

**“Victory Of Christ”
To The Church In Philadelphia
Revelation 3:7-13**

Introduction:

1. After Learning More About:
 - What Life Might Have Looked Like:
 - In Many Of The Roman Cities:
 - That We Have Visited So Far:
 - In Revelation 2-3!
 - This Morning:
 - We Will Start Looking At:
 - The Sixth Letter:
 - That We Come To:
 - In Revelation 2-3!
2. Which Is Jesus’ Letter:
 - To The Church In Philadelphia:
 - Which We Can Describe As:
 - His Message To:
 - A **“Faithful” Church!**
 - Found In 3:7-13!
 - Let’s Read This Letter Together:
 - 3:7-13 - “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; / 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. / 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. / 10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. / 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. / 12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. / 13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!”
3. Now - One Of The First Things:
 - That We Notice In This Letter:
 - Is - Much Like Its Counterpart:
 - In The Church Of Smyrna:
 - Though The Church Does Face Its Own Challenges From The Outside:
 - Jesus Only Offers Praise & Commendation To:
 - This Faithful Church!
 - So - Out Of The Seven Churches:
 - To Two Of Them (#2 & #6):
 - Do We Find Only Commendation!
 - And - These Were The Churches:
 - That Were Experiencing Most Of Their Pressure & Challenges:
 - From Outside The Church, Rather Than From Within!
21. And So - When It Comes To:
 - The Seven Parts Of This Letter:
 1. **Part 1 - Jesus’ Commission:**
 - For John To Write This Message:
 - To This Church!
 - 3:7 - “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write!”
 - **The City Of Philadelphia:**
 - Was About 30 Miles South-East:
 - Of The City Of Sardis!
 - As We Can See On This Map!

- And - The Greek Word “Philadelphia:”
 - Means Brotherly Love!
 - It Is Said That A King Who Lived About 200 Years Before Christ:
 - Named The City Because Of The Love & Loyalty Of His Brother:
 - Who Would Succeed Him On The Throne!
 - **The Modern City’s Name Is:**
 - Alasehir - Which Is Built Over:
 - Nearly All Of The Ruins Of The Old Cities That Were Before It!
- In Its Early Years:
 - It Was Part Of The Ancient:
 - Kingdom Of Pergamum!
 - And Was Situated On A Long Plateau:
 - Where Some Major Trade-Routes Crossed!
- And So - The City:
 - Became Known As:
 - **The “Gateway To The East!”**
- And - One Of The Most Significant Things:
 - That Philadelphia Was Known For:
 - Was That The City Was In A:
 - **Very Earth-Quake-Prone Area!**
 - A Devastating Earthquake:
 - Hit The Area In 17AD:
 - Destroying Both Sardis & Philadelphia:
 - To The Point That Rome Did Not Require Any Taxes From The City:
 - Though They Didn’t Help It Much To Recover!
- The Region Around Philadelphia:
 - Was Also Widely Known For:
 - Its Vineyards - Because Of Its Volcanic Soil:
 - Which Made Ideal Conditions For Grapes!
 - Which Rome Was Particularly Jealous About!
 - Even To The Point That:
 - They Demanded Philadelphia To Destroy Around Half Of Their Vineyards:
 - So That The Vineyards Of Italy Would Have No Rival!
- By The Time John Wrote Revelation:
 - Philadelphia Had Probably Recovered From:
 - The Earthquake:
 - But - Was Not As Significant A City:
 - As It Had Been!
- And So - It Was To The Church:
 - In This City - We Find:

2.

