

Introduction:

- In Revelation 1-3, there are 34 majestic terms used of Jesus to describe Him. You will also find 22 rewards mentioned in chapters 2-3 to those who overcome. All 56 of these things are to encourage the church/bride/us in her relationship with her Groom, Jesus!
- In the letters to the seven churches, Jesus is speaking to the church. Note: he is walking among the churches and in the letters He is speaking to them. It is not seven messages to seven church it is a message to seven churches, preparing the Church for the events that are about to unfold at the end of the age.
- He is calling the church to be faithful and deal relentlessly with their compromise. Resist fear. Resist compromise and embrace the grace for faithfulness.
- Philadelphia, along with Smyrna was one of two churches to receive only affirmation from Jesus, no rebuke.
 - This church faithfully obeyed and persevered.
 - Endure—*hypoménœ* has the senses a) "to stay alive," b) "to expect," c) "to stand firm," and d) "to bear," "to suffer". *Hypomonoe*—means a) "standing fast" and b) "expectation," "waiting". While *hypoménœ* is at first ethically neutral, *hypomonoes* becomes a prominent virtue in the sense of courageous endurance. "As distinct from patience, it has the active significance of energetic if not necessarily successful resistance. It is motivated not by public opinion or hope of reward but inwardly by love of honor." (from Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, abridged edition, Copyright © 1985 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. All rights reserved.)
 - Philadelphia literally sees and fulfills what Jesus addresses his disciples on in John 14:21-23 *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.* Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. NKJV
 - Rev 3:8-ff is a reflection of Is 22:22 Key of David that opens and shuts.
- Our goal in studying the Seven Churches is to see Jesus in the letters to the seven churches. In the letters we have a revelation of Jesus, the expectation of Jesus, an affirmation and/or rebuke, and picture of the rewards of living for Him.
 - The key to understanding the promises in the seven letters, is to understand what overcoming meant in the context of that letter. In this letter it meant watching, early revival. He is not saying, "If you do that, you will be born again." He says, "If you do that, I will give you a reward"

I. Jesus Walks in Philadelphia

A. Ancient Philadelphia was on the site of modern day Alashehir at the juncture of trade

routes. It sat on the high ground of the end of the valley leading from Sardis. The imperial route from Rome passed through Philadelphia thus, giving it the name "the gateway to the East" making it an important financial city. It was a prosperous city. It was also what we have been calling the seven churches of Revelation, a revival city.

- B. Nicknames of the city
 1. The 'missionary city'—(for the wrong reason)—to advance the Greek culture and gods into the East.
 2. "Little Athens" because of the growth of Greek culture by fifth century was incredible with temples, and pagan religious festivals.
- C. We know that the church of this city is being challenged by the Jews who are under the law. Jesus refers to them as 'of the synagogue of Satan'.
 1. There is serious conflict between the synagogue and Christians.
 2. The persecution has to be intense for the Jews of the region are called 'of the synagogue of Satan'.
 3. The church is being told, "You are wrong—Jesus was just a man. You are not of God. You're fired (job losses)." Persecution is an assault on soul and body of believers.
- D. Like the other churches we have studied, it is in this context that Jesus reveals himself. And the way He reveals himself is specific to their equipping/success to overcome.

II. Jesus Revealed in Philadelphia

- A. The description here reveals aspects of Jesus personality and ministry. This emphasizes His care for our lives especially those who are being persecuted.
- B. Jesus is revealed as:
 1. Holy—
 - a. He knows what it means to be set apart. He understands what it means to live to an audience of One in the midst of world that rejects the truth, righteousness and integrity that you live in.
 - b. Secondly, holy is who He is. He is totally superior to all others! His worth has no limit. The beauty of His purity and holiness is astounding! It transcends the natural.
 - c. He is saying, "I can relate to the struggle of staying pure! You are doing it! I am holy—hang in there—I will help you. My worth and authority are above all your earthly struggles." His holiness gives his church hope and courage.
 2. True—
 - a. True – (Greek) Alathinos – that which is true, sincere, valid correct or certain. Heb 8:2 speaks of the heavenly tabernacle as the true tabernacle. He is accurate. The plumb line by His life shows Him to be true without perversion or

