

The keep on Keeping on Church! The church in Philadelphia was the sixth of seven churches who received a spiritual evaluation directly from God through Jesus Christ.

Philadelphia, which means “brotherly love,” was situated in Lydia along the Hermus River valley about 38 miles southeast of Sardis. It was backed by volcanic cliffs and though the land was rich and fertile from the volcanic residue, Philadelphia was a dangerous place to live due the many earthquakes experienced by the region. The city was in constant danger of earthquakes and experienced shocks as an everyday occurrence.

As a result, many of its inhabitants chose to live in huts outside the city in the open country. Note the allusion to this in the promise of 3:12, “and he will not go out from it any more.”

Another important historical feature about this city and one also alluded to in the statements of the message to the church there: Philadelphia was founded for a special purpose and with a special intention. It was situated where the borders of Mysia, Lydia and Phrygia met. It was a border town. It was founded with the intention that it might be a missionary of Greek culture and the Greek language to Lydia and Phrygia; and so well did it to its work that by A.D. 19 the Lydians had forgotten their own Lydian language and were all but Greeks ...

That is what the Risen Christ means when he speaks of the open door that is set before Philadelphia. an open door to carry to men who never knew it the message of the love of Jesus Christ.57

The symbols of the ‘crown’ and the ‘temple’ mentioned in verses 11 and 12 are undoubtedly allusions by way of contrast with the games and religious festivals that were a part of life in the city of

Philadelphia. In contrast with the instability of life in a city prone to daily earthquakes, those who ‘overcome’ are promised the ultimate stability of being rewarded with special privileges in the temple of God. This church may picture the modern missionary era of church history.

Once again our risen Lord presents Himself in an aspect of His person and work which is fitting to the needs and problems of the assembly to ever remind us of the sufficiency of His life.

ESV Rev 3:7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.’”

- **“The Holy One”** asserts the Savior’s deity as the absolutely righteous One, the One totally set apart from sin. In [Isaiah 40:25](#), Yahweh calls Himself “The Holy One.” It is a title of deity and contrasts Him with the claims of Emperor worship.
- **“The True one.”** “True” is the Greek word *alhqinos*. It means “the real, the genuine, as opposed to what is false idols
- **“Who has the key of David.”** In [Revelation 1:18](#) the keys speak of Christ’s power and his royal claims as Lord and Head of David’s house. It anticipates and looks to His royal authority or sovereignty even now over heaven and earth ...

NLT Matt 28:18 Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.

- So The Lord holds the key to opening doors.
- **“The One Who Opens and no one will shut... Who shuts and no one opens ...”** In the final analysis it is always our Lord who opens all true doors of ministry to us. This church had a little strength, i.e.,

they were small in numbers by man's standards as man counts success, but this must never disturb or discourage us.

That is what the Risen Christ means when he speaks of the open door that is set before Philadelphia. Three centuries before Philadelphia had been given an open door to spread Greek ideas in the lands beyond; and now there has come to it another great missionary opportunity, an open door to carry to men who never knew it the message of the love of Jesus Christ.

The Lord holds the key to opening doors to ministry as well as the door to the hearts of men. So note the following description.

- There is also an important lesson here as believers seek God's guidance for ministry. The obvious lesson is that we must learn to seize the opportunities when they come, but not push and get frustrated when the Lord isn't opening the door. For other passages using the open door image see [Acts 14:27](#); [2 Cor. 2:12](#); [Col. 4:3](#).

I know your works.... ⁸ *“I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.*

(1) **They were faithful.. in using the opportunities (the open doors) the Lord had given them** and it was Jesus who opened the doors not their abilities

(2) **a door was opened because they have proven themselves Spiritually competent** *“You have little power.”* They were small in number by comparison to the religious and idolatrous people of the city, but, small as they were, they did have power, spiritual capacity because they were operating from the source of Christ's life and authority.

(3) **And They have kept his word ...** This was the secret to their lives and ministry... “Kept” is the Greek threw, “to watch over, guard, keep, preserve” they lived it!