Part 2 - Jesus’ Character:

- 3:7 - “These things saith he (ταδε λεγει) that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth!”
 - To This Church - Jesus Does Not Describe Himself:
 - In Terms Of The Vision At All!
 - Instead - He Reminds This Faithful Church Of His Own:
 - Faithful Virtues! 3!
 - **The Virtue Of His Holiness!**
 - He Is “The Holy One!”
 - First Time In Revelation ἅγιος Is Used!
 - Used Elsewhere For Saints / Angels / Cities - Here - Jesus!
 - Now - Even Though Jesus Is Not Described:
 - As “Holy” In John’s Vision:
 - It Is Certainly There In Principle!
 - His Glory & Brilliance!
 - **The Virtue Of His Faithfulness!**
 - He Is Also - “The True One!”
 - Also - First Time In Revelation ἀληθινος Is Used! But Not The Last!

- It Will Be Joined With Other Virtues To Describe Jesus!
 - 3:14 - He Is “Faithful And True!”
 - 6:10 - The Lord Is - “Holy And True!”
 - 15:13 - His Ways Are - “Just And True!”
- And - Though Jesus Is Not Described As True:
 - In John’s Vision - Yet - His Word:
 - Is Prominent In Chapter 1!
 - 1:2 - He The “Word Of God!” - And As His Word - He Is Always True!
- **The Virtue Of His Sovereignty:**
 - Is Described By Jesus’ Having:
 - “The Key Of David!”
 - This Is A Different “Key” Than Is Described:
 - In 1:18 - “The Keys Of Hell & Death!”
 - But - This Key:
 - Is Specifically Described In The Old Testament:
 - Isaiah 22:22!
 - Where - A Promise Is Made To:
 - A Fairly Obscure Man - Named - “Eliakim The Son Of Hilkiah!”
 - Who Faithfully Served Under The Good King Hezekiah - As His “Head Of The Household!”
 - And - Part Of The Promise Was This:
 - “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open!”
 - So - Eliakim Was To Be Raised Up To:
 - The Position Of Shebna:
 - Who Was A Proud & Unfaithful Servant To The King!
 - And - He Would Be Given:
 - The Palace Key - Which Was A Position Of Great:
 - Privilege & Power!
 - And - In This Way:
 - He Became A Type / Picture:
 - Of Jesus!
 - So Here - Jesus Says That:
 - He Is Now The True & Final Recipient:
 - Of This Symbolic Key!
 - Because He Possesses The Exclusive, Sovereign Access & Control Over Everything!
 - And - These Truths About Jesus:
 - The Faithful Church In Philadelphia:
 - Would Have Especially Needed!
 - Because Of What We Learn About The Church From:

3. **Part 3 - Jesus’ Comprehension:**

- Of The Church!
 - Which - Once Again:
 - Begins With The Same Phrase:
 - As In All Of The Other Messages:
 - 3:8 - “I Know Thy Works!”
 - And - After This Statement:
 - Of Jesus’ Comprehension:
 - We Find Three “Beholds!”
 - Which He Uses To Get The Attention Of The Church!
 - 3:8 (1x) / 3:9 (2x)
 - The First “Behold!” (3:8)
 - Is Used By Jesus:
 - To Encourage The Church:
 - **In Their Vigilance For The Lord!**
 - And That Their Works:
 - Did Not Go Unnoticed!
 - Now - When Jesus Says:

