



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 063

Letters to the 7 Churches 6 - Philadelphia

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Read Revelation 3:7-13

Introduction: Of all the seven churches in Asia that the Lord addressed, the one that pleased Him most was the church in Philadelphia. Every one of His comments were commendations. (Note: there are rich lessons to be gained from this letter and it may take longer than usual to fully engage in this study.)

1. **The Sender** (v1). He holds *The Key of David*. Find out from commentaries what is meant by this, what it opens and what it locks (see also comments on Isaiah 22:22).

2. **The Commendations** (vs 8-12). There are several:

you have a little strength (v8). Not *great* strength, notice! This does not appear to be said in rebuke. Do you agree with me?

have kept my word (v8).) Consider what areas of faithfulness are
not denied my name (v8)) evidenced in these three verses.
kept my command to persevere (v10))

3. **The Promises.** Now think about the promises in verses 8 to 12:

an open door (v8). An opportunity is offered to them. What might this be? An evangelic opportunity perhaps (as in 1 Cor 16:9)? Or the Kingdom of God (see verse 7)?

Their opposers will *worship at (their) feet* (v9). *The synagogue of Satan* was also mentioned in the letter to Smyrna (Rev 2:9). Clearly these were neither true Jews nor true Christians. What do commentators say about them?

*I also will keep you from the hour of trial** (v10). This is a reward, or result, of what? (See the preceding phrase.) The period of *trial* is to be in the *whole world*. Could, then, this refer to the *Great Tribulation* to come (Rev 7:14), or was it something within the experience of the 1st Century Christians in Philadelphia? Commentators differ, so it may prove instructive to consult a few.

Promises to overcomers (v12). There is a lot to be understood here so you will be dependent on the commentators for enlightenment.

4. **Exhortations** (verses 11 and 13). Continued perseverance and attention are called for.

To think about: Could the Lord's commendations to the Christians at Philadelphia be said of me?

To dig deeper: Find out about the city of Philadelphia and the situations that the Christians will have faced.

*Or *temptation* - an alternative translation, as in the KJV.