

Group discussion Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”

Read Revelation 3:7-13 aloud.

1. What was the door opened in verse 8?

We do not know.

What does the door say about God’s opinion of this church? Do you think this open door was a good thing or bad?

How is Christ related to this door? What role does he play?

What is the significance of “an open door that no one can shut”?

2. What can you tell about this church based on this text?

8 – Little strength, but remained faithful

9 – Opposed by Jews

10 – Had a track record of obedience and endurance.

Facing an hour of trial (that the whole earth would face)

Why would God provide a door of opportunity for a church facing serious opposition with little strength?

Faithfulness in small things leads to larger opportunities – Matt. 25:21.

Aside from the open door, what blessings are promised this church?

9 – Deliverance from enemies

10 – Protection through trials

11-12 – Citizenship in new Jerusalem

3. What are some doors God has opened for you?

How do you know when an opportunity is an open door from God?

How do you know when an open door is not from God?

4. How do other people represent open doors?

What is our role in opening doors for lost people?

What do you do to connect with guests at our Sunday morning worship services?

5. What if you don’t like the door God has placed before you? What are your options?

The ancient church in Philadelphia knew something about that, since God commends them for enduring.

6. How can a closed door represent God’s guidance? If he shut it, what are your chances of opening it?

See Rev. 3:7.

† **The big question** If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It’s okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.

What doors do you see God opening in your life?

What is your next step in following God through doors he opens?

Resources

Bible notes

- Revelation 1-3 consists of John's vision of Jesus, and a message from Jesus to seven churches in Asia, the region near John's exile on the island of Patmos.
- Most of the seven letters refer back to imagery from 1:12-18. Rev. 3:7 does not, but it quotes Isaiah 22:22, a passage referring to a household steward of Judah's king. It takes on new meaning when applied to Jesus.
- Philadelphia suffered a severe earthquake in AD 17, and that might relate to the pillar image (strong foundation) in verse 12.
- Philadelphia was a "gateway" city, situated in a valley that led from the Aegean port of Smyrna and opened into Asia. That might connect with the door imagery God used for them.

Prayer ideas

Praise God for the doors he opens before us.

Ask for wisdom to recognize the doors God places before us.

Seek courage to follow God, even when it requires perseverance.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Read Revelation 3:7-8 aloud.

What is going on in this passage? What can you tell about this church in ancient Philadelphia (in Turkey, not in Pennsylvania!)? Not very strong, but faithful to God.

What did God place before this little church?
An open door.

What do you think the door might have been?

What are some ways that kids are not as strong as grown-ups?

What are some ways that kids can be faithful?

Give a blessing – go around the room, and ask the group to tell what kind of doors God appears to be opening for each kid.



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LIFE Group Guide

Revelation 3 – a door of opportunity

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme: **Claiming God's opportunities.**

Kevin is leading us through a study of doors in scripture. This week's message relates to doors of opportunity. It looks at how God opened a door of opportunity for an ancient church, and it helps us envision the doors God is opening for us.

We don't get to pick the doors God places before us, but there is always a choice – enter or walk past. Sometimes God gives us 2-3 doors to choose, but he does not always reveal what is behind each door. But because he is gracious, he consistently gives new opportunities.

Leadership tip: This is a great time to develop plans for fall – either to launch a group, to reach out, or to develop new projects. With school starting back next month, people are forming new relationships and new routines. Talk about the next step for your group to grow.

Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ When have you been locked out?
- ❖ How many different types of doors can you name?
- ❖ If you had an emergency at 2 a.m., what friends would you call to help you?