

The Book of Revelation: The Church with an Open Door

Revelation 3:7-13

1) What They Are Up Against

- Ultimately, the church in Philadelphia is up against unbelieving, ethnic Jews.
- Exhibit A: *"those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not."* (v.9)
- Exhibit B: *"The one who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one will open."* (v.7)

Isaiah 22:19–22 – [19] *I will thrust you [Shebna] from your office, and you will be pulled down from your station. [20] In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, [21] and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. [22] And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.*

- In Isaiah 22, God is taking aim at the Jewish people who were generally inattentive to and even opposed to God's clear voice.
- In Revelation 3:7-13, God is addressing a church that is being harassed by the Jewish people who were generally inattentive to and even opposed to God's clear voice in the person of Jesus Christ.

2) What They Are Doing Well

- They have but little power (v.8)
- They have kept His Word (v.8)
- They have not denied His Name. (v.8)
- They have patiently endured (v.10)
 - These things are just really basic Christianity: obedience, faithfulness, and perseverance.
- As we seek to emulate the church at Philadelphia, ask yourself:
 - [Q] Are you keeping Jesus' Word?
 - [Q] Are you taking care not to deny Jesus' name?
 - [Q] Are you patiently enduring?
- Because of what they have done well, God will keep them from the hour of trial that is coming to earth.

3) What Jesus Holds Out Before Them

“One of the functions of Revelation was to purge and refurbish the Christian imagination. It tackles people’s imaginative response to the world, which is at least as deep and influential as their intellectual convictions. It recognizes the way a dominant culture, with its images and ideals constructs the world for us, so that we perceive and respond to the world on its terms...In its place, Revelation offers a different way of perceiving the world which leads people to resist and to challenge the effects of the dominant ideology.” -Richard Bauckham

- So if you want your life to change—like really change—then put the book of Revelation on like a pair of glasses. Let it help you see through everything.
- Let this book and what it reveals captivate your imagination and enchant you thinking as you are entranced with a vision of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Universe, and what He has in store for you.

A) Access (v.8)

- The unbelieving Jews had begun shutting Christians out of the synagogues.
- And now imagine Jesus, the one who has the key of David, opening what was shut to them. But more than just opening the door of the synagogue, Jesus is opening the door to God Himself.

B) Vindication (v.9)

- These unbelieving ethnic Jews, who are persecuting Christians, they will bow down to the Christians as God’s people.
- The Jews had always expected that one day, God would vindicate them among the nations, causing the nations to come and bow down before God and the people of God.
- So here’s the shocking reversal. These Jewish people who have rejected Jesus aren’t among the people of God; they are bowing before the real people of God—the Christians!

C) Return (v.11)

- [Q] If the idea of Jesus’ soon return took over as one of the most deeply abiding governing principles in how you see the world, how might your living change?

D) Reward (v.12)

- There are several things being promised in this verse. But they’re all really just multiple aspects of 1 main reward: God.
 - Unity: the privilege of inseparable union with God

Revelation 21:22 – [22] And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.
 - Identity: the privilege of bearing the name of God and belonging to Him