

Revelation: Following Our Victorious King

[Revelation 3:7-13](#)

"A Letter From Jesus on Endurance"— March 10, 2024



Introduction

We live in a performance-based value system. Envy often motivates us as we labor for success and achievement. We anxiously work every day to do things to make our life comfortable, thinking that doing this is what is important.

In the end, all of it will be left behind. ([Ecclesiastes 5:15](#)) A wise person learns this and lives by a different value system. A wise person lives by God's standard. In doing so, we are swimming upstream - against the current of the world. That can be hard, discouraging, and even dangerous. How can we persevere and make it across the finish line of faith?

The church in Philadelphia was one of two churches that Jesus had nothing against. In [vs. 7](#), He reminds this church who He is. He is the Holy One – distinct - set apart. He is God. He is the True One. The world is full of false teachers - frauds who spew out lies even from behind pulpits. He is the one who speaks what is true. And He has the key of David. The key symbolizes His authority and highlights His rule and reign. There is only one key, and He has it. It is THE key to open the door of heaven.

When we are anxious and afraid, our hearts begin to race. We are looking everywhere for comfort. Jesus says, "Look here!" "Behold" - I am the One you need! ([Isaiah 26:3](#)) Is your mind stayed on Jesus? Are you looking to the truth of who Jesus is as revealed in the Bible? What does He have to say to encourage a weary church?

Sermon Outline

1. Rejoice that you belong to God. Vs. 8-9
2. Hold fast to your confession of hope. Vs. 10-13

Read & Discuss

1. Read vs. 8-9

Jesus, with His authority, is the One who opens the door to the Kingdom of Heaven. As the Savior, He has authority over salvation and judgment. He sets before them an open door that no one will be able to shut. Jesus knew that the church here had little power in contrast to the church in Sardis. The church in Philadelphia was small and had little influence. They were not celebrated by the culture. To the world, they were a bunch of nobodies.

But the church in Philadelphia kept God's word and wouldn't deny the name of Jesus. This put them on the margins of society. To gain the world's applause, you must play by the world's rules. If you don't, they will cancel you. Some churches might be tempted to mix religion with politics, money, and entertainment, twisting God's word to gain the praise and acceptance of man. The church in Philadelphia was different. They had little power, but they were faithful. How are you tempted to play by the rules of the world? Have you experienced the world's rejection and/or criticism when you don't?

Because of how the church in Philadelphia stood up for Jesus, they were accused of being troublemakers. They faced persecution from the Jews, yet they trusted in Jesus as the promised Messiah. They were true, spiritual Jews.

In Jesus day, the religious leaders thought that the way to the Kingdom of Heaven was by keeping the law - a matter of performance. They acted like they had the key of David, and out of pride, they decided who got in and who got out. ([Matthew 23:13](#)) The true key that opens the door to the Kingdom of Heaven is not the law. It is Jesus - His death on the cross in our place and His resurrection that completes the work. It is grace! If you turn from your sin and your attempts to be a good person and trust in Christ alone, He will take your sin, give you His righteousness and forgive you. Jesus wants the door open! One day, Jesus will make it plain that He cared about the church in Philadelphia.

Many churches have twisted scripture to close the door to others. Some still do it today. They show partiality

based on race, etc. That is against God's word. To any Christian who is tempted to believe the myth of inferiority, listen to Jesus' words to the church Philadelphia. ([vs.9](#)) Jesus loved them! He saw their worth. Where do you look for your worth? Do you look to make yourself somebody by seeking the praise of man? Do you look for your worth in the love of God?

Additional reading: Romans 2 & 9, James 1

2. Read vs. 10-13

Jesus' promise to this church was not to take them out of the trial, but to protect them through the trial. We see this promise in Psalm 23 as well. ([Psalm 23:4](#)) How does Jesus do this? They have kept His word. He is keeping them. They have held fast to God. So, do we hold fast to God or does God hold us? Yes - it's both. He empowers us to hold Him fast. ([Philippians 2:13](#)) We work. God works, and He is at work in us. Are you bruised and weary, holding on to God, just barely? Do you wonder if you can trust God for the next day, week, month, or year? Could you trust God for the next minute? It feels impossible, but God strengthens us.

[Hebrews 10:23](#) "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering." It is because of Jesus, the High Priest who opened the door. Hold fast to Jesus. Hold fast to His word. How? We are strengthened by the church. We encourage each other. ([Hebrews 10:24](#)) Is there someone in your sphere of influence who needs your encouragement this week? Who are they?

In Matthew 16, after Peter's confession, Jesus gives "the keys" to Peter. In Matthew 18, authority is given to the church. The church affirms a person's faith in Christ. As a church does this carefully, they begin to nurture and foster assurance. They also clarify to the watching world what a Christian is. How does this help a weary Christian hold fast?

Being a member of a church is more than having your name on a roster. It is a covenant relationship. We live our lives together. [Our church covenant](#) summarizes the bible's teaching on how we are to live out caring for one another. When we do this, weary and tired saints are strengthened, and the world takes notice. The church is essential to God's plan for evangelism. How has this played out in your life?

How does this plan work? The church looks unimportant. Many keep it on the margins of their life, but Jesus puts it at the center. Jesus is not hindered by our lack of power. He wants that and will use it for His glory. When we see that we have little power, we finally rely on the God who has infinite power. He gets the glory.

It is not your performance; it is a matter of His grace. Those who have but little power, become pillars. Those who are considered nobodies are given God's name. When God writes His name on you, it is a reminder that we are His! You are a member of His family. You are loved.

Do you think that your life is mundane? To many, Jesus' command to hold fast feels anti-climactic, unimpressive, and small. Most of the time we are called to just take the next step, do the next thing, go on, persevere – just keep going. A bolt of lightning is impressive for a second. An oak tree starts out as a sapling and takes years to grow tall and strong. What is the next step for you? How are you growing spiritually?

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at [fbcum.org](#)

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| Next week's sermon text: we turn to Revelation 3:14-22 "A Letter From Jesus on Correction" |
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