

## ACCESSING THE OPEN DOOR OF HEAVEN

**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’”:<sup>8</sup> “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.<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup> Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’*

The seven letters of Christ to the Asia-Minor Churches are His heart as a Pastor, Shepherd, and Leader to His people. Christ is the ultimate Pastor-Leader. Whatever we hear and read from these 7 letters, we can be assured that this is how Christ continues to lead His Church today. Let us look specifically consider this letter of Christ to the Church in Philadelphia. I believe this specific letter is Christ’ prophetic message for His Church in our day.

### **I. CHRIST WHO OPENS DOORS**

- A. We are living in a very unique time in human history when Christ is revealing Himself to us in clear and unique ways. Christ offers this open door to his church as the help to endure hardships and persecution.
- B. Our endurance will be determined by our ability and willingness to access this open door. Our access to this open door is our access to all that God is and does on behalf of those who walk by faith and follow Christ in love.
- C. Christ starts by revealing Himself to us. Christ is the one who speaks and leads and even shepherds His people. The characteristics of Christ that He reveals about Himself are the key ingredients to walking in an overcoming and victorious lifestyle.
  - **He is holy!** Christ was anointed as a Man and set apart for a unique assignment in human history.
    - **Heb. 1:9** *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”*
    - Oil represents Holy Spirit’s approval and purposes.
    - **Lev. 19:2** *You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.*
  - **He is true!**
    - **Rev. 19:11** *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.*
    - **Jn. 17:6** *I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world.*
  - **He holds the Key of David!**
    - **Is. 22:22** *The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; so he shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut, and no one shall open.*

- The story of Shebna and Eliakim is a foreshadow of the transfer of Priestly and Kingly authority from the first Adam to the second Adam in Christ. What Adam and humanity failed to fulfill in their own weak attempts, Christ now fulfilled. This promise is now extended to those who will access this 'open door policy', so to speak.

#### D. The key of the house of David:

- This key is the Key to King's David's life and Israel's success.
- David discovered the open door and access point into God's heart and resources. When we seek God's will and desires, nothing can hinder our success.
  - David realized God's desire for worship from His people. It is the key that unlocks the heavenly blessings of God and hinders and even stops the demonic works of the enemies of God.

#### E. Jesus says, "I know your works."

- This is such a beautiful promise and encouragement for Christ's Followers. He is watching us and observing the thoughts, words, deeds, and even the movements of our heart. Though He is not physically present with us, He is fully active and participating in our lives.
- **2 Chron. 16:9** *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.*

#### F. Jesus says, "I have set before you an open door."

- **Revelation 4:1** *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."*
- This was the Apostle John's access and resource that enabled him to endure. So too, this must be ours for these days.

#### G. Jesus says, "You have a little strength."

- This is Jesus acknowledgement that even the weakest and least of these are given access to this open door and His Kingdom. As a matter of fact, Jesus says that the acknowledged weakness is a prerequisite to accessing this open door.
- **Mt. 5: 3** *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
- Jesus went on to praise the Philadelphia Church (1 of only 2 received praise w/out correction). Both the Disciples of Christ in Philadelphia and in Smyrna were praised w/out correction as both were facing the harshest of persecutions and martyrdom.

#### H. Jesus says, "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."

- There is some speculation to who these "synagogue of Satan" worshippers are. Some believe them to be a Jewish sect of that day who were persecuting Followers of the Way. Some believe that these Persecutors could refer to religious extremists who were twisting the truth of God's Word like Muslim extremists who persecuted and will continue to persecute Christians, as they call Christians infidels.
- The central theme is that as the first century Christians faced persecution from religious people, so too it is today and will increase before Christ returns. The primary persecutors of faith are those who are religious.
  - **Jn. 16:2** *They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.*
- Some theologians have suggested that this phrase that Christ uses here, "I will make them come and worship before your feet" should be seen as the miracle work of Christ in the hearts of even

the Persecutors. Christ would not make His followers the objects of worship but that they would worship Christ together with His followers. This would be the ultimate desire of Christ.

- I. Christ says, *“Because you have kept my Word, 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.”*
  - We always keep and preserve and cling to those things and people who we value the most. How much more Christ?
  - **Keep** (Greek- *tēreō* ) *to attend to carefully, take care of; to guard;*
  - Christ will keep and preserve His children even through the hardest and darkest of times, even if we lose our physical life.
- J. Jesus says, *“Behold, I am coming quickly!”*
  - This speaks to the speed and not necessarily of the timing of Christ’s coming. When He comes, it will be rapidly, taking many by surprise. And when He comes, He comes as Himself.
- K. Jesus says, *“He who overcomes...”*
  - **“I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more.”**
  - When we consider the narrative of scripture, from the Old and New Testament, the picture of pillar seems to be a tangible reflection of God’s presence in the midst of His people.
    - **Pillar** (Greek- *stylos* )- *a column; pillars of fire i.e. flames rising like pillars; prop or support*
    - This could reference either a constant fixture or a carrier of a constant flame. Either one offers great encouragement to those who endure under great pressure till Christ returns.
  - *“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.”*
  - All of these promises are offered to all Believers and Followers of Jesus. All Believers are offered these rewards as expressions of Christ’ approval and love because of our obedience and faithfulness.
  - These are not automatic rewards for every Believer. Unfortunately, there are many Christ-followers who have chosen to live with temporary pleasures and rewards as their focus rather than with eternity in sight.
- L. In summary, Christ is calling all of His Followers to engage and access the open door of Heaven, which is the open door of Christ’s heart as the way of enduring through hardship and persecution. This message is especially true for the final generation who will welcome Jesus back to the Earth.
- M. **Revelation 3:13** *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*