

The entire book of Revelation was written to the seven churches  
(1:4), *which represent all NT Churches.*

Revelation 3:7-13 NAS-95; Part 3 of 30

The order of this letter: **123\_576**

## The Letter to the Church in Philadelphia

Sunday, May 15 at 8:00 & 10:45 † Wednesday, May 18 at 7 PM

Fourth Sunday of Easter – 2011

Dear friends in Jesus Christ, today, *as we go through the letter to the Church in Philadelphia*, let us understand; then rightly apply it to ♦our church, ♦ourselves, and ♦others!

### 1 – Command to Write:

1. <sup>7</sup> **And to the angel [messenger/pastor] of the church in Philadelphia [about 30 miles southeast of Sardis] write** – A church's pastor is responsible for communicating GOD'S MESSAGE to the people of his congregation! I agree with Paul who wrote: <sup>NIV</sup> **1 Thessalonians 2:4** "...we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts."

### 2 – Description of the Speaker:

2. **He who is holy, who is true** – <sup>NAU</sup> **Revelation 6:10** ...they [the ones who had been put to death because of the Word of God] cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"
3. **who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this** – That description of Jesus is based on Isaiah 22:22. *What does it mean?* "The Lord Jesus has the keys to all the treasures of heaven and the power to bestow or to withhold them

according to his will.” (Becker, 67) Sometimes we think it depends on us when, *in fact*, it depends on God: <sup>NAU</sup> **Psalm 127:1** “Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain. <sup>2</sup> It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved *even in his sleep.*”

### 3 – Word of Commendation:

4. <sup>8</sup> **I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut [a door through which I will bring my gracious blessings; Dr. Becker wrote: “The holding open of the door does not depend on the strength of God’s people, but on the power and authority of the Lord Jesus.” (68). Now, Jesus returns to the topic of commending the members of the church in Philadelphia for three reasons:] **because you****
- a. **have a little power** – “Sardis was dead or about to die, the congregation in Philadelphia still had some strength” (Becker, 69).
  - b. **have kept My word** – “The members had kept (observed, taken to heart) the Savior’s word...” (Becker, 69). A similar comment was written by Dr. Walter A. Maier II in regard to *our response* to God’s Word: The disciples of Jesus are “**not only to know (academically), or keep in mind, but also to observe, or do, His will.**”<sup>1</sup>
  - c. **have not denied My name** – Like Peter – *in the face of possible arrest or worse* – we will be tempted, but

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<sup>1</sup> A Short Explanation of Matthew 28:16-20, CTS Press, 16.

God strengthens us and encourages us to *fight the good fight to the very end!* (See 1 Timothy 6:12-14)

5. <sup>9</sup> **Behold, I will cause *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie-- To “say that they are Jews” means to *say that they are God’s people*, but that is not true. We are not God’s people because we have Abraham’s blood, *but because we have Abraham’s faith!* Last Tuesday a person on the radio wrongly said: “Christianity came from Judaism.” Instead, Judaism, *a false religion*, came from Christianity – *the original and only true religion!* The true religion of Jews is Christianity, which is 6,000 years old; Judaism is only 2,300 years old!**
  
6. **I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you** – Finally, on the last day, *the truth will be made known!*
  
7. <sup>10</sup> **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.**
  - a. Some assume that God will remove His faithful ones before that time. We believe God will grant special protection in the midst of the testing, *even as God protected the Israelites in Egypt from the plagues!*
  
  - b. God sometimes tests those who claim to be in Christ to *show* whether or not they are genuine (See 1 Peter 1:3-7); with those in Philadelphia, they have already demonstrated such *by keeping the word!*

**4 – Word of Criticism:** *None in this letter!* It’s true that we have all sinned so we all need Jesus as Savior; *but may our church be like the church in Philadelphia without a word of criticism!*

## 5 – Word of Admonition:

8. <sup>11</sup> **I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take [takes] your crown** – The forces of evil are trying to take our crown, to pull us from Jesus; however, we are encouraged because Jesus is “**coming quickly.**”

## 7 – Word of Promise:

9. <sup>12</sup> **He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God and he will not [οὐ μὴ] go out from it [the temple] anymore** – An earthquake had destroyed Philadelphia early in the first century – *decades before the writing of Revelation*; apparently some of the pillars of the city had survived – *even though they were severely shaken!* Those who do not fall to evil when shaken *will dwell with God forevermore!*
10. **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** – To write my name on something is to note that I am the owner; *praise God that He has claimed us as His very own through Jesus!*

**6 – Call to Hear:** <sup>13</sup> **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. And all God’s people said: *Amen!***

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