

## Jesus Message to the Church – Philadelphia

Rev.3:7-13

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Today we will look at the church in Philadelphia, one of the seven churches to which Jesus sent messages through the apostle John.

Philadelphia is known as “Alashehir (city of god, exalted city). This city was very syncretistic, from Anatolian and Hellenistic practices. *Its patron deity was Dionysus, god of wine.* This city was almost destroyed in 17AD by an earthquake that devastated Sardis and nearby cities. The population of the city was small due to the constant earthquakes; this caused people to move outside the city.

Philadelphia became a missionary center for spreading the Greek language and customs into eastern parts of Lydia and Phrygia.

Some believe disciples of Paul planted this church there.

### Read text: Rev.3:7-13

**These are the words of him who is who is holy and true** (Holy =Separate; true=real genuine, truth in contrast to false). **Holy and true (Rev.6:10)**

**Who holds the key of David.**

**The key of David: Isa.22:20-23** “In that day I will summon my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiyah. **21**I will clothe him with your robe and fasten your sash around him and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the people of Judah. **22**I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. Eliakim carried a heavy key on a loop slung on his shoulders, indicating his power to grant or deny others an audience with the king. He alone provided access to the presence of the king. Jesus is the one who grants or denies access to the presence of God. He holds the authority.

**“What he opens no one can shut and what he shuts, no one can open”**

Jesus is also the one who holds the key to Hades and death. **Rev.1:18**

**Jesus knows what goes on in the church:** “**I know your deeds, see, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.**” There is an open door of opportunity for this church in this city. When God opens a door for you, no one will be able to close it and when he closes the door for you stop trying to push it open because you won’t.

*-I know you have little strength,*

*-but you kept my word and haven't denied my name.* even though they did not have much strength, they remained faithful to Jesus.

*(v.9) Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie-behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet and they will learn that I have loved you.* These people from the church of Satan (2:9) Jesus called them impostors, liars. They have slandered this church and now Jesus said he will make them bow down at the feet of the church. God will humble them for their error, but he will exalt the church for her faithfulness.

*They will know learn that I have loved you.*

*Jesus once again acknowledge that this church kept his command and endured patiently (v.10)* This church kept Christ's word which means they truly loved Jesus. Jesus said that if you love me, you will keep my commandments (**John 14:15, 21**)

**Jesus reward faithfulness and perseverance (v.10)** He promised protection from the hour of trial that is coming upon the whole earth. This is a reference to the tribulation since it will come upon the whole earth. To test those who live on the earth.

*Christ's faithful church won't go through the tribulation, but the unfaithful ones will.*

**Jesus is coming!** *(v.11) I am coming soon, hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.* The word soon in the Greek implies something suddenly, unexpectedly, something imminent; you can count on it. **The church is called to hold fast or be strong in perseverance, love, faith, sound teaching until Jesus comes.**

**Let no one take your crown.** *Work in the kingdom of God is rewarded, but laziness is condemned;* you could lose your reward. This is an athletic imagery, which the apostle Paul uses often in his letters. The Jews of the synagogues of Satan tried to disqualify these Christians from running their race for Christ. **But the church held on to Christ and his teaching.** Paul encourages the Corinthians to run in such a way as to receive the prize. (**1 Cor.9:24**) *to the Galatians he said, you were running a good race, who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth (Gal.5:7)* **Jesus said that in order to keep your crown, you must hold on (hold fast, be strong) to what you have. (Hold on to what you have so that no one will take your crown)**

### Promise for the conquerors:

*-Become a pillar in the temple of God...never again will he leave it* (security, no disturbance would come to force you out)

*-God's name and the name of the city of God written on him*

*-Jesus' new name written on him*

Names printed signified ownership, identification. God's people will be known as his people and citizens of his city. **Rev.21:3** *Look, the dwelling place of God is with people. He will be their God and they will be his people.*

### What is the Spirit saying to the churches? What does Jesus expect of his church today?

*-Jesus expects a church that remains faithful to him until the end.*

*-Jesus is the one who opens doors of opportunity or closes those doors.* The church must learn to walk through the open doors God opens and learn to stop trying to force open a door God has shut.

Jesus expects a church that hold fast to sound teaching, love, faith, service, patience. A church that endures persecution for his name's sake.

*-Christ expects a church of overcomers.*