



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Philadelphia – A Faithful Church (Rev 3:7-13)

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Dave DePue, Pastor / Kansas Capitol Commission / dave.depue@capitolcom.org / www.capitolcom.org/kansas

*We go to great lengths to honor individual and group achievement in our culture. Awards are milestones for athletes, family members, employees, and those in community and government service. Jesus addressed eternal rewards in a parable about a faithful manager. “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (Matthew 25:21). The Apostle James clarifies that the ultimate reward is the crown of life, life eternal (James 1:12). **How does a milestone differ from a destination?***

INTRODUCTION

God’s letter to leaders of each of seven historical yet representative churches followed the same format. The letters included: a salutation, recognition of the sender, a note of commendation (except Laodicea), words of condemnation (except for Smyrna and Philadelphia), an exhortation, and a promise. **Why would commendation and promise be in your letter?**

LEADERS/MEMBERS IN PHILADELPHIA

Revelation 3:7 “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.”

Philadelphia (modern Alashehir, Turkey) was founded in the first century B.C. by Attalus II, king of Pergamum. Loyalty to his brother Eumenes earned the city its name “brotherly love.” The cities purpose was to spread the Greek language, customs, and manners. The Apostle Paul upgraded this to a higher mission (Acts 19:10)! Christ is introduced as the One who shares the holy, sinless, pure nature of His Father (Psalm 16:10; Acts 3:14). “True” refers to one who is genuine, authentic, and speaks the truth. Christ has the “key of David”, the sovereign authority to control entry into the kingdom (Isaiah 22:22; John 14:6). Here Christ is seen holding the keys to salvation and blessing. In contrast, Christ is seen earlier also holding the keys to death and hell! (Revelation 1:18). **Do you have assurance of an open door? Which door?**

COMMENDATION

Revelation 3:8 “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.”

This church, these leaders had little power, were small in numbers, and without great wealth. However, they remained loyal to the gospel and had not denied the name of the Lord during persecution. They were shown an open door to the kingdom and given opportunity for continued service. **How well does this commendation fit you?**

EXHORTATION

Revelation 3:9-10 “Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, but are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 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.”

The synagogue of Satan is the unbelieving church. Those who come to know the truth will learn from Christ’s faithful ones. The time of testing refers to the coming tribulation, the seven-year period ending the age and rapturing the church (Matthew 24:21; Daniel 9:24-27; Jerimiah 30:7). **Have you had a bit of testing?**

PROMISE

Revelation 3:11-12a

“Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast to what you have, so no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more....”

We are to hang-on through the last of the coming trials (2Thesalonians 2). Everlasting citizenship is assured and a share in the blessings and privileges of residence in the new Jerusalem (Psalm 27:4).

A PRAYER

Father God: Thank You for revealing your provision for the rest of my journey here and the promise of blessings in eternity!