



"DEAR CHURCH"

A SERIES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

## "DEAR CHURCH", PART 7 PHILADELPHIA—HANGING BY A THREAD

August 25th, 2019

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### BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

"Do you know  
where you find  
the favor of the Lord?  
In humility.  
That's where.  
That's why Paul  
boasted in his  
weakness."

—Pastor Keith

### MAIN TEXT:

*"To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:*

*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 that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 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. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.*

*I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (Revelation 3:7-13)*

### ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

*I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. (Isaiah 22:22)*

*He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, "Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?" Then they scoffed, "He's just the carpenter's son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?" And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. Then Jesus told them, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family." And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief. (Matthew 13:54-55)*

*He asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not REVEALED to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 16:13-20)*

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

*Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me,... (2 Corinthians 2:12)*

*And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ,... (Colossians 4:3)*

*But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I WILL BOAST all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)*

*"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell*

asleep. "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' "Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' "'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. "Later the others also came. 'Lord, Lord,' they said, 'open the door for us!' "But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I don't know you.' "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. **(Matthew 25:1-13)**

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

The church in Philadelphia was a small church, but was a pillar held up by Christ. This church withstood earthquakes, persecution, and a culture that clearly did not follow Christ.

We can learn from the church in Philadelphia. No matter what circumstances they went through or weaknesses they had; they knew that it was Jesus who made them strong. Our church can draw from their example how to get through difficult times by leaning on Jesus and the community he has placed around us. In the midst of difficult circumstances God opened doors for the church in Philadelphia to evangelize and reach out to the larger community and so God does and will do the same for us.

In this passage in Revelation, we are called to live ready for the return of Christ. So we step through the doors God opens with the strength and love of Christ so others will be ready for His return as well.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping*

### LEAN IN

***These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.***

1. Have you locked yourself out of your house or your car? How did that make you feel?
2. How do you feel when you can't find your keys and are in a rush?
3. Have you ever been in an earthquake?
4. What was your high/low for this past week (or since group last met)?  
What was the best thing that happened and the worst thing that happened?

### LOOK DOWN

***These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max***

1. What is significant about the correlation between Rev. 3:7 and Isaiah 22:22?
2. Matthew 13:54-55 and Matthew 16:13-20 both show people's reactions to Jesus.  
What differences are there between these passages? And similarities?
3. Discuss Revelation 3:8, 1 Cor. 16:8-9, 2 Cor. 2:12, Col. 4:3 and what they about doors.
4. What does 2 Cor. 9-10 say about lack of strength/weakness?
5. Rev. 3:10-11 and Matthew 25:1-13 both talk about Christ and a bridegroom coming soon, how do these verses go together?

### LOOK OUT

***These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max***

1. This passage in Revelation talks of open and closed doors. Where might God be opening doors for the church or Christian culture today?
2. Living in a city like Portland is similar to Philadelphia, because Portland is also a hub of culture, how does living in a larger city make it difficult to remain a "pillar" of faith?
3. The church in Philadelphia was considered a pillar of the faith, are there churches or organizations you know of that you see as pillars of the faith?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

4. Rev. 3:9 talks about people who claim to be Jews but aren't, do you think there are people in churches claiming to be Christians who are not? What is there to do about it?
5. Pastor Keith talked about how trials can cause us to lean into community, how does that look in our church and Christian community?

## LOOK IN

*These are questions that help you consider personal application.*

*Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max*

1. What doors have you seen opened by God or closed by God in your life?
2. Pastor Keith mentioned not lingering and grieving by a closed door because it makes it difficult to see the next open door. Can you relate to this? How so?
3. Who do you say Jesus is? Does your life always reflect that?
4. When you are in the midst of trials or difficult circumstances do you lean in to God? Do you lean in to community?
5. Do you live with the expectation that Jesus is coming back? How does your answer impact the way you live your life?

## LIVE IT OUT

*These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.*

*Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.*

1. Is there a door God has opened and you need to walk through it?  
What is keeping you back or causing you to hesitate?
2. How can you live out the expectation that Jesus is coming back this week?
3. Are you going through a trial? How can you lean on God or your community this week?

*NOTE: On the following page (for most weeks) you will find a set of sermon notes created by Charissa Burns, an artist who calls B4 home. We include them purely for your enjoyment and encouragement, courtesy of Charissa. You can follow her on the 'Gram @charissaburnsstudio*

# DEAR CHURCH

8.25.19

BEAVERTON FOURSQUARE CHURCH

## The message to the church in Philadelphia Perseverance

### History of Philadelphia

- City of brotherly love
- Rome's imperial postal route
- "Little Athens" center of ~~ancient~~ Greco-Asiatic language (spread Greek)
- Economic: vineyards
- Earthquakes: on fault
- small church in difficult area

No matter circumstances you are going through Jesus is with you.

He is King above all Kings, Lord above all Lords, He is above all.

Above all problems & circumstances

Rev. 3:7-13  
Matt. 16:13-20  
1 Cor. 16:8-9  
2 Cor. 2:12  
2 Cor. 2:9-10  
Matt. 25:1-13

PAY ATTENTION TO THE DOORS GOD IS OPENING! (AND CLOSING)

God opens doors of opportunity of evangelism!

Rev. 3:7 "what he opens, no one can close."

Who do you say Jesus is?  
Who you say Jesus is either Restricts or Releases the Kingdom of God.

We don't have to bang the door down... He will open the door!

God calls us to go through the door he opened even when we are at our weakest... It is his strength that takes us through!

We need to be vulnerable in front of the Lord. 2 Cor. 2:9-10 "for my power is made perfect in weakness."  
- Rev. 3:8 "You have little strength, yet you obeyed my word and did not deny me."

We do not have to defend or get revenge, God will do that! Philadelphia was persecuted by fake Jews, vs. 9 says God will take care of it!

Be careful to not linger & cry over closed doors, because God has other doors to open!

God will take care of us in our trials and problems... trials cause us to lean into the Lord & into community and THE LORD WILL KEEP US.

What if we lived with the expectation that he is coming back?

We are to live READY for HIS RETURN.

The church at Philadelphia ~~were~~ pillars of the faith... it's the Lord that kept them upright. No matter the shaking around us we are held straight and firm by the Lord!

We are citizens of the Kingdom of God!  
→ we get to rest on that and have hope.

- ~~As~~ As we live as citizens and ready for the Lord's return, we live in a place of love and letting others know there is space in the Kingdom of God for them!