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### The Philadelphian Church, part 2

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## THE PHILADELPHIAN CHURCH

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION  
NUMBER 7  
REVELATION 3:10-17

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REVELATION 3:10-17 "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"

We now continue our study of this great church at Philadelphia.

REVELATION 3:10 "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." This verse has tremendous doctrinal implications. From this verse we can conclude that the church will not go through the Tribulation. "Thou hast kept the word of my patience" The word "kept" means to keep something that belongs to you. These saints in Philadelphia had kept something that belonged to them. Believers possess the Word of God. The Word of God belongs to them. But you can't keep something that you do not know, that you do not have in your mind. Now God is not going to withdraw the Word of God from you, but in eternity the Word of God will do you no good. The Word of God is for time, in eternity you will have God himself and you will not need the word. In other words, "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." So we must learn the Word of God now and keep it in time if we expect the Bible to do us any good. Ignorance is never bliss. Ignorance of the Word of God is the basis of failure and the lack of inner happiness. "Kept the word" means that these saints in Philadelphia had the Word of God in their minds and they applied it every day to experience. This means to us that we are to keep the Word of God on the launching pad all the time. Never try to live a moment without it. "Of my patience" refers to faith in action. These people trusted the Lord and lived by faith. "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation". Now there are two words in Greek for "keep". One of the words "Tereo ek" means to keep out of. The other word for keep is "hairo" and it means to take out of. The word used here is "Tereo ek" and it means that the church will be kept out of the Tribulation. The church does not even get into part of the Tribulation. The Church Age began on the day of Pentecost and will end with the rapture of the church, then will come the period called the Tribulation. But the church will not be in the earth at that time.

The Tribulation will last seven years, and this is the completion of the Jewish Age. The church is in Heaven at this time and will return with Christ, who is the bride of the church. So the church will be "Tereo ek" and it means to be kept from the Tribulation. Those who say the church will go through the Tribulation just don't know the Word of God. One reason we say these are such terrible days is that because of our fast communications system we know all that is happening in the world five minutes after it happens. One of the worst periods of world history was the 120 years before the flood. But the middle ages were terrible days also. So the point I am making is this--just because bad times come it does not mean the Tribulation has come. Now when we get back to Bible doctrine we understand these things. At the end of the Church Age

there will be a period of great apostasy. We will know that the Tribulation has come by the fact that the church is taken out of the world and lifted up to Heaven. So Revelation 2 and 3 is just a brief history of the Church Age. Then comes the Rapture of the church, then the Tribulation, which will end with the coming of Christ. Chapters 4 and 5 of Revelation describes the Church in Heaven. Chapters 6-19 describe the Tribulation. Revelation 20 tells of the Millennium and Revelation 21 tells of his Eternal Kingdom. So we are bound to conclude that Revelation is a dispensational book and this book cannot be understood in any other way. We are not in the worst period of history. The worst period will be the Tribulation and next to it were the days of Noah and the 120 years before the flood. Now in Revelation 6 we will study some fantastic things that will tell us of this period we call the Tribulation. So the Lord says to the Philadelphian Church, which is a representative of the Church Age, that he will keep them from this terrible period called the Tribulation.

It will be the worst period of horror the world has ever known and this is called the Great Tribulation. Religion will cover the earth during that period and religion will set the stage for the destruction of the whole earth. In Revelation 6-19 we will study the Tribulation and we will see how terrible religion can be and just how far into the depths religion can take the world. To be sure, religion is the root of many of the evils we face today. Religion is satanic. In Revelation 6-19 we will study how religion will take over the whole world. If there is anything in the earth that religion hates it is the Word of God and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. "The mystery of iniquity doth already work" and we see this in the ecumenical movement today. Religion begins to combine with the state and when this happens freedom goes. We have seen this in South America. When the church and state unite and religion replaces the church, then personal freedom vanishes. So far religion has not become the state in this nation. But in the Tribulation the church will become the state and it is impossible for you to realize how terrible this is going to be. We will study more about this a bit later on.

Now turn for a moment to 2 Thessalonians 2.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:1 "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him" "By our gathering together unto him" refers to the Rapture of the Church. False teachers came to those people in Thessalonica and told them that they were already in the Tribulation. But these saints in Thessalonica said, "No, we are not in the Tribulation. For our great teacher, Paul, taught us when he was with us concerning these things." And these false teachers even produced a letter which they falsely claimed Paul had written.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:2 "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." So the Thessalonians were warned not to be upset by this false letter. Paul said, "Don't be upset when some tell you that the Tribulation has arrived".

2 THESSALONIANS 2:3 "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" In this verse Paul tells them what must happen before the Tribulation can come. There will come a "departure" not a falling away. It is referring to the departure, the rapture of the church. This is a technical word for rapture "Apohistimi means a departure. That's the way this word is translated in 30 other passages in the New Testament. Once the departure takes place then the man of sin will be revealed. He will be the dictator of the revived Roman Empire, and the head of ecumenical religion in the Tribulation and he is called the Son of Perdition. This is the same thing Judas Iscariot was called, for he operates just like Judas Iscariot operated.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:4 "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This is a description of this man. This is the abomination of desolation. His statue is put up in the temple in Jerusalem.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:5 "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" Paul reminded the Thessalonians that when he was with them he kept on telling them these things. So Paul reminded them that he had gone over and over these things for Paul realized that so often these things went in one ear and out the other. They will need that doctrine later on, but they can't have it then unless they have it stored in the mind.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:6 "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time." One person can come in and give false doctrine and it takes a year of true teaching to get false doctrine out of the people's minds. During the Church Age the Holy Spirit puts a restraining power on negative volition, but once the church is taken out of the world this restraining power is taken off. "That he might be revealed in his time" is referring to this Roman Dictator. "In his time" is the Tribulation.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:7 "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." All during the Church Age the mystery of iniquity was at work, but the Holy Spirit restrained this power. But when the restraining power of the Holy Spirit is removed, evil has a free hand and really takes over.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:8 "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" Then that Roman Dictator will be revealed and Revelation 19:19-21 explains this.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:9 "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." This Roman Dictator is Satan's man. You remember when Satan offered Christ the crown without the cross Jesus refused the offer. Now this dictator will accept Satan's offer. These miracles and signs and wonders refer to strange miracles and speaking in tongues. You see, people are always impressed with things which they do not understand.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:10 "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Now who is taken in by this man? Those who do not know Bible doctrine.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:11 "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" This helps us to understand what we are going to study in Revelation 6. So this passage reminds us that the church will be kept from the Tribulation. Now we turn back to Revelation 3.