They were committed to Christ’s Word or the Word about the Savior **to preserve it** from false ideas and adulterations, but they were also **committed to observing its truth in their lives.**

(4) **“And have not denied My Name.”** This speaks of their spiritual fidelity and separation from the world. Remember, one may confess the Lord with his mouth and yet, in some way, deny Him with a life that is inconsistent with the truth of Scripture or the character of Christ. And Jesus is well aware of the difficulty of doing that in their culture...

The consequence....They will be honored for that...

*⁹ Behold, I will make those **of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie**—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. “The synagogue of Satan”*

- Like the Pharisees in Jesus time, They were literal Jews, physical descendants of David and Abraham, but in claiming to be Jews they were also claiming to be God’s people, religious guides to the truth, and the means and access to God.
- Religious persecution by religious Jews operating under Satan’s control whether they realized it or not. The Lord’s word to the religious leaders in John 8:42-47 is fitting here:

*ESV John 8: 42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. 43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44 **You are of your***

father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ *But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.* **Here he makes the clear distinction between racial Israel and regenerate Israel.**

- **They had rejected God's Son and revelation of God, they were of their father the Devil, as Christ plainly told them.**
- **To be a true Jew in the biblical sense one had to have the hope and faith of Abraham. Abraham was the possessor of faith in the promises of God to him and faith in the coming Messiah.**
- Satan was its head and the power behind the scenes. More crime, evil and persecution have been perpetrated in the name of religion and by the religious, self-righteous type than almost any other one source of evil.

These persecutors will in essence have to fall down at the believer's feet and proclaim who Jesus is...

1) They will kneel and proclaim who Jesus is

NLT Phil 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2) They will proclaim Jesus loves them and they are God's family members

NLT Heb 2:11 So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters. **13** *He also said, "I will put my trust in him," that is, "I and the children God has given me."*^l

3) So They will not face God's Judgment (10)

ESV 10A Because you have kept my word about patient endurance,

- **The reason for deliverance? You have kept my word about patiently enduring....or persevered...in spite of all circumstances, persecution, trials they had kept it by faith ...you held on to the Word of God...both literally and Jesus the living word!**
- **“Kept” is the Greek , to guard, watch over, protect,” or obey,** *NLT Hebrews 12 :1Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us*

Verse 10B*I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.*

- “Kept” and “Keep” is again the Greek word, “to guard, watch over, protect,” or “obey, This is important because this same word is used of the promise which follows.

“I will also keep you from the hour of trial, or “Testing” Here the context shows us the reference is to a very specific meaning, that of world-wide testing or tribulation.

(1) It is “the” hour of trial. The presence of the Greek article specifies this as a very specific time of testing. “Hour” is metaphorical for a shortened period

(2) It is to come upon the whole world. The term translated “world” is oikoumenh, meaning “the inhabited earth,” but modifying it is the adjective, “whole, complete.” The testing is worldwide.

(3) Finally, it is designed to test a certain category of people defined as “those who dwell upon the earth.” The verb “dwell or

it can mean “inhabit.” the inhabitants as those who are characterized as earth dwellers.

4) As used in Revelation, “those who dwell upon the earth” is basically a technical term for unbelievers because they are earthdwellers, i.e., people bound only to this life and what it can give (6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 14; 17:8;

5) In contrast to believers who are to think and live as nomads or foreigners, the earth dweller is quite at home on earth.

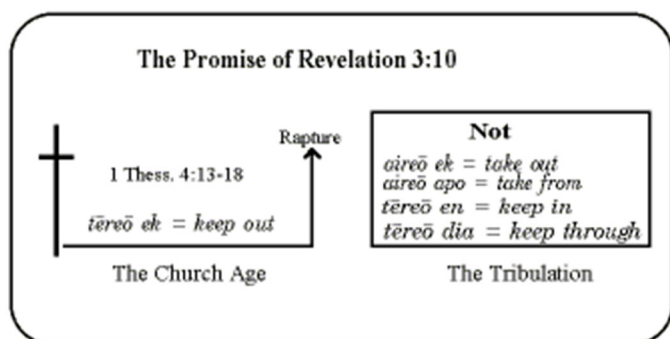
*NLT Hebrews 11:13 All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were **foreigners** and nomads here on earth.*

“The hour of trial,” sometimes referred to as “the Tribulation,” refers to the time of wrath or judgment described in chapters 6-19.

