

Text: Revelation 3:7 - 13

Title: Philadelphia - The Faithful Church

Theme: Jesus sees the patient perseverance of the Church through the midst of trials and He will reward Her soon.

Date: 170402

Response: Communion

Benediction: Revelation 3:11 - 12

I. Jesus Speaks to His church in Philadelphia

“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

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. Rev 3:7

A. The Church In Philadelphia

1. Modern day Alasehir
2. An in-land city (Currently less than 40,000)
3. About 30 miles south west of Sardis
4. Youngest of the seven churches
5. between 195 - 139 BC by Eumenes or Attelus - Brothers and consecutive kings of Pergamum
6. “City of Brotherly Love”
 - a) GR. contrary to our contemporary application of the idea
 - (1) *Occurs 7 times. referring to Christian love*
 - (2) *Only one time in John’s writings*
 - (3) *John alone uses the term to refer to the city and not a relationship*
 - b) *The Story of Philadelphia*
 - (1) *Rome attempted to turn Attelus against his older brother Eumenes in order to conquer Pergamum*
 - (2) *Rome was beaten*
 - (3) *Attelus was given the name Philadelphos - “Brother-lover”*
 - (4) *The City was then called after Attelus*
7. In an earthquake zone
 - a) AD 17 massive earthquake followed by large daily after-shocks
 - b) All residents displaced
 - c) Tiberius exempts the city from paying Roman tribute
 - d) Rome sends major relief and rebuilding aid
 - e) Erects a huge statue of the emperor
 - f) Re-names herself “New Caesarea”

8. Given a third name "Flavia" in honor of Emperor Vespasian
9. Most similar to Smyrna
 - a) No rebuke
 - b) Synagogue of Satan
 - c) Faithfulness

B. Jesus The Sovereign LORD speaks to His Church

“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:
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. Rev 3:7

1. "The One who is Holy, The One who is True"
 - a) The TRUE Messiah
 - (1) The HOLY ONE - OT COMMON FOR YHWH
 ““To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.”
 (Is. 40:25)
 - (2) THE TRUE ONE - Equates Jesus of Nazareth with God
 - b) Sovereign Holy Judge
 “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?
 (Rev 6:10)
 - c) Trustworthy and not capricious
 (1) Comfort and strength of the Philadelphian Church
 - d) The One who Holds The Key of David
 - (1) Jesus has complete control over who is admitted to the New Jerusalem
 - (2) (cf. Is. 22:19 - 22)
 Shibna's arrogance was divinely judged and his position and authority (The Key) was given to Eliakin
 - (3) Jesus has the divine authority
 (cf. Rev 1:18)
 Jesus references back to the opening of John's vision to establish His identity to the churches
2. The One Who Opens and Closes
 - a) Continues out of Is. 22
 - b) Jesus has divine power to accomplish
 (cf. Jn 10:26 - 30)
 Re-highlights his eternal authority to judge and keep his Kingdom
3. Jesus - the True Messiah who holds the key to the Eternal Jerusalem is speaking to you- Just like when the earthquake forced you to leave the city - One is here to rescue and strengthen you

II. The Faithful Church in Philadelphia

“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.”

A. “I know your deeds”

1. Trial by the Synagogue of Satan
 - a) Claimed that Jesus is NOT the Messiah
 - b) Christians were not a part of True Israel
 - c) Excommunicated the Christians from the synagogue
 2. You Have Little Power -
 3. You Have Kept My Word
 - a) you have been FAITHFUL through obedience
 - (1) (love) cf. *John 14:21*
 - (2) *WWJD minute by minute*
 4. You Have Not Denied My Name
 - a) You have been FAITHFUL
 - (1) withstood the pressure to capitulate
 - (2) to stand firm even when it meant you would be excommunicated
 - (3) and loyal to me even when it meant that you would suffer greatly from lack and want
- B. Lost friends or family, lost influence, lost respect, lost position, lost health, lost money, lost legal protection AND YET you lived each day to please your King

III. Jesus Word of Encouragement

“I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.”

