

# The book of Revelation

## 3:7-13

Welcome to the weekly verse-by-verse bible study in the book of Revelation. Make sure you pray before you start this, or any bible study.

Over the last several weeks, we have been studying the book of Revelation and the letters to the seven churches. This week we read the sixth letter to the church in Philadelphia.

✉ **Rev 3:7-13** <sup>7</sup> *"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':<sup>8</sup> '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. <sup>9</sup> '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. <sup>10</sup> '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. <sup>11</sup> 'Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. <sup>12</sup> '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. <sup>13</sup> 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' '*

In our study last week, it was a tough one, as we read the letter to the church in Sardis, which is known as the dead church. Even though we don't want to be like that church was, we may have seen things in our own lives where we were just like them. But that doesn't mean that we give up, but rather as the Holy Spirit spoke to our hearts, we need to change our lives to reflect Jesus and not the world or anyone else in the world.

This week we will look at the letter to the church in Philadelphia (No it's not in Pennsylvania lol.)

✉ *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write*

Just like Sardis, Philadelphia was also a city in Lydia, twenty-eight miles southeast of Sardis. But we know how corrupt and dead the church of Sardis was, and even though

these cities were less than 30 miles apart, we will see how different the two are from one another.

✎ *These things says He who is holy, He who is true*

Jesus is most certainly Holy and True. I remember reading a sign that said:

*Next time you think you're perfect try walking on water.*

How many times do we get puffed up because we think we did something great? For me, I know that I have never walked on water, and there is so much more that Jesus did that we can compare ourselves to. But once we compare ourselves to anything that Jesus has done, we realize how Holy and True Jesus is, and how much of a sinner that we all are. Yet so many in the world think they know more than Jesus and they question what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do. The reason they do this is because they have never placed themselves next to Jesus. I suppose they are just too afraid to, because then they would realize how wrong they are, and how right Jesus is!

But not only is Jesus Holy and True, but also:

✎ *He who has the key of David*

What is the key of David? Well, you could call it faith in God.

† **Luke 1:31-32** *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.*

David messed up big time (But then haven't we all!), as we all know when he committed adultery with Bathsheba, and had her husband, Uriah murdered to try and cover up his sin. Yet even though David messed up, his faith was not in himself to be forgiven, but rather in God, and that was the key to David's life. God promised David that his throne would last forever.

† **2 Sam 7:16-17** *And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever. According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.*

Reading through the Old Testament, we read of the descendants of David messing up as well (Think of the kings here), with some even going as far as turning their backs on God and serving other gods. Yet God knew this would happen, and He still made the promise to David, and as you read the genealogy of Jesus, we read that He is of the line of David, fulfilling the promise to king David.

† **Matt 1:6 & 16** *and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.*

*And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.*

Have you ever noticed that when the bible speaks of Bathsheba, she is always referred to as the wife of Uriah, never the wife of David. That tells us that even though we are forgiven of our sins, that sometimes we have to live with the consequences of that sin for the rest of our lives. But David never said, “*Oh God does not love me because He calls Bathsheba Uriah’s wife and not my wife.*” No, David accepted his sinning against God and the consequences, yet still walked with God and he knew that God loved him, and David still wrote Psalms to God.

This letter goes on to say about Jesus.

✎ *He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens*

When you read this, you could think of it as, depending upon our faith we are allowed (*He who opens and no one shuts*) or denied (*shuts and no one opens*) access to the Father and heaven.

You may be think that “*So then salvation is by works, right?*”

No, salvation is by what Jesus did on the cross, but you must believe in Jesus even though you have never seen Him die, or rise from the dead, that is the faith we are talking about here. Remember what Jesus said to Thomas?

† *John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

The question is, do you believe? If you do then Jesus will open up heaven to you and no one will be able to shut it up from you (*He who opens and no one shuts*). But if you don’t believe, then the doors, or gates to heaven are shut, and no matter what you do or who you pay will be able to open them for you when that time comes (*shuts and no one opens*). But you have a choice right now to have the gates of heaven open wide for you to enter in when you die, or to be shut tight. Which do you want?