- bentness...He is perfect!
- b. Because He is true, reliable, and certain—not a counterfeit. He can be trusted to follow through with His promises/rewards which He speaks of in verse 12 to be given to those who overcome. His leadership can be trusted.
3. Has the Key of David—All about authority!
 - a. Being the ultimate King in David's lineage who holds all authority over all promises and over all nations, Jesus now declares that He holds that authority. It is a direct reference to Isaiah 22:22. The language of Isaiah is used to present Christ as the Davidic Messiah with absolute power.
 - b. *"And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."* (Isaiah 22:22, ESV)
 - c. *"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."* (Matthew 28:18, ESV)
 - d. The supremacy of this authority is beyond what we can begin to imagine but it gives us hope and courage...we are on His side!
 4. He has the keys to the Kingdom
 - a. *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* (Matthew 16:19, ESV)
 - b. Keys of death and hell Rev. 1:18. This is authority over all demonic realms.
 - c. Doors of ministry and opportunity: He opens doors of opportunity, influence and ministry (Acts 14:27 door of faith; 2 Cor. 2:12 a door to preach; Col. 4:3 a door for the Word) and He opened a wide door for effective service in Ephesus for Paul (1 Cor. 16:8-9).
 - d. Doors to open so that Paul could speak the Word Col. 4:3
 - e. Jesus is a door opener when all doors seem closed. Jesus opens doors in the spirit that gives us access to the heart of God. *"All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."* Matthew 11:27 NKJV
 - f. He has authority to open the scroll at the end of the age. Rev 5:5
 - g. Jesus can open prison doors like He did for Peter in Acts 12:7-10 and for Paul in Acts 16:27
 - h. Jesus will open the bottomless pit and throw a bound Satan into it. Rev 20:1-3
- C. He shuts the door of hostility to the Philadelphians and promises protection. Only God can do these kinds of things.

III. Jesus' Heart Revealed in Philadelphia

- A. He rewards faithfulness—Heb 11:6 without faith it is impossible to please Him. He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. He loves to celebrate our success.
- B. He brings recompense—Is 35:4 *"Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.""* (Isaiah 35:4, ESV) He makes the unbelieving Jew and Gentile come and worship the Christ at the very feet of those they persecuted.
- C. His heart is for us.
- D. *"I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more"* (Rev. 3:12)
 1. To be a pillar means that you are a permeant and important part. To be a pillar is a position of honor and authority in the Millennial Kingdom. To be a pillar was to exude strength.
 2. Pillars stood for stability and brought beauty. All believers are part of God's spiritual temple (Eph. 2:21-22), but some will be pillars who hold a position of authority, responsibility and honor in the Millennium.
 3. Jesus promised them that they would never be removed from their place of honor. – When James, Cephas (Peter), and John, who seemed to be pillars... (Gal. 2:9) Paul was pillar to Gentiles.
- E. Because they did not deny His name, look what Jesus does for them.
 1. *I will write on him the name of My God* - to have the name of God on us means that we are recipients of His desire, authority, and partnership and revelation of His heart and beauty.
 2. *I will write on him the name of the city of My God*, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God - authority in the City and ability to comprehend it
 3. *I will write on him My new name* – revelation of Jesus' heart and beauty. Your name has to do with your identity. Jesus is saying that you will have his identity.
- F. One of the greatest things in life is to know and be known by someone.

Conclusion:

- This church had no rebuke and this church had some awesome affirmation and rewards.
- It 'pays' to be faithful.
- Jesus reveals Himself to the Philadelphians in such a way as to encourage continued faithfulness by making it worth their efforts.
- He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Heb 11:6