- “Behold, I Have Set Before Thee An Open Door, And No Man Can Shut It!”
 - There Are Many Who See This As A Parenthesis:
 - Because Immediately Following This, Jesus Describes Their Works:
 - “For Thou Hast A Little Strength, And Hast Kept My Word, And Hast Not Denied My Name!”
- So - In Effect - Right At The Outset:
 - Jesus Offers Them A Blessing / Reward!
 - For Their Vigilance & Faithfulness:
 - As A Church - Even As They Face The Pressures That We Will Learn About In 3:9!
- And - What Is This Blessing?
 - **“I Have Set Before Thee An Open Door!”**
 - “Set” - δίδωμι - “Given”
 - Meaning That He Had Granted Something To Them Already:
 - For Their Benefit & Use:
 - Using The Symbol Of A Door!
- It Is Implied That:
 - At One Point:
 - This “Door” Had Been Closed!
 - But It Is Now:
 - Open To Them!
 - And There Is An Opportunity:
 - And Even An Invitation:
 - For Them To Go Through It!
- And Since Jesus Has The “Key Of David!” (3:7)
 - When He Opens Any Door:
 - Noone Can Close It!
 - Because Jesus Is The One In Charge & In Complete Control!
 - Now - There Have Been Many Suggestions:
 - As To What This “Door” Represents!
- Some Think That Jesus Is Referring To:
 - **The Door Of Salvation** - Since Jesus Calls Himself The Door In The Gospels!
 - This Is A Minority Opinion!
 - But The Church Would Have Already Entered Through That Door!
 - Others Think That Jesus Is Referring To:
 - **The Door Of Opportunity** - For Further Witness!
 - Quite A Few Consider This To Be What Jesus Means!
 - Especially In Light Of Paul’s Use Of “Door” In His Ministry!
 - 1 Corinthians 16:9 - “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries!”
 - However - There’s A Third Suggestion - Which Is:
 - **The Door Of Deliverance & Entrance:**
 - Into God’s Kingdom!
 - Especially In Light Of The Challenge The Church Faces From:
 - The Jews In 3:9 - Who Thought They Had The Exclusive Rights As The Family Of God & As The House Of David!
 - Robert Thomas - “It Speaks Of A Sure Entrance Into The Messianic Kingdom, Promised To This Church As A Reward For Their Faithfulness.” / “This Promise Amounts To A Promise Of Deliverance From Their Jewish Adversaries, A Deliverance That Will Come At Christ’s Second Advent.” (3:11)
 - Grant Osborne - “While The Church Has Been Excommunicated From The Synagogue, Christ Has The ‘Keys’ To The Kingdom. He Has Opened The ‘Door,’ And ‘No One Could Shut It.’”
- I Lean Toward This Suggestion:
 - Because Of The Context:
 - But - There Might Be A Further Indication Of What Jesus Means:
 - In The Next Chapter - Which Is The Third & Last Place A “Door” Is Found In Revelation!
 - In 4:1-2 - “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will

- shew thee things which must be hereafter. / And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne!”
- And - What Does John See When He Goes Through The Door?
 - **The Glory Of God On His** Throne!
 - So - The Blessing That Awaits The Philadelphian Church:
 - Because Of Their Faithfulness & Vigilance:
 - Is The Glory Of God!
 - And - Jesus Alone Holds The Key To The Door:
 - Through Which Every Faithful Christian Can Go & One Day See & Experience God’s Glory In All Of Its Fulness~
 - This Would Have Been Especially Encouraging:
 - For A Church Suffering Persecution:
 - At The Hands Of Those Who “Say They Are Jews, And Are Not!” (3:9)
 - But - After This First “Behold!”
 - Jesus Then Goes On To Describe:
 - Their “Works!”
 - “I Know Thy Works!”
 - **First - The Challenge:**
 - To Their Works:
 - 3:8 - “For / That (ὅτι) Thou Hast A Little Strength!”
 - Some Have Thought That This Was:
 - Said In A Derogatory Way:
 - As If To Describe The Strength Of Their Faith!
 - But - In Light Of What Jesus Commends Them For:
 - In The Rest Of 3:8 - It Is Better To See This As:
 - Their Strength From A Natural Point Of View!
 - They Could Have Had “Little” (μικρός) Strength:
 - Because Of Their Size!
 - Because Of Their Age!
 - Because Of Their Influence!
 - Many Believe It Refers To Their Size:
 - Robert Thomas - “‘Little Power’ Must Refer To The Church's Limited Influence Because Of Its Numerical Smallness.”
 - Grant R. Osborne - “Though They Were A Small Church, They Were Faithful And Persevered. / The Church Lacked Size And Stature In The Community And Was Looked Down Upon And Persecuted.”
 - And So - Jesus’ Commends The Church:
 - Because - “Even Though - They Only Had A Little Strength!”
 - From The Perspective Of Man!
 - Yet:
 - **Second - Their Commitment:**
 - To The Lord Was Strong & Clear!
 - “And Hast Kept My Word, And Hast Not Denied My Name!”
 - To “Keep” Jesus Word:
 - Means They Both Guarded The Truth Of His Word & Obeyed The Voice Of His Word! (τηρέω)
 - To “Not Deny” Jesus Name:
 - Means That They Were Loyal To The Lord In Spite Of:
 - The Pressures & Persecution They Faced!
 - And So - Jesus Wanted To Encourage Them:
 - For Their Faithful Vigilance:
 - By Giving Them An Open Door:
 - To God’s Glory!
 - When It Seemed Like Any Of Their Own Glory:
 - Had Faded Away To Almost Nothing!
 - But Then - To Further Encourage This Fledgling But Faithful Church:
 - Jesus Uses:
 - Two More “Beholds” In 3:9:
 - To Encourage The Church By:

