

To the Church in Philadelphia Pt. 2

August 2, 2018

Revelation 3:7-13 ESV

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.

8 I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

9 Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie--behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.

10 Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.

11 I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.

12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:7 ESV

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.

- *God opens and shuts doors to constrain us within His will.*
- *Open and shut doors are manifestations of God's sovereign purposes and plans.*

Psalm 139:5 NASB For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

5 You have enclosed (tsuwr - confine, secure, enclose) me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me.

John 21:21-22 ESV

21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?"

22 Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!"

The dangers of comparison:

- *jealousy*
- *covetousness*
- *competition*
- *discouragement*
- *DISTRACTION*

Philippians 4:11-12 ESV

11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

If we don't learn how to be content in all circumstances, when the doors are shut and when they are open, we will grow bitter against God's plan and fight against His will.

Revelation 3:7-8 ESV

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.

8 I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power (*dynamis - strength, work, power*), and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

- *It was the open and shut doors of God's sovereignty that enclosed this church in the state of having little strength.*
- *By all appearances, Philadelphia was a weak church, yet it was unstoppable because of the open door which God ordained. Though it was a weak church, it was impossible to stop it or close it down.*
- *Would God deliberately keep a Christian, a ministry or a church, enclosed about with weakness by circumstances or resources, for a greater purpose?*
 - *By open and shut doors, God will circumstantially enclose us in His plan to fulfill His will and save us from ourselves.*

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 ESV

7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.

9 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 of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Whatever this thorn was, God enclosed Paul in this weakness and would not remove it. God kept Paul weak for a greater purpose.

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 ESV

8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.

9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

10 He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

The weakness could be financial.

Philippians 4:10-18 ESV

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were

indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.

11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

14 Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.

15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again.

17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.

18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

The weakness may be betrayal or persecution.

2 Timothy 4:9-17 ESV

9 Do your best to come to me soon.

10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.

12 Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.

15 Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message.

16 At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!

17 But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

The weakness could be violence or disaster.

2 Corinthians 11:24-28 ESV

24 Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one.

25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea;

26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers;

27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 7:5-6 ESV

5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn--fighting without and fear within.

6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

1 Thessalonians 3:5-8 ESV

5 For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.

6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you--

7 for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith.

8 For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord.

- **Though the Philadelphia church was weak, it was pure, receiving no rebuke or correction from Jesus.**
- **Which will we choose?**
 - *Would we rather be successful in man's eyes or pure in God's eyes? The two are rarely, if ever, compatible or simultaneous. We will have to forfeit one to gain the other.*
 - *Would we rather have great discernment and discipline such as the Ephesian church who left her first love?*
 - *Would we rather have the reputation of being alive and successful like the church in Sardis, yet be dead?*
 - *Would we rather be rich, in need of nothing, like the Laodicean church, yet be wretched, blind and naked?*

Matthew 10:37-39 ESV

38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 ESV

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.