Dear Church: Letters from Jesus (Revelation 3:1-6, Philadelphia)
10/26/2025 - Andy Deane

The church in Philadelphia reminds us that life is full of doors, some that open easily, others that seem firmly shut. But when Jesus opens a door, no one can close it, and when He closes a door, no one can force it open. His authority, not our ability, determines the opportunities before us. This passage invites us to trust the One who holds the keys, walk through the doors He opens, and depend on His strength every step of the way.

What Does the Church at Philadelphia Teach Us?

When Jesus Opens a Door, No One Can Shut It
Revelation 3:7, *7 "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. 8a I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut….*

- The doors open because of His attributes: *him who is holy & true*
- The doors open because of His authority: *holds the key of David*
- We want doors to open at work and for relationships, and God can do that, but in Bible it's often for evangelism:
    - Colossians 4:3, *pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim…*
    - 2 Corinthians 2:12, *I went to Troas to preach the gospel…and found that the Lord had opened a door for me*
    - 1 Corinthians 16:9, *Because a great door for effective work has opened to me…*
    - Join us on Thursday, 10/30 from 6:30pm-7:15pm in the Family Room (or on Zoom) to learn how you and your family can help us pilot a new gospel outreach idea that involves acts of kindness in our community.

Dependence Matters More Than Strength
Revelation 3:8b, *…I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.*

- Strength begins where self-reliance ends: *you have little strength*
    - Matthew 5:3, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
    - 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, *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.*
    - Joel 3:10, *Beat your plowshares into swords…Let the weak say, 'I am strong!'*
- Dependence grows in daily moments: *you have kept my word and have not denied my name*

Endurance Today Becomes Honor Tomorrow
Revelation 3:9, *9 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.*

- God sees the opposition to His church: *synagogue of Satan*
- God promises vindication for persecution: *acknowledge that I have loved you*
    - Philippians 2:10-11, *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
    - Romans 12:19, *Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath…*

Those Who Keep His Word Are Kept by His Power
Revelation 3:10, *10 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.*

- The Church is not destined for wrath: *I will also keep you from the hour of trial*
- This test seems to be for unbelievers, not Christ followers: *to test the inhabitants of the earth*
    - Philippians 3:20, *But our citizenship is in heaven…*

Hold On—Jesus Is Coming Soon
Revelation 3:11, *11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.*

- Hold on with hope: *I am coming soon*
    - 1 John 3:2-3, *…we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.*
    - Richard Baxter, "O that Christians would learn to live with one eye on Christ crucified and the other on his coming in glory! Then we should neither over-value the pleasures nor over-fear the sufferings of this present time. If everlasting joys were more in your thoughts, spiritual joys would abound more in your hearts."
- Hold on with purpose: *Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown*
    - Lou Holtz, "How you respond to the challenge in the second half will determine what you become after the game, whether you are a winner or a loser." (Head Coach of Notre Dame football - 1986 to 1996)

Jesus Rewards Overcomers with Eternal Security
Revelation 3:12-13, *12 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. 13 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

- Overcomers don't crumble—they become pillars. (2 Chronicles 3:15-17)
- We are with Him forever, never fearing eviction.
- He marks us as His own, forever identified with Him.
- Our reward isn't just heaven—it's friendship with Him.

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We are praying for 100 new pillars in our church family!

We're praying for 100 new pillars—people who will say yes to step up and serve, give, or lead a discipleship group.

- When you walk through the open door of serving, you help others walk through the open door of salvation.
- When you walk through the open door of giving, you open the door of ministry for others to flourish.
- When you walk through the open door of leading, you open the door of discipleship for someone's faith to grow.

It's time to move from consumer to contributor, from attender to pillar, from spectator to servant-leader.

Let's take action together. Text PILLAR to (951)425-4425 to say, "I'm ready to walk through an open door."