Jesus then says those words that can be exciting or scary, “*I know your works.*”

There are those four little words again that we see in ALL of the letters to the churches, “*I know your works.*”

**Ephesus** had left their first love, yet they **had works**.

**Smyrna** was persecuted, yet they **had works**.

**Pergamos** compromised their walk, yet they **had works**.

**Thyatira** was corrupt, yet they **had works**.

**Sardis** was a dead church, yet they **had works**.

**Philadelphia** was a faithful church, and they **had works**.

**Laodicea** was lukewarm, (as we will see next week), yet they **had works**.

So it seems that the amount of things you do will not determine which church you would fall into, because they all had works that they were doing. As we learned before, the purpose of works are to minister to others and also to set up our account in heaven, because our works will be judged in heaven and the motive behind our works will determine our reward in heaven..

So even though all these churches had works, the question is, will they all receive a reward for these works in heaven, or will the works be burned up, just as Paul spoke about to the Corinthians?

† **1 Cor 3:12-15** *Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

I pray that you all will have a huge account in heaven filled with rewards, and not just make it by the skin of your teeth.

Jesus goes on to tell the church that:

✠ *See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it;*

People wonder about loving their salvation and Jesus answers that question in the book of John.

† **John 10:28-29** *"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."*

Jesus will hold the gates to heaven wide open for us, and no one will be able to keep us as believers out. Just as no one will be able to snatch us out of the Father's hand!

Jesus goes on to tell the church that, *"for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name."*

- ✓ Do you ever feel like a weakling little Christian, like you just can't seem to be as holy or good as other Christians around you?
- ✓ Do you share Jesus with others and have them laugh at you as you stand there and wonder if you are a strong enough Christian or not?
- ✓ Do you struggle with sin? (*I think this is starting to sound like a commercial.*)

If you do then this verse is for all of us that do. Read it again: *for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.*

Sometimes I wonder how I make it each day as a Christian, because the more I read and study God's word, the more I see what a sinner I am. But we must always remember that our salvation is not based upon what we do or have done, but rather in what Jesus has done! Jesus gives us two things to remember to do, and that's to keep His word (*have kept My word*) and not deny His name (*and have not denied My name.*)

You may not be a Billy Graham or Chuck Smith, but then we are not all called to be like them. We are called to be what God created us to be. We just need to remember to always be in God's word and never deny Jesus!

Not only does Jesus know our weaknesses, but goes on to say, *"Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie"*

I think in all churches there are those who sneak in and try to fleece the flock of God. They will also try to get you to leave your church and come to theirs, or leave the church all together as some men will prey upon those vulnerable women who are hurting, making false promises to them just so they can use them sexually. Sad to say there are even women who do the same thing in the church. Maybe they are hurting over a past relationship that went bad and they think they can find a good man in church. So they will go to try and get one, and when they do, they will actually try to keep that guy from returning to church as they put all the focus on themselves and their needs instead of his ministry in the church. So many different ways these false Christians come into the church and lure unsuspecting believers away from the church.

So how do you know if someone is a false believer or not? First off, if they were trying to get you to leave the church, then I would encourage you to leave them behind and stick to your church family.

Second, Jesus says:

† *Matt 7:15-20 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them."*

Ask yourself, who are they drawing attention to, themselves or Jesus? Or, maybe they are drawing all the attention on you and not Jesus. We seem to be so into ourselves that the devil wants us to think of ourselves and not the needs of others. If he can get that guy or girl to tell you how great and wonderful you are and remove your focus off of Jesus, then you can be caught in his trap.

Jesus tells us what will happen to these liars when He says that, *"indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you."*

So will these people bow down to us in heaven?

No way Jose'.

The word "before" means: "in the presence of" or "in the sight of".

They will actually be bowing down to Jesus, and we will see it happening..

† **Phil 2:9-11** *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

But we will be there when they do, and they will not only confess Jesus as Lord, but will also realize that Jesus really does love us, and the sad thing is that they will realize that Jesus loved them as well, they just chose to reject the love of Jesus.

But for us, Jesus says, ***"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 seven-year tribulation period, which we will study starting in chapter 4.

