

Philadelphia – The Church that passed the Exam Revelation 3:7-13

A blameless church is not a **perfect** church

Today we look at different church: Philadelphia. It was a church with a **little strength** that went a **long way**. About 30 miles down the valley from Sardis was the youngest of the 7 churches. As usual there were economic considerations at the root of the existence of the city of Philadelphia because of various trade routes that passed through the area. The reason for its establishment was the spread of Hellenistic culture. It was a city planted to advance the culture of Greece.

Philadelphia is a name that is familiar to us. It means literally brother love. The leader of Pergamus was a Greek named Attalus II and he had a brother named Eumenes. Attalus founded the city for his brother in about 189 BC as a demonstration of his love for him. He was so devoted to his brother that his nickname actually became Philadelphus – the man who loves his brother.

In AD 17 there was a terrible earth quake that nearly wiped out Sardis and Philadelphia. Philadelphia shook time and again for years after that and few citizens actually lived in the city. Most lived outside the city in shacks that would not fall on them in an earthquake. They stayed because of the very fertile land particularly for growing vineyards. These earthquakes are very pertinent to the passage so remember that for later.

So why did Jesus find no blame in Philadelphia. Hebrews 4:13

Here is when a Church is approved in Jesus Sight.

1. When it seeks to understand Jesus' **character** (verse 7)
 - a. We have a **sinless** Savior – One who is Holy – *Hebrews 7:26; Psalm 99:9* – God is Different, separate from sin and altogether righteous.
 - b. We have a sincere **Sovereign** – 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

- c. We have the keeper of the **keys** – Isaiah 22:20-25
 - d. We have the controller of the **doors** – John 10:9 “I am the door”
 - i. He controls the door of **salvation** –
 - 1. 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.;*
 - 2. John 6:44 *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*
 - ii. He controls the door for **service** – Acts 16:6-10 – on Paul’s journeys it was God that opened and closed doors. Look at verse 8
 - 1. He knows we are **feeble**
 - 2. He knows if we are **firm**
 - 3. He knows if we are **faithful**
 - iii. He controls the door of **death** *Revelation 1:18 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.*
2. When it acknowledges Jesus’ **control** (verses -8-9)
- a. He controls our **opportunities** -
 - i. Resistance doesn’t mean God has closed a door - 1 Corinthians 16:8-9
 - ii. God opens doors for people that are concerned with his commission. - 2 Corinthians 2:12
 - iii. Pray for open doors for yourself and others - Colossians 4:2-4
 - 1. Be thankful for open doors -
 - 2. Be thankful for closed doors – “If you can’t pray a door open then don’t **pry** it open.”
 - b. He controls our **opposition** - Revelation 2:10; Luke 12:4-7
3. When it obeys Jesus’ **commands** (verse 10)
- a. Our responsibility is **perseverance** - just keep on going – Just keep on going! keep growing, keep giving, keep sharing, keep witnessing,

keep praying. A Great Commitment to the Great commission will build a great church! A Great commitment to the great commandment will make you have a church worth coming to.

- b. Jesus responds with **protection** - There is an hour of trial coming on this earth! - 2 Peter 2:9
4. When it waits to be rewarded at Jesus' coming (verses 11-12)
 - a. He promises a **Stephano** - The **crown**, or reward, for those who faithfully endure to the end waits eternal life with all its attendant rewards - full rewards (2 John 8).
 - b. He promises **stability** – Pillars. They ran from the quakes in life but they won't have to run anymore in Heaven.
 - c. He promises **security**.
 - i. He inscribes on us to whom we belong
 - ii. He inscribes on us where belong
 - iii. He inscribes on who belongs to us!

You have heard another sermon but did you get the message?

Villa El Salvador

Do you see that God intends for us to be overcomers

- Those that overcome the loveless attitude - he promises the tree of Life
- To that overcome persecution – he promises the crown of life
- To those overcome worldliness – he promises unending provision, a precious stone of pardon and a new reputation.
- To those that overcome false doctrine – he gives power, position, and authority to rule with him.
- To those that overcome deadness in the church - he promises to acknowledge before the Father.
- To those who overcome wasted opportunities – He promises rewards, crowns, authority and security.

But what are the open doors of opportunity?

- Freedom?
- Health?
- Provision

- Family relations
 - Work relationships
 - Friend relationships
 - Neighbors?
-
- What about doors for service – in the family of God the church?

Do you think that God is going to ask us about our collections?

Luke 11:23 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.