

Loved By God

Revelation 3:7-9

Thought for the Day: God loves us deeply and one day He is going to proudly and publicly declare His love for those who have kept His Word and not denied His name.

The Lord Jesus Christ wanted the church in Philadelphia to be a center for spreading the Gospel to the Roman provinces in Asia to the East. He declared Himself to be God, the true God as opposed to the many false gods worshiped in the city. He revealed His control and ability to open & shut doors of opportunity as He sees fit. He commended them for their good works and encouraged them to take advantage of the “open door” He had set before them.

I. The Greeting (3:7)

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.

II. The Commendation (3:8)

8 I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut.

- “In the New Testament an ‘open door’ speaks of opportunity for ministry (Acts 14:27; 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3). Christ is the Lord of the harvest and the Head of the church, and it is He who determines where and when His people shall serve.” (*Wiersbe, Be Victorious, p. 53*) Cp. Acts 16:6-10.
- It is Jesus who opens and closes doors of opportunity as He sees fit. Our job is not to force the doors open but rather, to recognize the open doors of opportunity and be ready to step through in faith and obedience, as the Lord leads.
- “Find out where God is at work and join Him there.” “Lord, please help me to see where You are working and show me how I can join You there.”
- If God has opened the door of opportunity, no one can shut it—you cannot fail. If God has closed the door, no one can open it—you cannot succeed. (Psalm 127:1-2)

...I know that you have but little power...

- “The Philadelphians looked at the ‘little power’ they had and emphasized the ‘little.’ Christ wanted to point them to that same condition and emphasize the ‘power.’” (*Swindoll, Revelation, pp. 74-75*)
- Success in the Lord’s work does not depend on our great power, but on His. We need to recognize our complete dependence on Him
 - It’s not our faith that moves the mountain; it is the Object of our faith—the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 17:20)
 - He invites us and gives us the privilege of joining with Him in accomplishing what only He can accomplish.

...and yet you have kept my word...

- If we focus on our weakness, we can become paralyzed by fear and doubt. When we focus on His strength, we live in faith and obedience and get to see Him work.

- The Lord would bless them with success because they were seeking to live in obedience to His Word.
- Love for the Lord manifests itself in obedience to the Lord.

...and have not denied my name.

- The Lord would bless them with success because they gladly and openly identified themselves as followers of Jesus Christ.
- "It is not the size or strength of a church that determines its ministry, but faith in the call and command of the Lord. God's commandments are God's enablements. If Jesus Christ gave them an open door, then He would see to it that they were able to walk through it!" (*Swindoll, Revelation, pp. 74-75.*) Zechariah 4:6.
- "The church in Philadelphia had a little power with great potential, not because of their size, resources, or influence but because of the holiness, faithfulness, and sovereign authority of their Lord. Because they had kept His Word and refused to deny their Master, they were poised for great accomplishments through the open door of opportunity Christ had placed before them." (*Swindoll, Revelation, p. 75*)

9 Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—

- Compare the same situation that the believers in Smyrna were experiencing. (Rev. 2:9)
- These were people who were Jews in the flesh, but were not worshipping and serving the God of the Bible—they were not true Jews at all.
- Concerning those who persecute us, we need to remember our true enemy is Satan. (Ephesians 6:12)

...behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet and they will learn that I have loved you.

- Their enemies would be humiliated before them and forced to acknowledge that they were loved by God.
- There is no greater honor or privilege in the universe than to be loved by God.
- People who do not know the Lord have chosen a life without Him. (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25)
- This will not be an acknowledgement that we are anything special, other than the fact that God has chosen to set His love upon us.
- Ultimately, all of God's enemies will bow before Him and acknowledge that He is Lord. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Have you acknowledged Jesus Christ as the Savior of your soul and the Lord of your life? God loves you deeply and one day He is going to proudly and publicly declare His love for those who have kept His Word and not denied His name.