

# The Faithful Church

**Key Verses:** Rev 3:11 ~ "I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown." – New American Standard Bible

**Power Point:** The church of Philadelphia was found faithful. They adhered firmly and devotedly, to Christ; his name, word and cause.

1. Rev 3:7-8; Acts 14:27; Colossians 4:2-3 ~ Sometimes we try to pressure people who aren't ready to hear or receive the gospel. Jesus is the one that deals with the hearts and opens the door.

- What is Jesus teaching us about ministry in this scripture?

2. Rev 3:9; James 1:12 ~ The church of Philadelphia was faithful to share the gospel even when under persecution and pressure and Jesus gave her many opportunities for ministry. He does the same with us.

- What does God promise to the faithful who overcome?

3. Rev 3:10–12 ~ We can rest and rely on Jesus to stand with His church regardless of what it may be facing.

- What is the importance of pillars in our lives and why does Jesus compare His overcomers to them?

**Application:** The church of Philadelphia was faithful and they persevered in spite of persecution. May we be like this church that faced all types of challenges but never took their eyes off the goal of the prize of the high calling of God.

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**Text: Rev 3:7-13**

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- When it came to religion, this city was no different than the others, with Temple worship to Artemis and other gods.
- The population of Philadelphia included, Jews, Christians of Jewish origin, and converts from paganism and heathen worship.
- Heathenism and apostate Judaism was a constant pressure on the Christians.

**The picture of Christ:** Verse 7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "HE WHO HAS THE KEY OF DAVID, HE WHO OPENS AND NO ONE SHUTS, AND SHUTS AND NO ONE OPENS":

Jesus described Himself as the One **who is holy and truth...**The holiness of Christ is a frequent truth in Scripture, and because He is holy and truth He is worthy to judge the spiritual life of the Philadelphia church.

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## **He who opens doors and no one shuts and shuts and no man opens**

In the New Testament, an "open door" speaks of opportunity for ministry

Acts 14:27 now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

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2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

Col 4:2, 3 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains...

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*Sometime we try to pressure people who aren't ready to hear or receive the gospel. Jesus is the one that deals with the hearts and opens the door.*

**He gave the church at Philadelphia a great opportunity for ministry.**

Verse 8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Remember that geographically Philadelphia was a gateway to the regions beyond to the east. Philadelphia was known as a city of Christian influence and was like a missionary church.

**The commendation:**

Verse 8b for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

**Little strength** - A little power. Little influence or weight in Philadelphia, because members were probably from the lower classes or poor so they didn't have impressive numbers, building or programs.

*And yet they kept His word and did not deny his name.*

This church was true to the Word of God.

They were faithful to share the gospel of Christ as the true savior and deliverer even when under persecution and pressure from those of the Synagogue of Satan.

**The admonition**

This church is one of two of the seven churches that Jesus has nothing negative to say about. Smyrna is the other. This was a faithful church.

**The encouragement and promise**

Rev 3:10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

*(AMPL) Because you have guarded and kept My word of patient endurance [have held fast the lesson of My patience with the expectant endurance that I give you]...*

Jesus commends the church of Philadelphia for being patient and persevering even during difficult times of persecution and pressure and promises not only to them but speaks to the end time church that He will preserve and guard them even during the great trial that will come upon the earth.

Although there are many eschatological views of the end times, Pre-tribulation, Mid-tribulation and Post-tribulation one thing is certain that Jesus will guard and protect His church.

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Hold fast what you have... Hold on to the truth and be patient and don't let anyone discourage you from running the race and winning the crown of your reward.

**1Co 9:25-27** And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

**James 1:12** Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 *I will write on him* My new name.

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Because of the earthquakes and constant tremors many of the people move outside the city and some lived in tents. They lacked stability. They would come into the city and just when they thought it was safe the earth would shake and they would have to go out.

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**Conclusion:** The church of Philadelphia was faithful. They adhered firmly and devotedly, to Christ, his name, his word and his cause. May we be like this church that faced all types of challenges but never took their eyes off the goal of the prize of the high calling of God.

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Verse 8b for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

**Little strength** - A little power. Little influence or weight in Philadelphia, because members were probably from the lower classes or poor so they didn't have impressive numbers, building or programs.

*And yet they kept His word and did not deny his name.*

This church was true to the Word of God.

They were faithful to share the gospel of Christ as the true savior and deliverer even when under persecution and pressure from those of the Synagogue of Satan.

**The admonition**

This church is one of two of the seven churches that Jesus has nothing negative to say about. Smyrna is the other. This was a faithful church.

**The encouragement and promise**

Rev 3:10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

*(AMPL) Because you have guarded and kept My word of patient endurance [have held fast the lesson of My patience with the expectant endurance that I give you]...*

Jesus commends the church of Philadelphia for being patient and persevering even during difficult times of persecution and pressure and promises not only to them but speaks to the end time church that He will preserve and guard them even during the great trial that will come upon the earth.

Although there are many eschatological views of the end times, Pre-tribulation, Mid-tribulation and Post-tribulation one thing is certain that Jesus will guard and protect His church.

