

Studying the book of Revelation (9)

Concord Community Church on (6/4/25)

Jesus' message to the church of Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)

The Faithful Church

Introduction:

Philadelphia is a Greek word meaning “Brotherly love” as we read in Hebrews 13:1 “Let brotherly love continue” (NKJV). In the NT, this word has been mentioned few times such as in Romans 12:1; 1-Tessalonians 4:9; 1-Peter 1:22 and 2-Peter 1:7. Definitely, God speaks to us through this name to keep brotherly love amongst the believers. Brotherly love is a distinctive and distinguished feature & sign of God’s people as proclaimed by Apostle Paul in his letter to Ephesus 2:19. Jesus Himself said “by this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

The Church in Philadelphia had this quality feature of brotherly love and Jesus commended (praise & appreciated) them for their faithfulness. Unlike other churches in Revelation, Philadelphia stands out as one of only two churches, that received no rebuke from the Lord. This church, though small and weak in the world’s eyes, remained faithful & obedient, securing a promise of eternal victory. This message is a powerful reminder of what it means to be faithful to Christ despite opposition. Today, we will examine this passage and explore its profound lessons that we can apply to our own walk with Christ.

I. Christ’s Authority Over the Church

Revelation 3:7: *“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 is described as *holy* and *true* (Isaiah 6:3, John 14:6). He is sovereign, trustworthy, and above reproach.
- The *key of David* refers to His supreme authority (Isaiah 22:22). He alone grants access to the Kingdom of God and controls the doors of opportunity, salvation, and service. The authority of opening & closing of doors refers to opportunities of spreading the message of Salvation & good news in various cities & countries, which Jesus exercises at His will. {Example: Acts 16:6-10; Acts 19:8-20; 1-Corinthians 16:8-9}
- Jesus' authority extends beyond the church—He reigns over all creation (Colossians 1:16-18).

II. The Open Door of Opportunity

Revelation 3:8: ***"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."***

- Jesus commends their faithfulness despite their *little strength*. This teaches us that God works through our weaknesses when we rely on Him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).
- The *open door* symbolizes opportunities in evangelism (1 Corinthians 16:9), spiritual growth, and kingdom advancement (John 10:9).
- Faithfulness in small things leads to greater opportunities (Luke 16:10).

III. Protection from Enemies

Revelation 3:9: ***"Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you."***

- The *synagogue of Satan* refers to religious opposition—those who claim to be God's people (Jews) but reject Christ (Romans 2:28-29). The book of Acts extensively mentions the opposition by Jews in chapters: 4-7; 9;13-14; 17; 21;23 and 25.
- The promise of vindication is similar to Isaiah 60:14, where enemies acknowledge God's favour upon His people.
- God ultimately exalts the faithful (Psalm 23:5, Philippians 2:9-11).

IV. The Promise of Preservation

Revelation 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."***

- The ***hour of trial*** may refer to global tribulation, but God's promise of preservation echoes Psalm 91:1-4. In Rev 3:10, Jesus gives the most specific guarantee that true Christian believers will not go into that 7-year tribulation period that He is about to unveil (Rev 6-18). Revelation 3:10 should be studied in the light of Rom 5:9 and 1-Thess 1:10 & 5:9
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- Jesus intercedes for His people's protection (John 17:15), and believers are not destined for wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9).
- Endurance leads to divine covering and ultimate deliverance (Matthew 24:13).

V. The Urgency of Christ's Coming

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

- Jesus' return is imminent, and believers must remain watchful (Matthew 24:42-44).
- The *crown* represents eternal reward (2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12). Staying faithful ensures we do not forfeit our reward (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).
- We must resist distractions, trials, and temptations that attempt to shake our faith (Hebrews 10:23, Galatians 6:9).

VI. The Overcomer's Reward

Revelation 3:12-13: "*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.*"

- A *pillar* signifies strength, permanence, and honour (Galatians 2:9). Faithful believers will have a secure place in God's kingdom.
- The *New Jerusalem* is the eternal home of believers (Revelation 21:2-3).
- Receiving a *new name* symbolizes divine identity and transformation (Isaiah 62:2, Revelation 2:17).
- Overcoming faith leads to eternal blessings (Romans 8:37-39, 1 John 5:4-5).

Conclusion:

The church of Philadelphia sets a powerful example of unwavering faith and obedience. Though they had little strength, they remained

true to Christ. Because of their faithfulness, Jesus promised them open doors, divine protection, and eternal rewards.

Let us strive to be like this faithful church by:

1. **Trusting in Christ's authority** over all things.
2. **Walking through open doors** of opportunity and service.
3. **Standing firm against opposition**, knowing God will vindicate us.
4. **Persevering in trials**, trusting in God's keeping power.
5. **Remaining watchful**, holding fast to our faith.
6. **Living as overcomers**, secure in the eternal promises of God.

May we be found faithful and worthy to hear Jesus say, "*Well done, good and faithful servant*" (Matthew 25:21). Amen!

Additional notes on Brotherly Love

1. Demonstrates Christian faith. [1 John 2:9-11](#).
2. Is to continue. [Heb. 13:1](#).
3. Ordered, commanded to Christians. [Rom. 12:10](#); [John 13:34](#).
4. Should increase. [1 Thess. 4:9-10](#).
5. Should supplement godliness and love. [2 Pet. 1:7](#).

Let Brotherly Love Continue

- I. **KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING.**
 - A. Follow the teachings of the Scripture.
 - B. Fellowship with the saints.
 - C. Faith in the Saviour.
- II. **KINDNESS SHOULD BE THE RULE AND GUIDE.**
 - A. Example of Christ.
 - B. Expressions of Christian love.
 - C. Experience acts of daily kindness.
- III. **KINDRED SPIRIT SHOULD GOVERN.**
 - A. We are brothers in the Lord.
 - B. We are bound by the Book.
 - C. We are blood-bought believer.
- IV. **KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL.**
 - A. Love for Christ and His Word.
 - B. Love for the Church and fellow Christian.
 - C. Love for the cause of Christ
- V. **KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD.**
 - A. His love keeps us saved.
 - B. His love keeps us serving.
 - C. His love keeps us sweet.
- VI. **KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S GIFT OF GRACE.**
 - A. Dedication of Christ to the Father's love.
 - B. Demonstration of Christ's love to a lost world.
 - C. Desire of God to reach you by His love.