

What God Expects of the Church | Part 5

Lesson 1

Revelation 3:7-13

February 5, 2023

Opening the Doors of the Church

INTRODUCTION

G.K. Chesterton stated that “Tolerance is the virtue of the man without convictions.”

Pastor John MacArthur defied California’s unconstitutional ban on indoor worship. Los Angeles County retaliated by suing the church and then attempting to stop people from attending by issuing a notice to terminate the church’s parking lease.

A private Christian school administrator in Florida responded to demands to affirm LGBTQ students’ proclaimed identities. In part, he stated: “...any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgender identity/lifestyle, self-identification, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful in the sight of God and the church....”

These two men are current examples of those that do not tolerate unbiblical demands and will stand for their convictions. The church at Philadelphia had also “not denied [His] name” despite pressure to do so, and Jesus promised that the church’s enemies would be completely humbled and defeated. While we open the doors of our church to all people, we, too, should stand firm in our convictions and never deny His name.

Memory verse: “I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.”

—Revelation 3:11

Pray, and read Revelation 3:7-13. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. What has Jesus placed before the church?
(Revelation 3:8)
2. Despite little strength, what did the church do?
(Revelation 3:8)
3. What will Jesus make the liars do? (Revelation 3:9)
4. Because the church kept His command to endure
patiently, what will Jesus do? (Revelation 3:10)
5. What does Jesus tell the church to do, and why?
(Revelation 3:11-12)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. What is “an open door that no one can shut”(v. 8)?
(1 Corinthians 16:8-9; 2 Corinthians 2:12;
Colossians 4:2-3)

2. What does it mean that those of the synagogue of Satan
“claim to be Jews though they are not” (v. 9)?
(Romans 2:28-29)

3. How will Jesus keep the church at Philadelphia “from
the hour of trial” (v. 10), and what is that trial
(assuming a pre-“trial” position)?
(John 14:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54;
1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation chapters 6-19)

4. What does “so that no one will take your crown” (v. 11) mean? (2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. The church at Philadelphia remained loyal to Jesus regardless of the cost. Revelation 14:12 describes the Tribulation saints who refuse the mark of the beast and remain faithful to Jesus. In what ways have you stood fast to your beliefs, and what were the consequences?

2. Churches today that believe the Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God are facing pressure to import worldly ideas; some are facing outright persecution. Laws are even being passed to criminalize expressing or living out those Biblical beliefs. What could you do to help change this dangerous trend? Is there a limit to what you would endure to defend God's Word?

3. Think about your daily life and that of your family. Have any unbiblical, worldly ideas crept in and affected your beliefs or the practice of your faith? Pray that you will not only hear, but will do "what the Spirit says..." to "Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown."