

(1) Churches come in all sizes and shapes. Some are huge (the so-called “mega-church”) and some are comparatively small (the “mini-church”). Let each person describe their own personal experience of church life, focusing on the size, influence, and power of the churches they’ve attended. What were the good things and bad things in both size cultures? Why? What do you think are the unique challenges that large churches face? Small churches too?

(2) How does it help you in difficult times of pain or persecution or loneliness to know that Jesus identifies himself as the one who has set before us “an open door which no one is able shut”? What does this latter phrase mean? Of what practical help is it to know this about Jesus? Read Romans 8:31 and apply what Paul says to what Jesus says.

(3) Of what significance is it that Jesus takes OT prophetic promises about Israel and applies them to the Church?

(4) Revelation 3:10 is one of the most frequently cited texts in the NT. Take a few minutes and let each person share briefly his/her own view on the end-times. Do you think this promise means that Jesus will return and “rapture” all his people out of the earth before the time of tribulation?

(5) If your answer to the last question was No, why not? What reasons are there to question the legitimacy of using 3:10 to prove the so-called “pre-tribulation rapture” of the church? In what ways was this passage and its promise relevant to the Christians in Philadelphia in the first century? In what ways is it relevant to us today?