



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Chapter Three

Day of Discovery Background Video

Chapter Three

7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: 8 ‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; 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 out of heaven from My God, and My new name. 13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

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- **The church at Philadelphia experienced the same kinds of societal and economic pressures as the other six, but did not fold under duress.**
- **They, like the other churches in Asia, had to exist and find their way through life in a polytheistic society.**
- **There was pressure to conform to the thinking that said, “all gods are equal, just pick one”.**

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- **The church at Philadelphia was one of just two of the seven churches about which Jesus had nothing negative to say.**
- **No warnings, no condemnation – just positive things to say about them.**
- **This was not because they were perfect, but because they were faithful.**

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- So a good lesson for us as a church and as individual Christians is that God does not require that which we cannot achieve; perfection.
- He looks for faithfulness – faithfulness when we do well, and a quick return to faithfulness when we fall short.
- When John wrote, “whoever is born of God does not commit sin”, he wasn’t saying that Christians do not sin – he was saying Christians do not practice sin.

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- **The basis for His commendation - Rev 3:8 “because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”**
- **Could it be that these are three of basic things by which we are measured as Christians?**
- **After all, the Philadelphian believers were not perfect, but were still found worthy of commendation.**

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- So when Jesus commends them, one of the things he commends them for is that *they were relying on His power to persevere, not their own.*
- Two points here:
 - It is foolish to try to live the Christian life in our own strength. (Gal 2:20)
 - It is also an easy trap to fall into.

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- Next, Jesus commends them for keeping His word.
- **John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. 18**
As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.
- The way to living a Christ-like life always involves His truth, His word.

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- **And thirdly, Jesus commends them for “not denying His name”.**
- **I doubt that they would be able to do #3, (not deny His name) without first relying on His power and His word.**
- **Said another way, “without His power and His word, what are the chances that by sheer force of our own will, we would endure persecution?”**

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- **The city of Philadelphia was nearly destroyed by an earthquake in 17 A.D.**
- **One of the consequences of that destruction was that a monument was erected to Caesar for his help in rebuilding the city – a monument that was later to be worshipped.**
- **The church actually continued on in Philadelphia until the 14th century when the land was over run by Muslims.**

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- **In Philadelphia, the Christians found themselves excluded from the synagogue and at risk to be called upon to say that “Caesar is Lord.”**
- **Jesus actually calls the synagogue at Philadelphia the synagogue of Satan because they had no interest in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.**
- **They cared more about their ceremonies than they did their neighbors.**

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- **Jesus assures them that He was the one with the power to open things and shut things, not the synagogue leaders.**
- **The Christians at Philadelphia got assurance from Jesus Himself, that ultimately it is He who decides who is ‘in’, and who is ‘out’.**
- **He even describes Himself as the one with “the key of David” – the key to royal treasuries of the King.**

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- **10 “Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”**
- **Now Jesus assures the Philadelphian believers that their faithful perseverance will give them a place of protection from a certain ‘testing’ that was ahead.**
- **So what ‘testing’ do you suppose the Lord has in mind?**

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- **Well, here is what we know for sure about the testing:**
 - **It was in the future. (not what they were experiencing now)**
 - **The testing is limited to a short time. (probably not a literal hour)**
 - **It is not too far away. (about to come)**
 - **The testing will be world wide.**
 - **The testing is for those “who dwell on the earth”. (11 times in Revelation this phrase is used to describe the unsaved in the tribulation)**

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- **This is in fact one of the verses that we use to support a Pre-tribulation Rapture.**
- **If this verse isn't referring to the Great Tribulation, then I have no idea what Jesus had in mind.**
- **There are no historical events that meet all of the criteria mentioned in the verse – limited in time, world-wide in scope, and for only unbelievers.**

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- Luke 17: And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; 29 but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.
- The godly are taken out, then judgment falls.

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- **While true that there was no such thing as a pretribulational view of the 2nd coming (Rapture) until sometime in the 1800's, that does not automatically invalidate it.**
- **When the 1st seal judgment falls we read - Rev 6:17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"**
- **1st Thes 5:9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

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- **3:11 I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.**
- **Jesus closes the letter with an appeal to “keep on keeping on”.**
- **Our state varies day to day, moment to moment, and we cannot rely on our past faithfulness to carry us through to the finish line – real faith is active and alive.**

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- 3:12 He who overcomes, *I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God*, and he will not go out from it anymore; 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 out of heaven from My God, *and My new name*.
- Rev 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; *and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself*.
- Is John 5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Questions