

*Note to preacher:*

*When you preach this message, bring a big bunch of keys on a key ring. Think of one facility that you can access with only one key on that ring. Example: house, apartment, office, church. Don't select a facility that you can enter with various keys through different doors.*

*A good song to use for the closing of worship is "Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel."  
Verse 4:*

*Oh, come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heavenly home:  
Make safe the way that leads on high  
And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

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Today we continue our study in Jesus' letters to seven churches, kept for us in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Today we study the 6th letter:

### **Revelation 3:7-13**

*Jesus said:* Write to the announcer for the church in the city  
named PHILADELPHIA:

*[quote]*

I am holy and true. I hold the Key of David.

If I open, no-one can close[shut].

If I close, no-one can open.

I tell you:

<sup>8</sup> I know what you do.

See, I made a door open for you.

That door, no-one can shut.

I know-that you don't have much strength.

But you still obey My Word,  
and you still trust Me and still announce My Name.

<sup>9</sup> Some people name themselves Jews, but that's not true. They are liars. They are the devil's church. They will come and bow-down in-front-of your feet. I will make that happen. They will know that I love you.

I finished commanded you: Remain patient and never give-up.

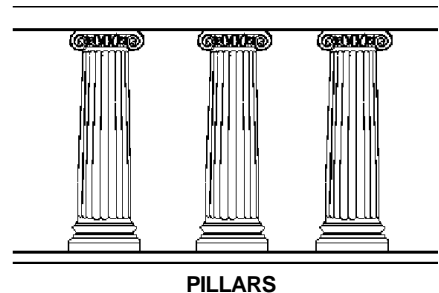
<sup>10</sup> You finished obeying my command.

Now I will protect you during great trouble that will come for testing all people living on earth.

<sup>11</sup> I will come soon! What you have, you must hold.

Then no-one can take your crown.

<sup>12</sup> Every person that wins, I will make you become PILLARS in God's temple. You will never again leave His temple. On you I will write 3 names:



[1] My God - His name I will write on you.

[2] His city, named New JERUSALEM, that city coming down from heaven, that name I will write on you. And

[3] My new name I will write on you.

<sup>13</sup> My Holy Spirit now speaks to your churches.

Every person must pay-attention.

Philadelphia. That city name is interesting, because one city in America has the same name --- Philadelphia. Our Philadelphia has much important history, during the time for American independence.

That name - PHILADELPHIA - means what?

That is a Greek name meaning "City of Brotherly Love."

If we visit Philadelphia, PA, today,

?will we see much brotherly love there???

Our friends living in Philadelphia maybe can answer that question.

What about Philadelphia in western Turkey 1,900 years ago?

Did they show much brotherly love?

We will see.

Again Jesus opens the letter describing Himself *[quote]*:

*"I am holy and true. I hold the Key of David."*

Holy and True?

The Bible often uses those words to describe God, showing that He and we are opposite.

God is Holy. We are not holy. We are all sinners.

God is True.

But we fool ourselves with lies.

And we mock people who say they know truth.

You know DAN RATHER? Three years ago he said in a TV interview: *"I think you can be an honest person and lie about any-number-of [many] things."* [2001]

Our world today, our culture,  
accepts everything as "holy,"  
because they reject naming anything as "sinful."

Now college philosophy professors[teachers] teach that anything  
is true, except: not the Bible. That's the only thing not true.

For Jesus to name Himself "HOLY and TRUE"  
earns that label "Narrow-minded" and "INTOLERANT."

For us to follow Jesus, and stand for what is holy and true,  
also earns our label "Narrow-minded" and "INTOLERANT."

Jesus said:

*"I am holy and true. I hold the Key of David.  
If I open, no-one can close[shut].  
If I close, no-one can open."*

Why David?

Old Testament prophets said that God's Savior, the MESSIAH,  
will come from King David's family.

Jesus is King... Twice!

First, Jesus is King, because He is True God, our Maker.  
Second, Jesus is King in His human birth.

But why a "KEY?"

And opening and closing what?

*[Object lesson: Show keys]*

Here I have many keys. But only one key will open \_\_\_\_\_.  
Other keys maybe look the same. But if I want to enter  
\_\_\_\_\_, I must use *[show it]* this key. All other keys will fail.

Heaven is the same.

Our sins, our rebellion against God, made heaven closed.

Christ came [finish!] and UNLOCKED heaven.

He opened-the-door for us, and now we can enter-in.

Jesus suffered and died on the cross instead-of us.

Jesus accepted our punishment. He paid our debt.

Jesus told His Disciples:

*"My Father's house has many rooms.*

*I go there to prepare a place for you.*

*After I go and prepare a place for you,*

*I will come back, and bring you home with Me.*

*You know the way to the place where I am going."*

One Disciple said to Jesus:

*"Lord, we don't know where you are going.*

*How can we know the way?"*

*Jesus answered,*

*"I am the way,*

*and the truth,*

*and the life.*

*The only way to the Father is through me." [John 14:1-7]*

If Christ didn't come, heaven will stay lock... closed.