- Noah was kept from the flood and through the flood (Gen 6:7,8)
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We can rest and rely on Jesus to stand with His church regardless of what it may be facing.

Rev 3:11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

Hold fast what you have... Hold on to the truth and be patient and don't let anyone discourage you from running the race and winning the crown of your reward.

**1Co 9:25-27** And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

**James 1:12** Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 *I will write on him* My new name.

I will make him a pillar...He shall go out no more

Because of the earthquakes and constant tremors many of the people move outside the city and some lived in tents. They lacked stability. They would come into the city and just when they thought it was safe the earth would shake and they would have to go out.

Jesus promises that they will be pillars in the temple of God. A pillar represents stability, firmness, beauty and permanency of place. Those who overcome will have a place of permanent residency and honor in the House of God.

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 *I will write on him* My new name.

“One of the interesting customs in the city was that which concerned the temples in the city. When a person had served the state as a benefactor, or public servant, or as a priest, the city would erect a pillar in one of the temples with that persons name inscribed on it. This is how the Philadelphians honored its citizens”

Kevin Connors Expository on the Book of Revelation

What will be inscribed on our heart will not be our name but the name of God, the name of the City of God and the new name.

You'll have to get there to find out what it is.

**Conclusion:** The church of Philadelphia was faithful. They adhered firmly and devotedly, to Christ, his name, his word and his cause. May we be like this church that faced all types of challenges but never took their eyes off the goal of the prize of the high calling of God.

# The Faithful Church

**Key Verses:** Rev 3:11 ~ "I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown." – New American Standard Bible

**Power Point:** The church of Philadelphia was found faithful. They adhered firmly and devotedly, to Christ; his name, word and cause.

1. Rev 3:7-8; Acts 14:27; Colossians 4:2-3 ~ Sometimes we try to pressure people who aren't ready to hear or receive the gospel. Jesus is the one that deals with the hearts and opens the door.

- What is Jesus teaching us about ministry in this scripture?

2. Rev 3:9; James 1:12 ~ The church of Philadelphia was faithful to share the gospel even when under persecution and pressure and Jesus gave her many opportunities for ministry. He does the same with us.

- What does God promise to the faithful who overcome?

3. Rev 3:10–12 ~ We can rest and rely on Jesus to stand with His church regardless of what it may be facing.

- What is the importance of pillars in our lives and why does Jesus compare His overcomers to them?

**Application:** The church of Philadelphia was faithful and they persevered in spite of persecution. May we be like this church that faced all types of challenges but never took their eyes off the goal of the prize of the high calling of God.

# The Faithful Church

Sunday February 20, 2010

**Introduction:** The Lord sent the letter to the church in Philadelphia to praise the Christians for their faithfulness in spite of persecution and to encourage them to persevere. May we be like this church that faced all types of challenges but never took their eyes off the goal of the prize of the high calling of God.

**Text: Rev 3:7-13**

## **Background on the city Philadelphia:**

- Philadelphia was located on a hillside about 30 miles southeast of Sardis in a famous wine-growing district.
- The king of Pergamum founded it around 190 B.C.
- The town received its name from his nickname, Philadelphus or brother lover. This king had a special devotion to his brother, Eumenes II.
- It was referred to as a gateway to central Asia Minor because it bordered three countries, Lydia, Mysia and Phrygia.
- Because it experienced earthquakes from time to time, people live in a rather unsettled state. And more of the population than normal chose to live outside the city walls, even in tents, huts or booths because of the tremors and what seemed to be constant shaking. This resulted in many people being poor.
- When it came to religion, this city was no different than the others, with Temple worship to Artemis and other gods.
- The population of Philadelphia included, Jews, Christians of Jewish origin, and converts from paganism and heathen worship.
- Heathenism and apostate Judaism was a constant pressure on the Christians.

**The picture of Christ:** Verse 7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "HE WHO HAS THE KEY OF DAVID, HE WHO OPENS AND NO ONE SHUTS, AND SHUTS AND NO ONE OPENS":

Jesus described Himself as the One **who is holy and truth...**The holiness of Christ is a frequent truth in Scripture, and because He is holy and truth He is worthy to judge the spiritual life of the Philadelphia church.

**The "key of David"** seems to refer to Isaiah 22:20-23 where Hezekiah's servant, Eliakim, received authority over David's house, including access to all the king's treasures.

Jesus claimed to have God's full administrative authority over salvation and judgment and to distribute or not distribute all God's resources according to His will.

## **He who opens doors and no one shuts and shuts and no man opens**

In the New Testament, an "open door" speaks of opportunity for ministry

Acts 14:27 now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 16:9, 10 and a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

Col 4:2, 3 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains...

Jesus is the Lord of the harvest and the Head of the church, and it is He who determines where and when His people shall serve.

**He also closes doors:**

Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

*Sometime we try to pressure people who aren't ready to hear or receive the gospel. Jesus is the one that deals with the hearts and opens the door.*

**He gave the church at Philadelphia a great opportunity for ministry.**

Verse 8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Remember that geographically Philadelphia was a gateway to the regions beyond to the east. Philadelphia was known as a city of Christian influence and was like a missionary church.

**The commendation:**

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