REVELATION 3:11 "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." This is the exhortation to the local church. "I come quickly" means that every believer has a relatively short time on the earth. Life is short at best and we need to get with Bible doctrine and learn all we can so we can apply the truth.

"No man take thy crown" refers to the judgment seat of Christ. This is a plea to stay in fellowship and produce divine good. All you produce when you are out of fellowship means discipline in time and loss in eternity. Don't be cheated out of your crown by not knowing doctrine and by not staying in fellowship with God. It is possible to serve a lifetime and lose your crown because you serve in carnality and what you do doesn't count with God. Beware of being robbed of reward.

REVELATION 3:12 "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."



This is assurance. Let us get this straight once and for all. The only one who really overcometh is the Lord Jesus Christ. We are in Christ and we partake of his victory. Every believer is an overcomer because of his position in Christ. "I will make a pillar in the temple." They had earthquakes in Philadelphia but they had designed a pillar that would withstand earthquakes and when more than a thousand years later, when the Turks came in to conquer Philadelphia, there they saw that beautiful church standing. The pillars had withstood all kinds of tragedies and earthquakes. The Turks were so impressed that they built a Mosque there. Even until this day some of those pillars are still there. So this is an illustration of permanence. You are in the top circle of salvation, and you are there forever. Christ said that no one could take them out of his hand. Your sin can't undo what Christ has done for you. God's plan is greater than any sin you can ever commit. "He shall go no more out" means that the saved man can never get out of the top circle, once you are saved and placed there by Christ. "I will write a new name" means that a new name goes with a new birth. You are born into the family of God. Now the New Jerusalem--we will study this in detail when we get there in Revelation 21. The New Jerusalem was promised Abraham. He told him that he would give him a city forever. Abraham was extremely wealthy but he would never move into the city. They had many fabulous cities in that day and the spade of the archeologist has uncovered many and great cities. But Abraham lived in a tent, and God had promised him a city. HEBREWS 11:13 "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." It says that Abraham died in a tent, believing that God would keep his word and one day provide that city. Abraham lived in the security of his tent and was as safe as the promises of God. In the resurrection Abraham is going to see that city come down from Heaven and he will live in it forever. The promises of God are complete and perfect.

REVELATION 3:13 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." This verse states again the principle that you have to learn doctrine if you are going to have assurance in time.

#### The Seventh Church--The Church Of Laodicea

REVELATION 3:14-22 "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." This church is as bad as the Philadelphian Church was good.

REVELATION 3:14 "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" This is the salutation. Laodicea was in the Lycus Valley, 40 miles southeast of Philadelphia and 40 miles north of Ephesus. It was a famous banking town. Cicero lived here and wrote many of his famous letters from this place. It was quite a medical center. It was the center for treating eye disease. It was an ophthalmology center. Here was developed a famous eye salve.

Here in verse 14 we have a beautiful description of Jesus Christ. He is called the Amen--and it means the one who can be trusted.

The faithful--Christ will always be faithful to his word.

The true--He is the revealer of what God is like. He is truth.

(John 1:18, John 6:46, 1 Timothy 6:16, 1 John 4:12)

He is here called "The firstborn of the creation of God". And this means he was the ruler, the priest, and the one who would receive the double portion. The double portion means that Christ will have an eternal kingdom and every believer of the ages will live with him forever. So these people in the Lycus Valley were reminded here of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

REVELATION 3:15 "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." Now the appraisal of the church. Christ knew their works and that they were neither cold nor hot. We must have a clear understanding of these two words if we are ever to understand this verse.

The unbeliever is cold. The one who is hot is the believer who is in fellowship. If water is allowed to cool off it becomes lukewarm and this is exactly what had happened to the church members in Laodicea.

Cold----This is the unbeliever.

Hot-----This is the believer in fellowship.

Lukewarm----This is the carnal Christian, out of fellowship.

So these people in Laodicea were carnal Christians who did not use 1 John 1:9. There is one way to be filled with the Spirit and that is to stay in fellowship and you have to use 1 John 1:9 in order to do that. There is one way to be saved and that is to believe in Christ. There is one way to stay in fellowship and that is to use 1 John 1:9. Lukewarm believers get out of fellowship and will not rebound. Rebounding is like turning on the heat again and making the lukewarm water hot again.

"I will spue thee out of my mouth" means that Christ would spit them out, vomit them out of his mouth. This is a figure that refers to divine discipline. If you do not use rebound then the discipline will get rough.

REVELATION 3:17 "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" Christ here quotes the Christian in Laodicea as saying these things. "You do not know" and remember, this is God's estimate of them. Laodicea was a free enterprise city and they were very prosperous. They said they were rich. God said they were WRETCHED--MISERABLE--POOR--BLIND--NAKED. This is a description of Christians out of fellowship. The believer out of fellowship is just about the most miserable person in all the world.

REVELATION 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." This is the invitation to the unbeliever to accept Christ.