



Rev 2 and 3 – Messages to God’s Church

Revision

- The story of how pagan ideas were first introduced into the Church through the “wiles of the devil” and how Christians through the centuries were affected. (2 John 7-10).

1. The Christians of the **Ephesian** era remained **faithful to the doctrine** but lost **their first love** (Rev. 2:1-7). (c. AD 31 – 300).
2. The Christians of the **Smyrna** era were **persecuted** because they did **not accept false doctrine** (Rev. 2:8-11). (c. AD 300 – 650).
3. There were some from the **Pergamos** era who **did not compromise** under pressure the Laws of God, and **did not yield to pagan ideas** (Rev. 2:12-17). (c. AD 650 – 1000).
4. There were many in the **Thyatira** era who **began to compromise** sound doctrine and to yield under pressure, **tolerating (syncretizing) apostasy** (Rev. 2:18-29). (c. AD 1000 – 1500).
5. The Christians of the **Sardis** era have a reputation that they live, but **they are dead**. They **need to strengthen the remaining things that haven’t died yet**. Their works are not perfect before God. Remember what you received, stand firm and repent (Rev. 3:1-6). (c. AD 1500 onwards).

Rev 3:7-13 – Message to Philadelphia

The Church faithful to Christ and His Word

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- The city of Philadelphia was founded by Attalus Philadelphus around 150 BC.
- It had a long history and was destroyed several times by **earthquakes**.
- It was **a gateway** to the inner Asian plateau.
- **Grapes** were one of the main crops.
- Dionysus, the god of the grape harvest, of winemaking, of fertility, of ritual madness and of religious ecstasy, was one of the main objects of pagan worship in the region.



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- 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": (Rev. 3:7)
- To the '**aggelos**' – messenger – possibly to the leader; to the responsible pastor.
- This symbolizes a hierarchy in the Church.
 (From Christ, to His angel [Rev 1:1], to John, to the leader of the Church, to us).
- Jesus Christ is the One "**who is holy**" and the One "**who is true**".
- A calling for us to be holy as He is **holy** (1 Pet 1:15-16).
- Christ is the author of **truth** – God does not lie (Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18)
- In the midst of a false (pagan) doctrine, Jesus Christ is the only one completely **true**.
- Having correct doctrine and living correctly are two things that go together.
- There can be no holiness without truth.



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- Christ is speaking (Rev 2:1, 8, 12, 18) – all these letters are written by Christ.
- To the church era surrounded by paganistic ideas and wickedness, Christ gives the certainty that it is He who has the power to "access everything" in the Kingdom of God, according to His will.
- The key is important, it is fundamental, it is required.
- He has the key of David - similar to Eliakim, son of Hilkiah (Is.22:20-22).
- Shebna's authority and power (Isa. 22:15, 19) was given to Eliakim.
- Eliakim now had the key to all the treasures, just as he had access to the king.
- Christ, the antitype of Eliakim, has Kingdom authority (Is. 9:6-7).
- The key: points to God's Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9; Zech. 4:6).



Rev 3:7-13 – Message to Philadelphia The Church faithful to Christ and His Word

- I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, ... (Rev. 3:8).
- Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia (2 Cor. 2:12-13; Acts 16:8-10).
- It is not the door of the Kingdom of God, but an open door to preach, teach and bring the Good News of the Kingdom. (In Paul's time it was to Europe).
- Acts 14:27 – The open door was not only for Israelites, but also for Gentiles – ie, to the whole world.
- The Church in the Philadelphia era has spiritual power from God to preach the gospel around the world through an open door.
- Collectively as a physical organization God gave the Church in the Philadelphia era that Work to do around the world before the second coming of Christ: Mat. 24:14.
- Individually, our door is to be an example to others: 1 Pet. 3:15; Col. 4:6.



Rev 3:7-13 – Message to Philadelphia The Church faithful to Christ and His Word

- 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 (Rev. 3:8).
- And this Work is not due to the strength of the Church, as it has little strength.
- What small force is this? Because they are few in numbers? Little financial strength?
- "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Cor. 12:9).
- Praised for keeping the Word of God – they are faithful to the sound doctrine of Christ (Mat. 7:21).
- "Have not denied the name of Jesus Christ". They do not represent God's name, the name of the body of Christ (the Church of God), or the name of Christ (as Christ's true representatives) in vain (Ex. 20:7).
- Act as part of the Family: Live, obey, and trust in His power.



Rev 3:7-13 – Message to Philadelphia The Church faithful to Christ and His Word

- 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 (Rev. 3:9).
- Those in the synagogue of Satan (Rev. 2:9): The adversaries of the Church (2 Cor 11:12-15).
- Who call themselves Jews, but are not, but lie (Rom. 2:28-29).
- Who say they believe in Christ. They appear to be true Christians (Mat. 7:15).
- They say they are part of the Truth, but they do not accept the authority of the Church.
- The end-time church encounters much imitation, a lot of religious ritualism, individualism, hypocrisy – that is, opposition (appearing godly), but mixed with worldly attitudes (2 Tim. 3:5).
- Let them come and worship, prostrate at your feet – they will have to acknowledge the authority that God gave the Church in the Philadelphia era. God will make it very clear who He is pleased with. (The "gateway" God is using to the true "grapevine").