We can knock-and-knock, but we can't go-in.

Notice that Jesus did not tell the Philadelphia church:

*"I have the key." No!*

He said, *"I AM the key."*

The Bible says:

*"Jesus is the only One who can save people.*

*God gave us no other Name for our Savior.*

*We must have Him to get saved." [Acts 4:12]*

Our Key into heaven is Jesus alone.

Running to other religions, searching for another way,  
is worthless.

Now, Jesus tells the church in Philadelphia:

*"I know what you do.  
See, I made a door open for you.  
That door, no-one can shut.  
I know-that you don't have much strength.  
But you still obey My Word,  
and you still trust Me and still announce My Name."*

For that church in Philadelphia,  
Jesus has no criticism, only praise.  
He has no warning, only encouragement.

Other churches we finished studying,  
they were careless about God's Word.  
They tried to mix in idol worship.  
They tried to add-on permission for adultery.  
They tried to change God's Word to fit with their culture.  
But not that little church in Philadelphia.

Another thing:  
That church was small, but they didn't hide.  
They saw a door open for mission in their home city.  
They boldly announced Jesus' name.  
If they got persecution, that didn't-matter.  
They still trusted Him,  
They still obeyed Him.

Remember Jesus' eleven Disciples, on Easter Sunday? After His death and resurrection, His Disciples were where? ...doing what?

They hid in a room with doors locked!

But that's not what we see in Philadelphia. Their doors were open, and they announced the Good News!

And - interesting - their greatest possibility for mission was to whom? ...to the people that resisted Jesus the most!

Jesus said:

*"Some people name themselves Jews, but that's not true. They are liars."*

Meaning: Jewish people have God's promise. But those people refused to believe His promise. And if they don't believe God, they believe whom? Jesus answers that *[quote]*:

*"They are the devil's church."*

Does that mean: "Give-up! Let them go!" ??? No! Jesus said:

*"They will come and bow-down in-front-of your feet. I will make that happen. They will know that I love you."*

Notice the people that come and bow-down, they don't worship Christians.

No. Those people bow-down because they finally[pah!] understand that the True God is that God Christians worship. That God they seek really is Jesus Christ.

Also notice who makes them understand?

Not the church, not us.

Jesus said *He will make that happen.*

Christ in us leads people to Himself.

His Holy Spirit encourages people to believe.

Next Jesus says *[quote]*,

*"I finished commanded you: Remain patient and never give-up. You finished obeying my command. Now I will protect you during great trouble that will come test all people living on earth."*

What trouble? What test?

Is Jesus talking about increased Roman persecution against Christians during that time?

Is He talking about suffering that will increase on earth that short time before the world ends and Jesus comes again?

Maybe both.

History tells us that the small church in Philadelphia stayed strong during Roman persecution, and later during early years under Moslem control.

Remember, Jesus never promises that we will escape trouble. But He promises that He will stay with us and support us during trouble.

Now, we read Jesus' final blessing in His letter:

*"I will come soon! What you have, you must hold. Then no-one can take your crown. Every person that wins, I will make you become PILLARS in God's temple. You will never again leave His temple."*

History tells us that Philadelphia had a bad earthquake, but some pillars stayed standing. That became a picture for that church.

Through their bad trouble and persecution, they will stay standing for Christ.

The Bible often names us as members in Christ's temple. Remember that every time the Bible talks about "Church," that never means a building. "Church" in the Bible never means a meeting time. "Church" is always people, the body of Christ.

Hearing-people often talk about other members in the church who work hard and are faithful servants, naming them "*PILLARS of the church.*"

Jesus names members in the Philadelphia church as Pillars in His heavenly temple!

Then He says,

*"On you I will write 3 names:*

*[1] My God - His name I will write on you."*

Proof that you belong to Him!

*"[2] His city, named New JERUSALEM,  
that city coming down from heaven,  
that name I will write on you."*

That's your new address! Your true home is not here.  
Your true home is with Jesus in heaven.

*"And [3] My new name I will write on you."*

In the Bible, a name means that person's CHARACTER... his personality, or sometimes the name means God's special plan for that person's life. Example:

ADAM means what? ...Man, MANKIND.

ADAM can also mean soil, dirt, earth.  
EVE means what? ...Mother of living people [Gen.2:20]  
ABRAHAM means what? ...Father of many nations. [Gen. 17:5]  
JACOB means what? ...Cheater.  
But God changed his name to ISRAEL, Prince with God.  
The name JESUS means what? ...Savior!

Jesus said, *"My new name I will write on you."*

Your new character, your new personality is Jesus Christ.  
The special plan that God has for you is in Jesus Christ.

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*We pray:*

*Father in heaven,*

*Thank-You for writing Your name on us.*

*Thank-You for making us Yours.*

*Thank-You for sending Jesus to open heaven for us.*

*Make our eyes-open, to see the open-doors in-front-of us.*

*Help us see the possibilities and opportunities we have  
for announcing the Name of Christ Jesus.*

*Help us to proceed with courage and trust.*

*Amen*