

November 1, 2020
La Jolla Christian Fellowship
REVELATION - Letter To The Seven Churches
Episode 7 : To the Church in Philadelphia
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Revelation 3:7-13

*“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. ⁸I 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. ⁹I 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. ¹⁰Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. ¹¹I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. ¹²The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them 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 them my new name. ¹³Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

Understanding Philadelphia: Brotherly Love. Eumenes II named the city for the love of his brother, who would be his successor, Attalus II (159–138 BC)

- A city that had experienced **financial ruination**.
 - 17 A.D. Earthquake: Allowed not to pay tribute for 5 years by the Emperor.
 - Emperor Domitian closes the vineyards of Philadelphia 92 A.D. Revelations written circa 96 A.D.
- An administrative district of Sardis, but unlike the church of Sardis will be kept from the hour of trial coming on the entire earth. **Vs. 10** *I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.*
- Home of the Roman Imperial Cult.
- Jesus has nothing negative to say about the church at Philadelphia

The Declaration: Vs. 7 *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.*

Holy and True: Holiness and truth are the two great separators of our day.

“God’s holiness is a threat to our autonomy and self-rule”

- Greg Ogden

Revelation 4 picks up on this theme with its dramatic picture of the **holiness of God**.

Truth: 2 Timothy 4:3 *For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.*

Open Doors: *Who (Jesus) holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. (ISA 22:22)*

Deeds: *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. ⁹I 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.*

- Christians in this city had been shut out of the Jewish synagogues.
- **Name removed** from synagogue book of registry.
- Jews were exempt from having to say Jesus is Lord.
- **Fall at your feet: Vs. 9** *I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.*

The Reward:

- You will become pillars
- I will write upon those pillars

Small Group Questions

1. Jesus declares that he is holy and true. Has modern day holiness changed since the time of the believers in Philadelphia?
2. Greg Ogden writes that, “God’s holiness is a threat to our own self rule. Why is that?”
3. Jesus says that he opens and closes doors that no one can shut or open. How do you know when God has opened or shut a door in your personal life?
4. 2 Tim 4:3 talks about a generation no longer being able to hear or accept truth. Are we living in that time now? How do you know what truth ultimately is?
5. In the passage we are told that one day we will be pillars in the throne of God. What would it mean to be a pillar of truth and holiness in the world today?