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- 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 (Apoc. 3:10).
- Because they persevered, they were steadfast and relentless in keeping sound doctrine, the love of the truth, and constant in keeping the Word of God (2 Thes. 2:10).
- Not only deliverance from trials, but deliverance from the “the hour of trial” [the time of testing – a time of trouble] which will come upon all the earth (a Great Tribulation like never before) (Mat. 24:20-22; Dan. 12:1).
- “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be *counted worthy to escape* all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).
- So we can conclude that there is deliverance or a protection for those that are counted worthy to escape, BEFORE the Great Tribulation.
- Satan will persecute the Church right till the time of Christ’s return (Rev. 12:13-17).



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- “Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (Rev. 3:11).
- Quickly – Gr 5035 – *tachu* – or suddenly and unexpectedly (by surprise).
- Keep what you have: It’s a mental attitude; they kept sound doctrine; they had and are in love with the truth; have the key; obey; do not deny the name of Christ.
- Some will tend to “water down the Truth” – could be, for instance, by “emotional feelings” – instead of *holding fast what they have*.
- Crown – Gr 4735 – *stephanos* – This is the wreath or garland one would receive for winning the race. The crown of victory!
- If we are persevering, if we are holding on tight, if we are steadfast, if we have all these characteristics of constancy and overcoming, if we are doing what we supposed to do, if we are close to God... Then no one will take our crown of victory.
- 2 Thes. 2:9-10 - Those who perish ... What happened?



Rev 3:7-13 – Message to Philadelphia
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- “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 I will write on him My new name” (Rev 3:12).
- The columns had people’s names printed on them and they are part of the temple (not independent; we are together as a team).
- Columns stand upright during “*earthquakes*” (which have affected the Church).
- “... he shall go out no more”- he (she) will no longer be subject to temptations and trials. A permanent residence in the presence of the Father.
- The name of God’s Kingdom will be part of his name.
- The name of God, the Father – Who owns the Kingdom.
- The name of the city of God – He (she) will belong to the Kingdom of God, he will be in New Jerusalem, the Kingdom’s headquarters, a permanent citizenship. He will no longer be a stranger or pilgrim.
- The new name of Jesus Christ – is it a name recognizing this tight relationship between us and Christ?



Rev 3:7-13 – Message to Philadelphia
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- **The Philadelphia era**
- We believe this era started either in 1931 when Mr Armstrong was ordained, or
- ... in 1934 the gospel began to be preached by radio and by printed media, through The Plain Truth magazine.
- The Work had never been done this effectively around the world as from this period on.
- 19 years later, in 1953 the work began in Europe.
- Many “earthquakes” have happened to stop the Work, but God has kept the Work going (God has set an open door, and no one can shut it – Rev. 3:8).
- This Work will (possibly) continue till 3 ½ years before Christ’s return (Rev. 12:13-14; Dan. 12:7).
- Then the Two Witnesses will carry on the Work.



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- **The Philadelphia era (Cont.)**
- The Work has always had little strength.
- The Work has basic Fundamental Beliefs based on God’s Word, which have been kept.
- The Work does not deny Christ’s name, His authority as the Head of the Church.
- We have to be connected to the true vine, through branches.
- Christ is the vine, we are the branches (John 15:5).
- There is a physical organization to feed the Church through ministers selected by God – a gateway (Eph. 4:11-12).
- Consider one another – don’t forsake the assembly – a team: not independent (Heb 10:24-25).
- We must overcome till the end (Rev. 3:12).



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- **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches** (Rev. 3:13).
- Be aware of all other messages – even if you live in this age – because our personal attitudes and spiritual status could fall under one of the other eras.
- Hold on to the basic faith once delivered to the saints.
- Don’t lose the first love.
- This way brings persecution (in this society).
- Don’t allow pagan ideas to filter in.
- Don’t compromise in our lives.
- Don’t appear to be alive, whilst being spiritually dead.



Rev 3:7-13 – Message to **Philadelphia** **The Church faithful to Christ and His Word**

• Points to re-emphasize:

1. Christ is the Head of the Church.
2. He gave us the vital key (the Holy Spirit) that opens the Way to the Kingdom of God.
3. Don't miss-place it! Use it daily.
4. Enter through the door (Christ) using the **gateway** (God's ministry) to the Kingdom.
5. We must do the Work collectively, as a team. The Work is not an independent work. It is part of the **true grape** vine with branches connected to the trunk. We have to be involved in the Father's business (Luke 2:49).
6. We must also do our part individually. Be an example, stay true to the end, bear fruit in the vine.
7. Love the Truth! Keep the faith! (Don't quit – but overcome till the end).