First, this is a promise to the church as a whole. This is clear from 3:13 which broadens this as a promise to the churches at large. All believers are to listen to these messages and their warning, exhortations, and promises and act accordingly.

Second, the promise is “I will keep you from the hour ...” i.e., from the Trial or Tribulation. This is very specific and carefully described in the Greek to emphasize and clearly teach the removal of the church...before the Trial or Tribulation Jesus will bring upon the earth dwellers.

Tim please put this up....



The Greek words for “keep from” are “threw ek” meaning “out of.” Is inconsistent with through the trial...

There are four other ways this could have been stated if John wanted to imply that church age believers would be in the Tribulation, but none of them were used.

- 1) airew ek = to take out, or swzw ek = to save out. This could mean that believers would go into the Tribulation and then be taken out of the Tribulation.**
- 2) airew apo = to take from. This would mean that believers would go into the Tribulation and then be taken out of the Tribulation.**
- 3) threw en = To keep in. This would be a promise of preservation in the Tribulation.**
- 4) threw dia = to keep through. This would be a promise to keep us through the Tribulation.**

Rather than any of the above, John chose to use threw ek, which means “to keep out.” This is a promise that believers will never get into the Tribulation.

The same word is used in ESV 1 Thess 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

When will this take place??

ESV REV 3:11 I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.

- His coming is promised to be Soon or quickly. This means unexpectedly, without announcement” and not necessarily immediately.

So the charge here is to “hold fast,” a warning against spiritual carelessness. The warning reminds us to live in the light of His coming, to hold fast to Him in faith and service.

- For when He comes it will mean examination and rewards. He will not forget our service on His behalf, but we must hold fast to the hope and expectation of His coming for us or we will live carelessly, indifferently to our calling and purpose as believers.

Why?? “That no one may seize your crown” is an interesting picture. To lose a crown is to be deprived of the honor or glory potentially available through faithful living.

- Jesus refers to rewards which are lost and given to others because we failed to hold fast. To finish

ESV 1 COR 9:24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. **There is also the parable Jesus spoke of negligent servant**

NLT Luke 19:24 “Then, turning to the others standing nearby, the king ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one who has ten pounds.’

In Contrast....

ESV Rev 3:12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, 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 from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.*¹

In verse 12, then, the believer who conquers or overcomes is promised three specific things:

First, They will have as a reward a special ministry as a permanent and prominent fixture in the temple of God....

Remember The city was in constant danger of earthquakes, As a result, many of its inhabitants chose to live in huts outside the city in the open country. **Note the allusion to this in the promise of 3:12, “and he will not go out from it any more.”**

- **All believers are in the spiritual building and household of God but some will be pillars as special rewards. To be a pillar is a special reward with a permanent position of honor and responsibilities in the millennium and eternal state. Pillars stood for stability, ornamentation, and service.**
- **Second, They will never be removed from this place of preeminence in the eternal temple.** The overcomer has a fixed eternal place of honor in the sanctuary of God. “They will not go out from it anymore.”
- **Third, he will have three special names: he will have written on him God’s name, the name of the new Jerusalem along with Christ’s own new name. This would all signify the priestly dignity and prominence given to the conqueror.**

Finally the letter is closed with the usual charge to all the churches or to the church of God at large wherever it may exist in the world to hear and take this message to heart.

¹³ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ end

end

.² We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.^[a] Because of the joy^[b] awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.³ Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people;^[c] then you won't become weary and give up.

NLT HEB 4:12 For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.

