

PHILADELPHIA: PERSEVERING AND PRESERVED - Rv 3:7-13

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INTRODUCTION

1. 2 churches w/o rebuke: Smyrna & Philadelphia. Both profiled w/ weakness: 2:9 & 3:8; both have proven faithful in past: 2:9 & 3:8-9; both promised protection: 2:10 & 3:10; both promised blessings: 2:10,11 & 3:11-12. No rebuke or summons to repent - weakest but most tenacious
2. All 7 churches speak to every Christian in every church - Rv 3:7-13

1st: Address & Author

1. v7 Jesus speaks from His throne; see church in rln to 'the end' [Eschaton].
2. v7 recalls 1:5 - *holy & true = faithful witness* [1:5]; deity - 6:10
3. *Who has the key of David* - 1:18 [Isa 22:22] - authority in view of Final Judgment & in Kingdom of Messiah: David's Son/Lord. At beginning of letter, Jesus speaks to opposition from synagogue - Jn 16:2-4

2nd: Evaluation of Spiritual Condition

1. v8 *Jesus knows deeds* - weak: *little power*
2. *shut door* [3x in v7-8] & *open door* [2x]. v12 *will not go out from temple*. Sounds like doors are being shut to Xns in Philadelphia.
 - i. Exclusion from family, society - synagogue - 3:9 *syn of Satan*
 - ii. *Jesus has put before you an open door* - often opportunity for ministry [1C 2:12; Col 4:3; A 14:27] but in this context, Jesus opens door to kingdom - fellowship w/ Jesus - 3:10; access to throne-room - 4:1-2
 - iii. *Behold* [2x in letter]: see this - open door & assessment of syn [2x v9].
3. *deeds* - evidence of life, faith, love: altho weak - persevering.
4. *you have little power*: few in number? undeveloped or few leaders?
 - i. 1C 1:25-29 church IS weak - *according to the flesh*. Phila: persisting in churchmanship: not effective in witness; not influential - they were good at being rejected & ignored.
 - ii. Some pt to *open door* [v8] as opportunity for enlarged ministry &/or promised preservation thru impending *hour of testing* [v10]

3rd: Words of Praise

1. v8b,10a *kept My word* [2x], *not denied My name - of My perseverance*:
 - i. *the word of My perseverance* - Hb 12:2-3; Rv 1:9; A 11:23; 14:22
 - ii. *not denied My name* - Rv 2:13 - *name* = authority; IIIrd: *Antipas*
 - iii. *MY* repeated - 3:12. Phila was faithful to doct'al truth: not abstractly but as devotion to Jesus Himself: *My faith, My word*

4th: Words of Exhortation

1. v9 - cf 2:9: how to define *Jew* - Rm 2:28-29; Gal 3:7, 29

- i. Jesus' assessment: *syn of Satan; lies* - paganism is also Satanic. Dragon directs false religion of pagans & false Jews.
 - ii. 1Th 2:14-16 ethnicity irrelevant - church in Thess persecuted by pagan & church in Judea by Jews: both by Satan. Issue is rlnshp to Jesus.
2. Language of military defeat - Rv 3:9 = posture of conquered enemy.
 - i. Mentioned last time: cursing Xns was part of syn liturgy in 90s
 - ii. *Behold* [2x in Grk] 2nd time: *Behold I will make them come* - conflates several OT vss - Isa 45:14; 49:23; 60:14
 - iii. *Behold I will make them know that I have loved you* - Isa 43:4; Rv 1:5; Rm 8:35-39.
 3. v9 - styled to make strong impact on hearer - repetitive, reinforced

5th: Promise to Overcomer

1. v10 Xn life is a *test* - to *keep word of perseverance* thru the *hour of testing*. 1C 10:13 - appears as tho ch is overcome [Rv 11:7] - Lk 21:34-36
2. Phil 2:12-13 - perseverance manifests preservation
3. v11 *I am coming quickly* = 2nd coming: Rv: 22:7,12,20. *Hold fast to what you have* [Jesus] & you will have *crown* [2:10]
4. v12 - outcasts from syn made *pillar* in temple in *new Jerusalem* - Rv 21-22. *God* [4x] & *name* [3x] - Jesus' name - Rv 22:4

6th: Command to Hear HS.

1. v13 - Hear what HS says re: entrance into the Kingdom of God - do not listen to voice that say such exclusivity is bigoted & hateful.
2. Hear what HS says re: Jesus love for you.
3. Hear what HS says re: definition of "Jew" & "Israel".
4. Hear what HS says re: our weakness.
5. Hear what HS says re: our hope - 2C 4:17-18