

REVELATION: HELP FOR LIVING, HOPE FOR LEAVING

Sermon no. 7

PHILADELPHIA: LET'S BE THIS CHURCH!

Revelation 3:7-13

It is a blessing that, without having to disrupt our sermon series, our first two messages for 2016 align with what many people aspire for each New Year: a good start. Last Sunday we learned that living from the overflow of the Holy Spirit is the normal life for every Christian *individual*. Today we look at the *church* we could be: Philadelphia.

Together with Smyrna, Philadelphia is the other church for which Jesus did not have a single rebuke. He mentioned their weaknesses and struggles, yet none of these led to anything that could be negatively cited.

What makes a church pleasing to God is not the absence of its struggles or the magnitude of its strengths, but its faithfulness to the Word of God and the Name of God. This is what we will see with Philadelphia. Let's be this church!

1. OUR OPEN DOOR DOOR (verses 7-8a).

• **Christ Himself opens the door.**

In the New Testament, an "open door" speaks of openings for ministry (Acts 14:27; 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3; Acts 16:6-10).

It's Jesus' job to open the doors. He's very good at it, and He doesn't need our help. But after He has opened it, it is our mandate to go through it and use it.

2. OUR OPPORTUNITY TO BE A CHURCH THAT PLEASES GOD (verses 8b-10)

a) **Keep the Word of God – even when it's not easy or popular.**

b) **Never water down our Loyalty to the Name of Christ – never be ashamed of the gospel, and send it through the open doors.**

c) **Endure opposition patiently.**

Christ honors faith, not strength. Little strength and great opportunity often go hand in hand.

- He promised that we will be vindicated.
- He promised that we will be protected.

3. OUR OBLIGATION (verses 11-13)

a) **“Hold on to what you have” – stay faithful and committed.**

b) **To overcome by faith.**

- We will be Safe and Secure.
- We will be Named and Claimed.

All believers have a passport stamped “Citizen of heaven” and a visa guaranteeing them permanent entrance.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

We are all called to be “overcomers” every single day because we all have a lot to overcome.

There are always reasons to give up, always reasons to quit, always plenty of excuses if we want them. Yet the church that keeps God’s Word, remains loyal to His Name, and endures opposition is that the one that pleases God. This was the church of Philadelphia. This is the church we should pray to become.