



Philadelphia: The Missional Church

Week 6 | October 22nd, 2023
Community Group Discussion Guide

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NO Gathering - Sunday, November 12th

Due to our Annual Family Vacation, there will be *NO* Sunday Gathering, on Sunday, November 12th.

REVIEW THE MISSION

Take some time to review who various people are building relationships with and seeking to share the gospel with. **Pray for these individuals - that God would open their eyes to the good news of the gospel.**

PRAYER + SCRIPTURE

Open with a brief word of prayer: "God, we thank you for this time together. We open our hearts to how you might want to meet with us. Come Holy Spirit."

1-2 minutes of silent reflection.

Read Revelation 3:7-13

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.'

1-2 minutes of silent reflection.

Close with this short prayer: "Lord, we pray for your strength in our lives. In your grace, you have chosen to use us in your Kingdom where you open the door. We pray for eyes to see how you want to use us, hearts that desire to obey, and faith that encourages us to proclaim your Gospel. Amen."

As you reflect on Revelation 3:7-13, what is the Holy Spirit showing or teaching you?

SERMON DISCUSSION

THE MISSIONAL CHURCH

Read Revelation 3:8.

Jesus is opening doors for missions and evangelism to this church. He has put them in a strategic place for the advancement of the gospel both near and far. Jesus wants to work through this church for the advancement of His Kingdom. And here's the Biblical reality, Jesus says the same thing to you and to me – "I want you to join me in furthering my kingdom in this world."

But the first thing we must ask ourselves is – do we have eyes to see the open doors Jesus has put in our lives to take the gospel both near and far?

Take a few minutes to recap the open doors we talked about on Sunday - in the world, in our city, and in our lives (p4 of the sermon manuscript).

Which of these open doors burdens your heart as you read it and why?

EXCUSES FOR THE CALL

The second question we must ask ourselves is – are we willing to walk through these open door opportunities with courage?

Often our response to these open doors are two excuses on why we could not carry on the mission:

- I'm too weak to share the Gospel (lacking skills, knowledge, or effectiveness)
- I'm not in a season where I can share the Gospel (busyness or suffering)

Which of these two excuses do you tend to have when called to share the Gospel? Can you think of other excuses you might make for not engaging in the mission of God?

THE ANSWERS TO OUR EXCUSES

In the sermon, we gave answers to our commonly used excuses for not engaging on mission.

- Although we may think we're too weak to share the gospel, our power doesn't come from ourselves but from Christ and His Word.
- Although we may think we're not in a season where we can share the gospel, Jesus uses our seasons for kingdom purposes.

Which of these answers/assurances do you find gospel hope in as you consider joining God in His plan of Kingdom advancement?

SERIES PRACTICES

One of our key discipleship values as a church is that of practice. Moving forward, we are going to begin emphasizing various spiritual practices during each sermon series. These practices are meant to coincide with the theme of the series, and something we invite our church to practice as a part of their spiritual formation.

PRACTICE #1 - FASTING

In its most basic form, Biblical fasting is the intentional abstaining from food for a spiritual purpose. As Christians, we intentionally face the pain of hunger and lack to direct our hearts towards God.

For resources on fasting, check out:

- www.rhythmsandformation.com
- <https://citychurchknox.com/sermons/formation-v-fasting-rethinking-our-relationship-with-food>

For this series, we are encouraging individuals to fast from all food and non-water beverages from dinner Wednesday through dinner Thursday, as a means of focusing our attention on God and asking Him to deepen our love for Him. Although there is freedom to adjust this to fit your various circumstances or season.

PRACTICE #2 - WORSHIP THROUGH SONG

The second practice we are inviting our church family to participate in is that of worship through song. Singing is a great way to help connect what we believe in our minds to what we experience in our hearts.

To that end, our worship team has put together a playlist to help guide this practice for us, that you can sing along with in your car, in your home, on a run, or anywhere else that seems appropriate.

You can find the playlist here:



Take some time now before you close discussing plans for fasting and worship during the next 8 weeks as a group.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray over what was shared in the discussion, for your group to be united in the gospel, and for help from the Holy Spirit to be shaped to be more like Jesus as we put God's ways into practice.