

DEAR CHURCH
Part Six: The Church In Philadelphia
Pastor Rick Henderson **October 28-29, 2023**

Jesus is always **LEANING IN**.

REVELATION 3:7-13 *To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

SYMBOLISM & REFERENCES:

- Key of David = authority over all things
- Door: Open/Shut = controls who enters; also ministry opportunity with guaranteed success
- Synagogue of Satan = those who conspired with the Roman government to harm believers
- Hour of Trial = divinely orchestrated hardship/judgment
- Test = reveal or expose allegiances and character
- Inhabitants of the Earth = those who do not follow Jesus
- Crown = outcomes of faithfulness and ministry
- Pillar = honor and strength
- New Names = new identity
- New Jerusalem = where Jesus and his people live and reign

(Interpretation of) REVELATION 3:7-13 *To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who **is the ultimate authority over all things**. What he **decides to do or allow, no one can stop**. What he **decides not to do or not allow, no one can start**. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an **opportunity to spread the gospel, with guaranteed success that no one can stop**. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those who **conspire with the government to bring you harm**, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the **severe hardship that is going to come on the whole world to reveal all those who do not trust in or follow me**. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your **reward for faithfulness and work for the gospel**. The one who is victorious I will **honor as an example of strength and permanent member in the temple of my God**. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them a **new identity as citizens in the city of God**, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will **also share my identity and inheritance with them**. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

UNEXPECTED MESSAGE:

- It's better to have no church than an unloving church.
- It's better to let a church suffer than to prevent it.
- It's possible for a church to stand up for Jesus while standing against Jesus.
- It's possible for a church to wrongly value staying together over staying faithful.
- It's possible for everyone but Jesus to be convinced that a church is alive and well.
- A church may be strongest when it's weak.

REVELATION 3:8,12 *I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that **you have little strength**, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name...The one who is victorious I will make a **pillar in the temple of my God.***

WHO you have is more important than **WHAT** you have.

EPHESIANS 2:19-22 *Consequently, **you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens** with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. **In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.** And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

REVELATION 3:8,11 *See, I have placed before you an **open door that no one can shut**...I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.*

Perseverance isn't **PASSIVE**.

Church is not for spectators. –Tony Evans

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-21. *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

REVELATION 3:13 *Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

SERIES THESIS: KNOWING the truth doesn't change anything. **SUBMITTING** to the truth changes everything.