

THE OPEN DOOR BEFORE US

And you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom
of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ...



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.

(REVELATION 3:8b ESV)

1. JESUS CHRIST SPEAKS HIS WORDS TO US FROM THE PLACE OF HIGHEST AUTHORITY, 3:7.

- (Revelation 3:7 ESV) 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.**”

A. He is the holy one.

- (Isaiah 57:15a ESV) **For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.**
- (John 6:69 ESV) And we have believed, and have come to know, **that you are the Holy One of God.**

B. He is the true one.

C. He has the key of David—Jesus Christ rules with all authority as Lord and King in the kingdom of God.

- (Matthew 28:18 ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”**
- (Ephesians 1:20–21 ESV) *[Christ is seated]* **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.**

2. JESUS CHRIST SPEAKS WITH KNOWLEDGE, POWER AND ASSURANCE AS HE DRAWS OUR ATTENTION TO THE OPEN DOOR THAT HE HAS SET BEFORE US, 3:8-10.

- (Revelation 3:8 ESV) **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.**

A. First word of assurance: Christ knows us.

B. Second word of assurance: Christ has set before us an unstoppable opportunity as we continue to faithfully serve him in the gospel and in worship.

- (Romans 8:31, 37–39 ESV) What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** ... 37 No, **in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor

anything else in all creation, **will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

- (Matthew 23:13 NIV) Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! **You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.**
- (1 Corinthians 16:8–9 ESV) But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for **a wide door for effective work** has opened to me, **and there are many adversaries.**

C. Third word of assurance [from Peter]: God has provided everything we need to successfully walk through this door and continue on right into heaven.

- (2 Peter 1:3–11 NIV) **His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.** 4 Through these he has given us his **very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature,** having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 **For this very reason, make every effort to** add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 **For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** 9 But whoever does not have them is **nearsighted and blind, forgetting** that they have been cleansed from their past sins. 10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 **and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

D. Fourth word of assurance: Even though we are small in size, we are approved unto God as we endure in keeping his word and not denying his name.

- (2 Timothy 2:15 ESV) **Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.**

EXCURSUS # 1:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO KEEP CHRIST'S WORD?

An excursus is a detailed discussion of a particular point in a book, usually in an appendix; a digression that contains further exposition of some point or topic; a lengthy, appended exposition of a topic or point, especially to discuss a particular issue.

KEEPING THE WORD OF GOD ... NEW TESTAMENT

"KEEP" -Greek *τηρέω* [tay-reh-o]- means to guard, obey, observe; to conform one's action or practice to; to attend to carefully; to hold fast, keep under guard, keep safe, keep watch over, take to heart.

- I. Keeping the words of God is an extremely important concept in Revelation.
 - (Revelation 1:3b ESV) Blessed are those who hear, **and who keep what is written in it**, for the time is near.
 - (Revelation 12:17a ESV) Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, **on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus**.
 - (Revelation 14:12 ESV) Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, **those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus**.
 - (Revelation 22:9 ESV) But he said to me, "You must not do that! **I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book**. Worship God."
- II. Keeping Christ's word testifies to our love for Christ.
 - (John 14:23-24b ESV) Jesus answered him, "**if anyone loves me, he will keep my word**, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. **Whoever does not love me does not keep my words**."
- III. Keeping Christ's word identifies us as those who have been given by the Father to Christ.
 - (John 17:6 ESV) I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. **Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word**.
- IV. Keeping Christ's word yields assurance to the keeper that he knows God and that the love of God is working in his life.

• (1 John 2:3-5a ESV) **And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments**. Whoever says "I know him" but **does not keep his commandments is a liar**, and the truth is not in him, 5 **but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected**.

- V. The Pharisees did the opposite—they rejected the commandment of God in order to **keep** their tradition.
 - (Mark 7:9 ESV) And he said to them, "**You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish [τηρέω] your tradition!**"

KEEPING THE WORD OF GOD ... OLD TESTAMENT

"KEEP" -Hebrew *šamar* [or shawmar]- means to keep; to hedge about, i.e. to guard; generally, to protect, attend to, be circumspect; to observe, preserve; have charge of; to keep watch.

- I. Adding to or taking away from God's word makes a person unable to keep God's word.
 - (Deuteronomy 4:2 ESV) You shall **not add to the word** that I command you, **nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments** of the LORD your God that I command you.
- II. Adding to or taking away from God's word reveals a person who leans on his own understanding.
 - (Proverbs 3:5 ESV) Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.
- III. In keeping God's word we learn reverence for God.
 - (Deuteronomy 17:19 ESV) And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, **that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law** and these statutes, and doing them.

EXCURSUS # 2:

WHAT IT MEANS TO NOT DENY CHRIST'S NAME?

To not deny Christ's name means to fully and wholeheartedly acknowledge and confess everything the Bible reveals to us as to who he is; the nature of his character, his attributes, his work, his position and place in eternity, creation, salvation and in all things to come.

- (Matthew 10:32–33 ESV) So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.
- (1 John 2:22–23 ESV) Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.
- (Hebrews 1:3a ESV) He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

–END EXCURSUS–

D. Fifth word of assurance: Christ assures us of future vindication before the religious liars who persecute us.

The religious liars are those who profess to believe but do not and they persecute those whom Christ dearly loves by using their power, influence and position in the community. But they, and all false believers, will one day come to learn who Christ truly loves.

- (Revelation 3:9 ESV) 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.
- (Luke 13:25–27 ESV) When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, “Lord, open to us,” then he will answer you, “I do not know where you come from.” 26 Then you will begin to say, “We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.” But he will say, “I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!”

E. Sixth word of assurance: Christ promises deliverance from a future hour of trial.

- (Revelation 3:10 ESV) 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.

ὑπομονή [hypomonē] cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy; patient continuance; patient waiting; the characteristic of a person who is not swayed from his deliberate purpose and his love and faith to God by trials and sufferings.

- (Isaiah 66:1a, 2 ESV) Thus says the LORD: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool ... All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.”

3. JESUS CHRIST TELLS US THAT HE IS COMING SOON AND TO HOLD FAST TO WHAT WE HAVE, 3:11-12.

- (Revelation 3:11–12 ESV) 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.

A. Seventh word of assurance: I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have.

4. OUR LORD TELLS US THAT WE BETTER HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES, 3:13.

- (Revelation 3:13 ESV) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.
(REVELATION 3:13 ESV)