

THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

REVELATION 3

Text: Revelation 3:7

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⁷ And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

Introduction:

Of the seven letters to the seven churches found here in Revelation only two didn't receive any sort of correction or rebuke. One was the church in Smyrna, and the other is this church, the church in Philadelphia. While the letter to the church in Smyrna is a challenge for them to remain faithful unto death, this letter is filled with compliments and praise. The other five letters all contained words of complaint and correction, but this church receives nothing but praise from the Lord.

As you read this letter you become quickly aware that this is a church that the Lord is using for His glory. Most churches that God uses fit into this kind of mold.

Notice:

1. THE CHRIST OF THIS CHURCH

Revelation 3:7-8

⁷ And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; ⁸ I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

A. His Attributes

1. He is Holy

1 Peter 2:21-22

²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: ²² Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Hebrews 4:15

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin.

2. He is Honest

B. His Activity

1. His work with the doors

a. He holds the key of salvation.

Revelation 1:18

¹⁸ I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

b. He holds the key of service

Revelation 3:8

⁸ I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

2. His watchfulness in the deeds

Proverbs 15:3

³ The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

2. THE CONDITION OF THIS CHURCH

Revelation 3:8

⁸ I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

A. The privilege they enjoyed (An open door)

B. The power they exhibited (Little strength)

Many believe that this was speaking about the size of this church, a small church with limited resources and few workers. What they probably saw as weakness, the Lord saw as strength.

Hebrews 11:34

³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

2 Corinthians 12:10

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Romans 8:31

³¹ What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

C. The proof they embodied

The last part of verse eight tells us why the Lord blessed this church.

Revelation 3:8

⁸ I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

3. THE CHALLENGES TO THIS CHURCH

Revelation 3:9-11

⁹ Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. ¹⁰ Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. ¹¹ Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

A. Persecution – Not everyone was happy with this church.

B. Perceptive – Hold fast that which thou hast.