

**PASTOR:** Kip McCormick

**DATE:** July 7, 2024

**SERIES:** Rev'd Up

**SERMON:** The Steadfast Church (Philadelphia)

**MAIN SCRIPTURE:** Revelation 3:7-13 (NASB)

**SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 26:3; Isaiah 22:22; Acts 14:27; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:3; Psalm 27:14; John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Galatians 5:19-23



**MESSAGE TAKEAWAY:** In times of increasing difficulty, we must remain steadfast individually and as a church.

### **SUPPORTING THOUGHTS:**

- Keys represent authority. The “key of David” means that He has the authority to open the door to His future kingdom. (Isaiah 22:15-25)
- Jesus holds the keys to death and hell as well as salvation and blessings (MacArthur).
- Two ways to look at this “open door.” Admission into kingdom or open door for ministry opportunities. (Acts 14:27; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:3)
- Discerning God’s will: 1) Scripture; 2) Godly men and women; 3) Prayer; 4) Circumstances. (Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God*)
- **Hour of Testing** – a time of coming wrath that God will send to judge the world in preparation for Christ’s second coming: 3 Options that involve “Keep you from.”
  - **Option 1:** Ongoing, periodic times of great distress in general through the ages. God will always eternally protect His people, yet they will always suffer.
  - **Option 2:** There will be a future, specific time of tribulation, but God will protect His church like He protected the Hebrew nation when Egypt/Pharaoh suffered the plagues in Egypt in the Exodus accounts.
  - **Option 3:** There will be a future, specific time of tribulation in which **true believers will be spared by God as He removes them from the place of His wrath** prior to the tribulation, as He did with Lot before judging Sodom.
- The Tribulation: The 7-year period before Christ’s earthly kingdom is brought about. The latter 3.5 years of the Tribulation is referred to as the Great Tribulation.
- Rapture: Doctrine of hope. God “snatches away” all believers from the earth to make way for His righteous judgment to be poured out on the earth during the tribulation period. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52)
- Remember four things when we hit contentious issues: 1) Christ will return. 2) God triumphs over evil as justice is served. 3) We will be rewarded for our faith. 4) Jesus wins.
- Pillar = permanent and stable.
- New Name: A promise of ownership.

**CHALLENGE:** Where in my life am I lacking “steadfastness”?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Where in your life have you lacked steadfastness? Where have you been able to be steadfast? (Think about matters of character, integrity, faith, family, marriage, relationships, profession.) What changes will you make to be more steadfast?
- Why did Jesus commend the church of Philadelphia? What are some parallels with New Life Fellowship?
- What open doors of ministry has Jesus shown you in your own life? At New Life Fellowship? How do we guard against opening a door that Christ hasn't opened and closing one He has kept open?
- How do you deal with open doors and closed doors? Give an example of how you've dealt with this well and when you've totally biffed it (misread the situation). What were the results?
- Whether the hour of testing Jesus mentions is long term (a time of tribulation) or short term (suffering in general), what tangible things can you be doing right now to prepare yourself for that time?
- Kip mentioned a contentious issue within the Church – the doctrine of the Rapture. It can be divisive and is a secondary issue with respect to matters of faith. How do you deal with contentious issues in Church doctrine, especially on secondary issues?
- Kip said that in eschatology (end of times studies) the U.S. is not mentioned and gave a key reason why. Does that affect your interpretation of scripture, especially in an election year? If so, how? If not, why not?
- How can you maintain a strong sense of patriotism for your country without making it an idol in your life?

## Seven Churches of Revelation



**RESOURCES:** Eliyahu Lizorkin-Eyzenberg, Israel Bible Center (multiple books and commentaries); **Gotquestions.org**; **Life Application Study Bible** Commentary, Revelation; **John MacArthur** (multiple books, sermons, study bible; Grace to You Ministries); **Roy Rhodes** (Reasoning from the Scripture Ministries, Basic Bible Prophecy); **Chuck Swindoll** (New Testament Commentary – Revelation).