

OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES

REVELATION

THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

3:7-13

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Revelation 3:7-13

Jesus Writes to the Church in Philadelphia

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He Who is holy, who is true, Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one will shut, and Who shuts and no one opens, says this: “I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.” Revelation 3:7-8

Jesus describes Himself as the One Who is holy, the One Who is true. He rightfully claims He is the One Who has the key of David. No one is able to shut what Jesus has opened. No one is able to open what Jesus has shut.

The church at Philadelphia did not have a lot of powerful teaching, but what they had they kept, and they didn't deny His Name. Jesus only gave them a little power, but because they did not deny His Name, because they kept His Word, and because they used the power they did have—what did He do? He put before them an open door which no one could shut.

What are you doing with what you have? It is required that you be faithful with whatever He has given you. And this is not referring to wealth or health, but whatever grace He has given you spiritually. If you are faithful with what He has given you, you will be given more. It does not matter the *size* of your church, it does not matter the size of the *ministry* of your church. What matters is—what are you doing with what He has given you? What are you doing with what you know?

Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Revelation 3:9

Isn't that gorgeous? It may not be someone from a synagogue of Satan as far as a Jew, it may be your family, those that persecute you now, those that hate you now because you are using the little power that He has given you. You use that power to keep His commandments even though others don't understand the ways of God. You use that power to be faithful to His Name even though they think you are crazy. They do not understand why you do these “weird” things. Eventually though... eventually... He is going to make them come and bow down at your feet, not to honor you, but to make them know that He has loved you. Thank you, God.

Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Revelation 3:10

They kept the word of His perseverance. They persevered through the persecution that the Word of God brings. They hated our Master—they will hate us if we look like Him. These precious souls persevered throughout the hardships of the Christian life. Jesus was pleased with their faithful perseverance and promised to keep them from the hour of testing which was going to come upon the whole world. The hour of testing is looking forward to something that has not even happened yet—the Great Tribulation. Those from the church in Philadelphia have gone to be with the Lord and did not experience the hour of the Great Tribulation. What can we know about our relationship to the Great Tribulation? As believers, we can know we will be kept from the hour of testing that is going to come upon the whole world, but we can also know there will be much that we will have to endure. The word perseverance shows us that there is much to endure. Don't ever think the Christian life is a cakewalk because that goes against everything He tells us in His Word. There will be trials, suffering, persecution, and tribulation. But we can make it; we can persevere; we can overcome!

I want you to pay attention to a phrase that will be repeated consistently throughout Revelation, “those who dwell on the earth”. Those who dwell on the earth, or earth dwellers, are *not* saved. This does not mean that the earth dwellers include everyone who is dwelling on the earth. The earth dwellers are the ones who are not saved on the earth and who will not be saved. They are a major character and component of the book of Revelation.

I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. Revelation 3:11

This hour of testing is going to test those who dwell on the earth. He will identify whoever is false and judge him. When He comes, things will take place quickly. Until then, the Philadelphians were told to hold fast what they had. We are told to hold fast what we have until He comes. Why? Because there is a crown coming! A crown! I don't know about you, but I have never been the owner of a true crown. And yet, the Son of God is promising a crown for those who hold fast the truth that has been given to them from the Word of God! Amazing! I don't know about you, but no one is going to take away my crown—I am holding fast!

He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; 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 out of heaven from My God, and My new name. Revelation 3:12

They had constant volcanic activity in Philadelphia and they had to leave the city over and over again. One volcanic eruption after another. Imagine living in Philadelphia—it has only been a couple of years and you hear the news that “Mount BlowingUpAgain” is

active. You have to run away from the city until the volcanic and earthquake activity subsides. Then you return once again to rebuild the city and your home. Jesus says He will make the church of Philadelphia a pillar in the temple of His God. Does the pillar ever leave the temple? No. The pillar is never going to be taken or shaken down. Do you see just the beauty of the intricate detail of the Word of God, the wonder of God choosing *every* word? If you do a little bit of history work in studying the seven churches, you will find the description of Himself, the promises, everything fits so perfectly for that literal historical church. It grows your faith up just a little bit bigger because He is so detailed. And if He's detailed about that, is He going to be detailed every place else in the Word? Oh, yes!

What did Jesus have against the church of Philadelphia? This is the one church that He didn't have anything against. May we hold so fast to Him in His Word that He could say that about us.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Revelation 3:13

Jesus had the key of David which is the key to the kingdom of God. Jesus had the authority and the power of the kingdom that was promised to David. *Jesus* "opens and shuts" into the kingdom or out of the kingdom. No one else. Jesus decides who enters the kingdom and who doesn't. Have you used the power that He has given you? Have you kept His Word? Have you kept the word of His perseverance? The tribulation that His Word brings? He will keep *you*. I love that part. He will *keep* you. He will let everyone know that you are His and that He has loved you. Have you denied His Name or have you paid the incredible cost of claiming His Name? Have you walked through the door of obedience that He has opened for you? A door of tribulation, a door of service to the King. Are you holding fast to truth, His Word alone?

You must... you must hold fast to truth because others will try to wrench it from you...