

THE CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA—REVELATION 3:7-13 (MISSIONS CHURCH 1790 – 1900’S)

The Philadelphian church was located in the very heart and center of Greek civilization. This city was founded only 189 years before the birth of our Lord; however, it had incredible influence on that area of the ancient world. As we will learn, this church was vital. In fact, Philadelphia remained an independent Christian city until conquered by the Turks at the end of the fourteenth century.

- The name *Philadelphia* means _____ *love*
- It was foremost eastern city of the eastern border of Asia. If you went beyond Philadelphia you entered Asia Minor and went into Assyria.
- It was built in 189 BC by King Eumenes II of Pergamon. He built it in honor of his brother _____ II (159–138 B.C.) who, in spite of Roman pressure, maintained “loyalty/love” for his brother, Eumenes II (197–159 B.C.)— thus the name “Philadelphia” (brotherly love).
- It was referred to by historians as “Little _____” – because it was so luxurious
- It was a very important commerce city and was considered the _____ to the east!
 - o Philadelphia saw it as their mission to pass culture and civilization into the rest of the world.
 - o Eumenes formed the city to be a “missionary” city. He saw it as the last outpost of Greek culture / civilization.
 - o The people were taught and believed it was their responsibility to take their culture to the rest of the east.
- The city was dedicated to the god _____ – The god of revelry, wine, orgy, and ecstasy
 - o During Roman time it was known as Bacchus
- It was subject to a lot of earthquakes. After several massive quakes the people were afraid to live in the city.
- Because of where they were and the mindset of the culture, the Church of Philadelphia assumed a _____ mindset.

History will bear that this church is very descriptive of the church age that began somewhere around the mid 1700’s and will continue to the Tribulation. The Philadelphian period came out of the Sardis period. Although the Reformation church did not completely fulfill its destiny, the Holy Spirit still lit the fire of revival. God was waking up a “dead” church. Philadelphia was marked by vitality and life. In this church age, God produced revivals that burned in Europe and the British Isles, spreading even to America. These revivals gave birth to what is commonly known as the *Modern _____ Movement*.

The Lord told this church that He had placed before them an open door. This open door birthed some of the greatest men and women of God in the history of the church. These include Adoniram Judson, David Livingstone, William Carey, Jonathan Edwards, Smith Wigglesworth,

Charles Finney and many more. During this awesome period, missionaries were sent out all over the world--to Africa, Japan, China, Korea, India, South American and the Islands of the Sea.

This period produced the printing of the Bible in the language of the people and literal interpretation of the Biblical record. Because of this, once again there was an increasing interest in the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. When the church once again believed in the immanence of Christ's return, the fire of evangelism and zeal returned to the house of God. Finally, after hundreds of years of darkness and ritualism, the church was once again willing to do whatever the Lord commanded.

FOUR ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S CHARACTER REVEALED TO PHILADELPHIA REVELATION 3:7

- _____—Christ is reminding His church that He is holy and that we who serve Him must separate ourselves unto Him and come apart from the world.
- _____—John 14:6 refers to our Lord as *Truth*. Christ is not only the *Truth*; He is also the *Ultimate Truth*. There is no *Truth* that can be given in this world other than the *Truth* revealed in Jesus Christ.
- _____—This is a reference to the authority of Christ and points to His eventual world rulership in the Millennial Reign. Christ sets up kings in this world; but, He also controls the extent of their influence.
 - “Key” – means one who has a key that opens chambers of treasures or open doors to new realms – **Jesus is the _____**
 - Matthew 16:9 – Jesus has the keys to the Kingdom
 - Luke 11:5 – Jesus has key to knowledge
 - Rev. 1:18 – Jesus has the keys to Hades and Death
 - Rev. 3:7 – Jesus has the Key of David
 - Rev. 9:1 – Jesus has the Key to Bottomless Pit
 - Rev. 20:1 – Jesus has the key to the Abyss
 - First Mention: Isaiah 22:20-23
 - The key was used to get into Kings personal chamber and into his Treasure Chambers.
- _____—Matthew 28:18 *All authority is given unto me....* Christ has been given all authority in heaven and in the earth. No one can close the door of ministry until Christ gives the legal right to so.
 - The word “opens” is used:
 - Acts 5:19 – Door opened for Peter in prison
 - Acts 12:10 – Angel opens the door to prison
 - Acts 16:2 – Paul and Silas in Jail
 - Rev. 4:1 – John sees a door opened in heaven...

THERE IS NO COMDEMNATION FOR THIS CHURCH!

A. Commendation: Rev 3:8-10 - I Know Your Deeds

- i. Because of this church's deeds, a door of opportunity was opened to them for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 16:9 = Paul considered an open door to be an opportunity for ministry.
- ii. You Have Little Strength - This must refer to the fact that this kind of church, even in today's culture, is in the minority.
- iii. You have Kept My Word - This church not only believed the word, they **also** obeyed it!
- iv. You Have Not Denied My Name
 - 1) Satan always attempts to counterfeit every true work of God.
 - 2) Because of their faithfulness to God, Christ gave them two promises along with these commendations:
 - a. Vindication = Christ promised that all false religionist (imposters), who claimed to be Jews and were not would, would some day be subdued before them. These persecutors will recognize that while persecuting the true church, they turned their back on God. (v. 9)
 - b. Preservation = The world has never known universal tribulation. The hour of testing spoken of is none other than the seven-year tribulation period.

I personally believe that the "open door" set before this church could have **double interpretation**. Sure, it does represent a period of church history characterized by fervent, open evangelistic work. I believe, however, that it is also the **open door of the _____ that will preserve the church from the Tribulation Period to come.** – Matt. 24:36-39

B. Counsel:

- i. Hold on to what you have...let no one take your crown = The enemy will attempt to steal the revelation and joy that you have in serving Christ; but you must hold tightly to your faith!

C. Challenge:

- i. He who overcomes will be made a pillar in the temple of my God...
 - 1) Pillars speak of stability
 - 2) In the kingdom to come the overcomers will not be outsiders or part of a minority. They will be in the _____ of authority in that kingdom.
- ii. I will write on him the name of my God and the city of my God, the new Jerusalem...
 - 1) True believers are identified with Christ by the seal of the name of GOD, which allows them to have entrance into the city of God. (Rev. 21:9-22:6)
 - 2) I will write on him my new name...

SPECIAL NOTE: THE GREATEST INCREASE IN FALSE CHRISTS AND FALSE RELIGIONS IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY BEGAN DURING THIS TIME PERIOD!

- 3) The believers of the church of Philadelphia will have the name of God which entitles them entrance into the city of God.
- 4) They will be given the name of Christ. According to Revelation 22:3-4, this entitles those who have this name to “be His servants and **see His face.**”
- 5) This seems to be an exclusive experience for all of those who are overcomers!