believe

B. The Congregation (v.8)

1. The City

a. The name—Philadelphia

1. “philio” — love
2. “adelphos” — brotherly

b. Today known as Alshir in Turkey

c. Situated in a vast volcanic plain

1. Were constantly fleeing the city
2. Recurring after-shocks would drive the people out of the city in sheer panic

2. The church in Philadelphia.....during John's writing

- a. Missionary minded
- b. Situated on the “gateway to Asia”
- c. They seized opportunities to spread the Gospel
- d. Endured faithfully

3. The church....in history

- a. Remained the last bastion of Christianity in Asia as Islam spread after 600 AD
- b. Held out against Muslim invasion as all the other cities surrendered
 1. Stood alone for 12 years
 2. It fell in 1390 to the Muslim conqueror Timur

*He built a wall with the corpses of Christians

- c. The final group of Christians continued to fly the banner of Christ for another 500 years
 - d. Finally fled the city during WW I
4. Similar to an era in church history beginning in 1800
- a. Missionaries poured through open doors

C. The Concern (none)

1. One of two churches with no concerns or criticism
2. The other was the suffering church of Smyrna

D. The Commendation (v.8-10)

1. *"I know your deeds".....v.8*
 - a. *"you have little strength, yet you have kept my Word"....v.8*
 - Obeyed His commandments in the Bible
 - Even though they had very little personal strength
 - b. *"and have not denied My Name".....v.8*
 - Told people about Jesus
 - Not ashamed
 - c. *"have persevered"....v.10*
 - Didn't quit despite persecution
2. God gave them special opportunities to serve (v.8)
 - a. *"See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut."v.8*
 1. Philadelphia was the doorway to Asia
 2. They took advantage of opportunities

E. Thoughts regarding open doors

1. *Open Doors are special opportunities to serve*

a. Paul in Ephesus

1. (I Cor. 16:8) ***“But I will stay at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me,”***

b. Don’t have to “force” the Gospel

1. God prepares the hearts of people

c. You should be constantly looking for open doors

1. Some one who is—

—lonely

—sad

—desperate

—sick

—broke financially

d. We tend to think of mission as a field far away...instead of the people around us

1. Look for ***people*** who are open

2. *Struggles accompany most open doors*

a. Don’t expect it to be easy

b. Paul in Ephesus

1. (I Cor. 16:8-9) ***“But I will stay at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many people who oppose me.”***

c. It’s people that bring the greatest obstacles...and heartbreaks

d. Some are just plain tools of Satan

*Conversation with “Al”

e. Don't grow weary in well doing

3. *Our church is facing a series of open doors*

a. We are in a special place and time

b. Telling “The Chapel Pointe Story”

c. We have seized the opportunities

1. New families pouring into our church

2. God is doing something special here

d. But God will continue to send more doors

e. We have an opportunity to be a part of something special

1. God isn't done building great churches

2. He is more than capable of doing it here

3. We are just getting started

4. Don't grow complacent

f. People are searching for a church tuned in to the needs of the 21st century...but anchored in a personal faith in Jesus Christ

4. *Open doors close when people delay*

a. Delay in seizing an opportunity is tantamount to letting the door slam shut prior to entering

b. God will let others seize the opportunity

c. You should be driven by a sense of urgency

d. The opportunity may never again occur!

e. Some churches die because they failed to walk through open doors

1. The open doors for this church
2. If we hesitate.....watch out!

5. *God sometimes closes doors for your benefit*

- a. And you don't know why
- b. He may have something better for you
- c. Or He might be protecting you
- d. Gary and Calvary Baptist

6. *Doors are often everyday situations*

- a. God works through everyday situations
 1. Meet a person who is hurting
 2. New neighbor moves in
 - And they are friendly toward you!
- b. Service in this church
 1. Someone asks you
 2. You aren't doing anything
 3. Would enjoy it
 4. "Go man!"
- c. Pour your heart into your area of ministry
 1. Strive for excellence
 2. Need to make it your passion
- d. Open doors are all around you
 1. They are here...and they are now

7. *Failure to walk through an open door may be a sin*

- a. A sin of omission
- b. Failure to serve in the local church when feeling led
- c. Failure to enter an open door will cost you greatly
 - 1. God wants to bless you
 - 2. The open door is a venue of blessing

8. *Prayer opens more doors than shoving*

- a. Only God can open doors
- b. Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the mighty muscle of Omnipotence
- c. God prepares the heart of your friends
- d. Can't be pried open by you
 - Patience
 - Don't get pushy!

