



GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Fall Quarter - Lesson 4 - Week of September 29, 2024

Lesson: THE BLESSING OF PERSEVERANCE

Bible Verses: Revelation 3:1-13; Matthew 24:12-13; Mark 13:12-13; Romans 5:3-4; Galatians 6:7-10; James 1:12

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. What time of day or night are you most productive: morning; afternoon; evening; or after midnight?
2. What do you like most about fall?

DISCUSSION

"See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name." Revelation 3:8 (NKJV)

Reflection: Everyone likes the idea of persevering, but it can be much more difficult to put it into practice, especially when faced with obstacles and setbacks. Think about a project you wanted to quit but chose to see it to completion. What was the result of your perseverance?

Situation: Read Revelation 3:1-13 (NKJV). In this chapter, Jesus continues His messages to the seven churches of Asia. His message for the believers in Sardis is found in verses one through six. This city, located 30 miles south of Thyatira, was once strategically important to the Roman Empire. But by John's day, its glory lay in the past and its wealthy citizens had slipped into moral slumber and decadence. In Revelation 3:1 Jesus referred to the church members as dead, and He only commended a few for remaining faithful. Have you kept the faith?

In verses seven to thirteen, Christ addresses the church in Philadelphia (located 25 miles southeast of Sardis). He issues a glowing report for the believers in that city. These followers of Christ had endured much for the gospel and had remained faithful to the Lord.

1. What did Jesus say he knew about the believers in Sardis? How had they failed to persevere?
2. What did Jesus instruct the believers in Sardis to do?
3. How did Jesus describe himself to the believers in Philadelphia?
4. For what in particular did Jesus commend the Philadelphia church?
5. How did Jesus say He was protecting them?
6. Jesus promised rewards to the believers in Philadelphia for their continued perseverance and faith in Him. What other promises did he make?

Inspiration: “. . . 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 (Revelation 3:7-8).”

Jesus is a doorman. He opens and shuts doors all the time. No one can close what he has opened, and no one can open what He has closed. He stands at the door and knocks. *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me (Revelation 3:20).”*

If the door is locked, He has a key. If He doesn't want to use the key, He walks through the walls (John 20:19). But better than being just a doorman, Jesus is the door. “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture (John 10:9 NKJV).” So, what is Jesus trying to say with all this talk about doors? He controls all gateways and passages from one place to another. Nothing gets past Him!

What do we do as we wait for other doors to open? In the book of Revelation, Jesus makes it clear to the church of Philadelphia to keep God's word and commands, stay faithful, and not curse or deny Him. Right now, Jesus is sorting through His vast key ring looking for the right door for you. He may have to lock and unlock a few other doors first, but one is sure to open soon. Trust Him. It is an open-and-shut case.

1. What doors has Jesus opened in your life?
2. What did you have to persevere while waiting for doors to open?
3. In what ways did you see God respond to your faithfulness?
4. In what ways has your church helped you stay faithful to God?
5. Think of someone you know struggling to stay faithful to God. How can you encourage him or her to persevere and not give up?

Life Lessons: The daily challenge of believers is to stay true to Christ and practice faithfulness. To this end, the church in Philadelphia provides us with three crucial principles on how to stay faithful: (1) Acknowledge our weakness and God's strength; (2) obey God's word, and (3) claim the power of Christ. As we put these principles into practice, like our brothers and sisters from Philadelphia, we will also receive Christ's commendation.

Devotion: Father, help us to keep our eyes fixed on the promise and hope of heaven rather than on things of this world that so quickly pass. Guide us through the doors you want us to take.

Journaling: What makes it difficult for you to persevere through trials?

Prayer Focus: God, help me to persevere and remain faithful to you!