Paul and His missionary team had planned to minister first in Asia, but were forbidden by the Holy Spirit ([Acts 16:6](#)). Then they wanted to minister in Bithynia, but they were not permitted to minister there either (vs. 7). Instead, they were called to Macedonia. In other words, at that point at least, the Lord shut the doors to Asia and Bithynia, but opened them in other places. Similarly, in [1 Corinthians 16](#), Paul expressed his plans to eventually visit Corinth (16:5-7), but he carefully qualified this with “if the Lord permits” (vs. 7). However, for the moment, he was committed to staying at Ephesus to minister. Why? Because “a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries (evidently a sign to Paul of God’s hand on his work at Ephesus)” (cf. vss. 8-9).

But when we turn to 2 Corinthians, we find that Paul had to change his plans in regard to Corinth due to circumstances beyond his control and the sovereign **leading of the Lord, the One who opens and closes doors.**

¹⁰ Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. ¹² The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, 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 from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. ¹³ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

^{1 Thess 1:10} And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God’s Son from heaven—Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.

Some have tried to argue that this construction means just the opposite of the above interpretation. Gundry, for instance, in his book, *The Church and the Tribulation*, believes it argues for a post-tribulational emergence of the saints. He writes, “As it is, ek lays all the emphasis on emergence, in this verse on the final, victorious outcome of the keeping-guarding.”⁶⁰ Although this is generally true with ek, if ek is related to a non-motion verb like threw, the idea of motion out of something is negated by the static nature of the verb. The fact then, that a motion verb like swzw is used here with ek shows the fallacy of Gundry’s argument. However, even if a verb of motion were used, it would not prove Gundry’s argument. A good illustration is [2 Corinthians 1:10](#) which has r@uomai ek, “delivered us from death.” Certainly Paul did not mean that God had delivered them out of death through resurrection, but that He had kept them from death.⁶¹ Another illustration of this use of ek with a verb of motion is [James 5:20](#), “save him from (the peril) of death,” swzw plusek.

As [James 5:20](#) and [2 Corinthians 1:10](#) means saved from the peril of death, i.e., from dying.

This is the time of Jacob’s trouble described by Jeremiah as unprecedented in its judgment

NLT JER 30:7 In all history there has never been such a time of terror. It will be a time of trouble for my people Israel. Yet in the end they will be saved! ⁸For in that day,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, “I will break the yoke from their necks and snap their chains. Foreigners will no longer be their masters.

The promise:

is the Greek peirasmos, “a trial, temptation, or testing.” The context must determine the exact meaning of the word.

On one side of the city the land was fertile enough to grow grapes. The quality of wine produced by the fields of Philadelphia was such that the Roman poet Virgil wrote about its excellence.

Who Started It?

Philadelphia was founded in 189 B.C. by Pergamon King Eumenes and given its name in honor of the love he had for brother Attalus. The city was also called Decapolis, because it was considered one of the ten cities of the plain. In the first century A.D. the city was referred to Neo-kaisaria. During the reign of Vespasian, it was called Flavia.

In addition to these names the city was also sometimes referred to as "Little Athens" because of the pagan temples and other public buildings which adorned it. Its modern name, Alashehir, might be a corruption of the Turkish words meaning "city of God."

observe” as with the principles and commands of Scripture. This is a non motion verb in contrast to verbs of motion like swzw, “to save, deliver,” and lambanw, “to take.”

The Apostle Paul comments on what constitutes a true child of Abraham in ...

NLT Rom 9: 7 Being descendants of Abraham doesn't make them truly Abraham's children. For the Scriptures say, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted,"[d] though Abraham had other children, too. 8 This means that Abraham's physical descendants are not necessarily children of God. Only the children of the promise are considered to be Abraham's children.

- Here he makes the clear distinction between racial Israel and regenerate Israel.
- They had rejected God's Son and revelation of God, they were of their father the Devil, as Christ plainly told them. To be a true Jew in the biblical sense one had to have the hope and faith of Abraham. Abraham was the possessor of faith in the promises of God to him and faith in the coming Messiah.