

Going Deeper Study Guide

The Church in Philadelphia: The Submitted, Persevering Church

Revelation 3:7–13

Based on Sunday's sermon

Sermon Summary

Of all seven churches, Philadelphia receives no rebuke from Christ. This was not a large, influential, or powerful church. In fact, Jesus describes them as having "little power." Yet they were faithful. They kept His Word, did not deny His name, and patiently endured hardship.

The church's confidence was not found in its strength, resources, influence, or numbers. Their confidence rested in the sovereign Christ—the Holy One, the True One, the One who holds the key of David and opens doors that no one can shut.

While the world values power, prestige, and influence, Christ delights in using weak and seemingly insignificant people for His glory. The church in Philadelphia reminds us that faithfulness matters more than prominence. Christ opens doors for gospel ministry, guards His people through trials, and promises an eternal inheritance to those who persevere.

Key Truth

The strength of Christ is greater than the weakness of His church.

Faithfulness is not measured by size, influence, or visible success.
Faithfulness is measured by obedience, endurance, and trust in Christ.

Digging Into the Text

1. What do Christ's titles reveal about Him?

Read Revelation 3:7

Jesus identifies Himself as:

- The Holy One
- The True One
- The One who holds the key of David

Questions

- Why is Christ's holiness important for believers living in a sinful culture?
- How does knowing Christ is "the True One" help us navigate a world filled with competing truth claims?
- What comfort do you find in knowing Jesus alone possesses the authority to open and shut doors?

Cross References

- Isaiah 55:8–9
- Isaiah 22:22
- John 14:6
- Colossians 1:15–18

2. Why does Christ commend this church?

Read Revelation 3:8

Jesus highlights three things:

1. They had little power.
2. They kept His Word.
3. They did not deny His name.

Notice that Christ does not praise their influence, size, or accomplishments.

Questions

- What kinds of things do churches often measure success by today?
- Why is obedience more important than visible results?
- Have you ever felt insignificant in serving Christ? How does this passage encourage you?

Application

God does not require greatness from His people; He requires faithfulness.

3. What is the "open door" Christ sets before them?

Read Revelation 3:8

The sermon emphasized that the open door is ultimately Christ's sovereign work of advancing His kingdom through the gospel. Christ opens hearts, minds, and opportunities that no one else can create.

Questions

- What opportunities has God placed before you right now?
- Are there gospel conversations or ministry opportunities you have been hesitant to pursue?
- What would it look like to simply walk through the doors Christ has opened?

Cross References

- Acts 16:14
- Luke 24:45
- Romans 1:16
- 1 Corinthians 16:9

Application

Our responsibility is not to force doors open. Our responsibility is to walk faithfully through the doors Christ opens.

4. What does patient endurance look like?

Read Revelation 3:10–11

The church had already endured faithfully, yet Jesus calls them to continue enduring.

Questions

- Why is endurance often harder than starting well?
- What trials are testing your faith right now?
- How does Christ's promise to keep His people encourage you?

Cross References

- Hebrews 12:1–3
- James 1:2–4
- Romans 5:3–5
- 1 Peter 1:6–9

Application

Christ does not promise a trial-free life. He promises His presence and preservation through every trial.

5. What hope is given to those who conquer?

Read Revelation 3:12–13

Jesus gives several promises:

- A permanent place in God's temple
- The name of God written upon them
- Citizenship in the New Jerusalem
- Christ's own new name

These promises communicate belonging, security, identity, and permanence.

Questions

- Why do believers often seek identity in things other than Christ?
- What does it mean that believers belong permanently to God?
- How does eternal hope strengthen present faithfulness?

Cross References

- Philippians 3:20
- Hebrews 11:13–16

- Revelation 21:1–4
- Revelation 22:1–5

Theology Matters

Christ's Sovereignty

Jesus is not reacting to events. He rules over them.

The church in Philadelphia was not successful because of its strength. It was fruitful because Christ was sovereign.

God's Power Through Weakness

Throughout Scripture, God delights in using weak things to display His glory.

- Moses was hesitant.
- Gideon's army was reduced.
- David was overlooked.
- The disciples were ordinary men.
- Philadelphia had little power.

Yet God used them all.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:26–31

Family Worship Guide

Read Together

Revelation 3:7–13

Discuss Together

1. Why was the church in Philadelphia special?
2. What does it mean that Jesus holds the key of David?
3. What is an "open door" God might give believers?
4. Why should we keep following Jesus even when life is hard?
5. What promises does Jesus give to His people?

Family Activity

Take turns sharing one way you feel weak or inadequate.

Then read:

2 Corinthians 12:9

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Pray together, thanking God that His strength is enough for every weakness.

Memory Verse

Revelation 3:8b (ESV)

"I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name."

Prayer Focus

Lord Jesus, thank You that our hope is not found in our strength, abilities, numbers, or influence. Thank You that You are the Holy One, the True One, and the Sovereign King who opens doors no one can shut. Help us remain faithful to Your Word, endure patiently through trials, and boldly walk through every gospel opportunity You place before us. Keep our eyes fixed on the glorious hope that awaits all who belong to You. Amen.