(Rev 3:9 - 10)

A. A Promise of Faithful Keeping

1. Because you “Kept”
 - a) My words
 - b) Not denied my name
 - c) My word about patiently persevering
2. “Behold!”
 - a) Look! - I have opened the door in for you
 - (1) No one has the “power” to close
 - b) Look - They are false - They are LIARS
 - c) Look! I Will Make Them bow before you
 - (1) (cf Is 49:23; 60:14) - Gentiles coming and bowing

- (2) (cf. Gal 6:16) - Falsely Jews bow before the Church - The "Israel of God"
- d) (Look! I will make them) Know I have loved you
 (1) cf. Rom 9:13; John 14:21)
3. I Will KEEP You from the hour of testing
- a) *What is the "Hour of Testing"?*
- (1) *A testing of all "earth dwellers"*
- (a) *8x in Rev - always humans in opposition to the church*
"All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."
(Rev 13:8)
- (b) *In the middle of the "trumpets" (Rev 8:13)*
- (c) *Similarity with Smyrna's "10 days" - believers are killed (Rev 2:10; 6:10)*
- b) Kept safely through
- (1) cf. John 17:15 "protect" = keep
 "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one."
- (2) Echo of Adamic Responsibility - Keep (Guard) the Garden
- (3) cf. Rev 6:9 - 11
 "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed."

B. A Faithful Promise of Reward

"I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name."

(Rev 3:11–12)

1. I am coming soon!
- a) Consistent anchor throughout Rev.
- (1) Rev 2:16
 (2) Rev 22:7, 12, 22
- b) denotes "Very Quickly"
- (1) John 11:30 - Mary, when Jesus came after her brother died
 (2) Matt 5:25 "settle quickly, while still on the way"

- c) Keep Hanging on
 - (1) If the word to Sardis was “WAKE UP!” the word to Philadelphia is “HOLD ON!”
 - (2) To the very end
 - (a) Don’t forfeit like Sibna, or king Saul
 - (3) Holding on is Being victorious
- 2. I Will Make You A Pillar
 - a) Not temporary like Eliakin
 - (1) “I will drive him like a peg into a firm place” (Is 22:23)
 - b) He Will Never Leave It
 - (1) “in that day the pag will fall” (Is 22:25)
 - (2) You’ve been kicked out of the synagogue
 - (3) You’ve been displaced from the city
 - c) Earthquake-proof construction
- 3. I Will Write On Him
 - a) The Name of My God, New City of My God, My New Name
 - (1) Not trinitarian language
 - (2) Eternal Security language
 - (3) All of the hidden things of God will be made known to the victorious ones
 - b) The statute of the High priest in the Philadelphian temple
- 4. Just like the high priest has a pillar set up after his faithful service
- 5. Just like the city is given the name of her resuer
 - a) So you will be set up and receive the name

IV. Applying The Word

- A. What is the Spirit saying to the churches? To BRCC?
- B. “keep” “Give” “Hold” “Open” “Placed” “Closed” assurance
 - 1. Non-believer: Have you laid hold of Jesus?
 - a) Have you set up your throne like Saul and Shibna?
 - b) Have you rejected the Savior like the Synagogue of Satan?
 - c) It is not yet too late
 - d) Jesus holds the Key to the door of eternal life
 - e) bow before Him while there is still time
 - 2. Believer: Are you weary and weak?
 - a) Young father or mother wrestling to pass on the faith to your kids
 - b) Husband/Wife struggling to forgive and love as Christ has forgiven and loved you
 - c) Chrstian at school, at work being rejected and rediculed for your faith and obedience
 - d) Keep His Word, Endure with Patience, Do not deny His name
 - 3. Are you close to letting go?
 - a)(despair, disbelief, agnosticism, cultural pressure)
 - b) He is holding on to you and will perfect your faith
 - c) He is coming quickly and His reward is with Him
 - 4. Communion

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I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

(Revelation 3:7–13 NIV)