9. *Beware of doors that lead nowhere*

- a. The Winchester Mansion
 - 1. San Jose, California
 - 2. The widow of the rifle maker
 - 3. She feared ghosts of those killed by her husband's rifles
 - a. Told to keep building so ghosts would be confused
 - 4. Stairways to nowhere
 - 5. Doors to nowhere!
- b. Satan's doors that lead nowhere
 - 1. Will keep you busy...but lead you nowhere

- c. Like sitting in a rocking chair
 - 1. It will keep you busy
 - 2. But it won't get you anywhere

10. Don't be quick to give up on closed doors

- a. When you feel passionate....but a door is closed
 - 1. May be closed.....but not locked
- b. It might be the right ministry...but the wrong time
 - 1. They may not be ready yet
 - 2. or, you may not be ready yet
- c. When I was first approached in Vista:
 - 1. It wasn't time
 - 2. I never shared why I said "no"
 - 3. If God was in it, He would work it out
 - And He did
- d. God honors proper persistence

11. You can't go through the big doors until you have first gone through the small doors

- a. Opportunities are progressive
- b. Must prove self with the smaller ones

12. God will limit the open doors for those with unconfessed sin in their lives

- a. God places high premium on purity
- b. Your job is to search out the sin in your life
 - God will then open doors

- c. God uses clean instruments
- d. Great opportunities always seem to find those with clean hearts

F. ...back to verse 9...

1. Their enemies would one day acknowledge the truth (9)
 - a. Some said they were the true Jews
 1. Not true Jews inside their hearts
 - b. Would someday acknowledge God's love for the true believers
2. The believers would be delivered from the hour of trial (v.10)
 - a. The coming "Hour of Trial"
 1. When is it?
 2. The Tribulation
 - a. When God will judge the unrighteous
 - b. And restore the Jews
 - Time of Jacob's Sorrow
 - b. The Church will be delivered from that time
 1. Rev. 2 & 3 – Church on earth
 2. Rev. 4 & 5 – Church in Heaven
 3. Rev. 6 → The Tribulation...the Hour of Trial

G. The Challenge (v.11-13)

1. When will they be delivered?
 - a. *"I am coming soon"....v.11*
 1. Next item on God's timetable

2. Idea of “*sudden*”—not “*soon*”
3. “Behold I come “*quickly*”
 - b. Will come to deliver the faithful
2. Don’t let crowns / rewards slip away....v.11
 - a. Examples abound
 - b. (*Col. 2:18*)—“*Let no one defraud you of your reward...*”
3. The overcomer’s reward.....v.12
 - a. The faithful Christian
 - b. Rewards—

1. “Pillar in God’s temple”.....v.12

- a. Pillars erected to honor great citizens
- b. A pillar in Heaven in your honor
 - *in the heavenly temple

2. “Never again will he leave it”....v.12

- a. Earthquakes in Philadelphia
 - *would have to flee the city
- b. But not in Eternal City

3. Bear God’s name....v.12

- a. Called “a child of God”

4. Bear the name of God’s City....v.12

- a. People from New York City...
 1. Proud
 - b. A permanent passport

c. A permanent resident

1. Versus illegal aliens

2. Fear being discovered

5. Bear the new name of Jesus.....v.12

a. Rev. 19:12—“...He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.”

b. And we’ll get it!

1. Like a bride gets husband’s name

*Filling out Marriage license

Important information on signatures

If either intends to change their name upon marriage, and as the signatures of the couple would follow the Marriage Ceremony, the name to be used as a result of the marriage is the preferred signature.

2. We are the bride of Christ

*”Christ-ian”

4. Are you listening to what the Spirit is saying? (v.13)

a. What open doors do you face?

b. Don’t hesitate