



The Book of Revelation: Week 8

Philadelphia:

The Faithful Church

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Review

- Jesus commissioned John to write to seven churches in Asia Minor.
- These letters give us instruction for the last days, and to help us become overcomers. In each letter, Jesus either praises the church, or rebukes the church, or both. He makes promises to those who overcome, and He gives warnings to people who persist in wrongdoing.

Philadelphia

7 “ And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, “ These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”:

8 “ I know your works. 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.

9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 “ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Rev. 3:7-13 NKJV)

- Philadelphia is one of only two churches which received no rebuke from the Lord.
- The name means the place or city of brotherly love.
- Philadelphia was founded as a missionary town, planted to spread Greek culture.

**7 “ And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,
“ These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David,
He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”:**

- Jesus always describes Himself in a way that is meaningful. God comes to us with purpose.
- This is the most elaborate description of the Lord in these seven letters.

Holy –

- This means that He is separate and other from us.
- “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” (Isaiah 6:5 NKJV)
- The fact that we are in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ doesn’t magically transform Him into “one of the guys.”
- Proverbs 8:13 says, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.” (Proverbs 8:13 NKJV)
- Jesus is the Eternal God, for who else but God is holy?

He Who is true –

- This word *true* as opposed to being a counterfeit. Jesus is the genuine article! As the preacher said, He is the only one qualified to be an all-sufficient Savior.
- *Then Jesus said to them again, “ Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd....”* (John 10:7-11 NKJV)

He who has the key of David –

- *The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; so he shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut, and no one shall open.* (Isaiah 22:20-22 NKJV)

- The key was a symbol of authority that would be placed upon a man’s shoulder. Jesus is saying that He is the one who now has the ultimate authority.
- He creates opportunities and closes them to us as HE wills.
- Psalm 62:11 says, *Power belongs to God*. This is how you can keep your peace.

8 “ I know your works. 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.

- Again Jesus says He knows their works. He sees all that we do. Now He wants them to observe that they have an open door to work. He says, “See!” Why do they have an open door?
- He said no one could shut it because **they had a little strength**. The word for strength there is *dunamis*. It’s the dynamic, supernatural power of God.
- Another reason they have an open door given to them by the Lord is because **they have kept His Word**. Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.
- Today it is fashionable not to value the Word of God, the Bible. Compared to past generations, we are weak in the Word.
- Almost all doctrinal error will lead to personal, moral, and spiritual weakness and error, because doctrinal error causes us to have a faulty grasp of reality, of God, of Christ, and of His plan for us.
- Jesus commended the Church that kept His Word, and if a Church is to keep His Word, it must first know His Word.

- The third reason Jesus gave them an open door was because **they had not denied His Name**. Jesus said that if we deny Him before men, He will also deny us before the Father!
- Jesus will only entrust the Kingdom and Kingdom works to those who are not ashamed of Him.
- A last days, Philadelphia Church, may have many chances to deny Him in small ways or in large ways. Remember Polycarp! *"Eighty-six years I have served Him, and He never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"*

9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

- We can presume that they were among those Jews who were enemies of the Church in the first century. Is there a last days parallel here as well?
- *Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. (Isa. 66:5)*

10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

- Is this a reference to the Rapture? Many say yes, some say no. We can be encouraged as we read in 1 Thessalonians 5, that God has not appointed us to wrath. The Church will not see the wrath of God.

11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

- Jesus says hang on to what you have. We face the possibility that we can lose rewards through our sin, disobedience, or laziness and lack of faith.
- Paul teaches us to run in such a way that we will win the prize. n!

12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

- Philadelphia had been subjected to powerful earthquakes.
- The Temple pillars were called Yachin (stability) and Boaz (strength).
- Jesus is telling us that he is able to make you stable, strong, and secure.
- In the age to come, your interior stability will be outwardly manifested.
- And Jesus says we will no longer depart from his temple. *“Who would not yearn for that city out of which no friend departs, and into which no enemy enters?”*
- Being inscribed says that we want to identify with God completely, and that we belong to Him. Priests wore a crown that said, “Set apart for the LORD.”

13 “ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

- Faithful people can take to heart these words of Jesus tonight, and keep going from faith to greater faith, strength to greater strength, and glory to greater glory.