- **Revealing His Vindication:**
 - Against Those Who Were:
 - The Cause Of So Many Of Their Problems!
 - “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee!”
- So - The Second “Behold” Tells Us:
 - **Who Jesus Will Deal With!**
 - And - It Is The Same Adversaries That Caused Problems:
 - To The Persecuted Church In Smyrna!
 - Look At 2:9:
 - “I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan!”
 - So - They Claimed To Have A Special Connection To God:
 - Because Of Their Jewish Religion & Relatives - But In Truth:
 - They Were “Of Their Father The Devil / Satan!” (John 8:44)
- So - The Third “Behold” Tells Us:
 - **How Jesus Will Deal With Them!**
 - 3:9b - “I Will Make Them So That They Might Come & Worship/Honor/Homage By Kneeling Before Your Feet!” - Submission! (See 2:26-27)
 - This Points Back To:
 - An Old Testament Prophecy:
 - Given To Israel In Isaiah 60:14:
 - “The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel!”
 - So - According To Isaiah 60:14:
 - The Gentiles Would Come And:
 - Bow Down Before The Feet If Israel!
 - But - Here - The Roles Are Reversed!
 - Since It Is The False Jews:
 - Who Will Bow Down Before The Feet Of:
 - This Faithful Church!
 - **So, Jesus Applies What Was Assumed To Be True Of The Ethnic Nation Of Israel:**
 - To The Multi-Ethnic People Of God - The **Church!**
 - This Is Just One Instance, Of Many, Where:
 - A Promise To Israel:
 - In The Old Testament:
 - Is Applied To The Church:
 - In The New Testament!
 - Which Shows Us That:
 - Even Those Promises To Israel:
 - Were Not Promises Of Universal Salvation & Deliverance & Blessing To Every Jew!
 - But Only To Those Jews Who:
 - Were Connected To God:
 - Through Faith In Their Messiah! Christ!
 - Now - Though We Are Not Told:
 - How Jesus “Will Make” It So That:
 - They Will “Come & Worship” Before Their Feet!
 - It May Be Under:
 - **The Compulsion Of Judgment!**
 - As We Find In Philippians 2:10-11 - “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; / And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!”
 - However - It May Even Be Under:
 - **The Convincing Of Grace!**
 - Though We Can’t Be Certain:
 - This Does Have A More Positive Ring To It Than:

- 2:26-27 - Church Of Thyatira!

- “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: / And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father!”

- So - It May Be That:

- That These False Jews Will:

- Humble Themselves Willingly:

- And Honor Christ & His Church - By Responding To His Love Themselves!

- This Is What Robert Thomas Thinks Might Be The Case:

- “The People Of Ethnic Israel Who Will Have Become Christians Will Willingly Render Such Homage To Members Of The Body Of Christ!”

- Either Way - Everyone Will Know That Jesus Loved & Loves The Church!

Conclusion:

1. But Then - When We Come To 3:10:

- We Discover A Further Reward:

- To This Feeble But Faithful Church!

- Which We Will Look At Next Week!

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