You will hear the terms, "pre trib", "mid trib" and "post trib" (Trib = Tribulation).

Most believe (as do I) in pre trib, which means we as the church will be raptured or caught up before (pre) the seven-year tribulation starts.

Some believe in mid trib, which they believe that we will be raptured at the midway or 3½-year point.

Then there are those who believe in post trib meaning that we as the church will live through the seven years (post), then we will be raptured and return all at the same time.

I like what one pastor said one time to those who are mid or post trib. *"I'll explain it to you again on the way up"*.

But here in verse 10, Jesus makes it clear that He will keep us from the seven years of tribulation upon the earth. ***"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."*** I am so thankful for that, because I have a hard enough time dealing with the world the way it is. I would really hate to be here during those seven years, because you think things are bad now, it gets worse, a lot worse!

Yet Jesus has words of encouragement for us, which are, ***"Behold, I am coming quickly!"***

Do you believe that Jesus is coming back at any time, like right now?

If we do, then why do we get so angry with others?

Why do we curse and use harmful words towards others, even in our own family or church family?

Why do we treat our closest friends and family like they are nothing?

Why do we treat strangers like they are strangers instead of people who need Jesus?  
Why are we so concerned with our own welfare so much that we push others aside so that we can have nice things?

Yes, Jesus is coming back any minute. The question is, what will He see his bride (the church) doing when He comes for her?

Think about that, what if you were a man who was about to marry a beautiful woman. Then one day you go to her house and knock on the door. As you do the door opens and you see her beating on her brother or sister, both physically and verbally. Yelling at the homeless and calling them names. Taking from others so that she could have for herself. Talking bad about her brothers or sisters or even strangers; and she stands there staggering from drinking and partying, and giving herself to other men or even women. Would she turn around and see you and say, *“Oh, I didn’t know you were coming over. I was expecting you.”* Would you still want to marry her?

Are these the type of things Jesus will see in His bride when He comes for her?

Jesus said these very things to us, the Church:

† **Matt 24:48-50** *“But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,”*

Whether you are doing good or doing bad, Jesus is coming back. What will you be doing when He does come back for His bride?

Jesus encourages us to, *“Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”*

You may read that and be thinking, *“See, you can lose your salvation.”*

That’s not what this verse is saying. Looks at what Paul says,

† **1 Cor 9:24-25** *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown*

We have all at one time or another run in a race, whether it was in school as children or have done it professionally. When you do, you don’t just run because you have to, but because you want to receive the prize for coming in first place. But what if you fall while you are running? Do you just sit there and give up? You can, but then you will never make it to the finish line.

In our walk with the Lord, we all fall once in a while. But when we do, should we just sit there and give up? No! Notice this does not say that only the person who came in first place is the winner. No it encourages us all to keep running and not to give up. Our prize

is in the completion of the race, not running over others to come in first. Jesus also said:  
***“But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” Matt 19:30***

Do you think that by running over others, God will like you more because you ran the race to win? Wouldn't God be happier if you came in last because you stopped to help someone else get across the finish line then if you pushed other over making them fall so you could make it first?

If we keep holding on to Jesus, no matter how tough things get, we will finish and no one will be able to take our crown.

Jesus' half brother, James said, ***“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” James 1:12***

I do or say some pretty stupid things to my wife sometimes. I don't do it on purpose to hurt her or anything; I just mess up like most guys do. But I still love her and she knows that, and I am quick to ask her forgiveness when I realize what a jerk I was. That's why we stick together because of our love. Now if I did these things on purpose to hurt my wife and I told her that I didn't want anything to do with her anymore, then I could, or would lose my wife. But I don't because I love her.

I do some even stupider things concerning my relationship with Jesus. Once again I don't do them on purpose and would never want to hurt Jesus with the things I say or do (or don't do), yet I still do. But I love Jesus, and He knows that, and because of my love for Him, and more important, His love towards me, I will make it to the end of this race called life here on this earth.

But if I did them on purpose to hurt Jesus and told Him that I wanted nothing to do with Him anymore, I would get what I asked for. But please note in both cases that I love both Jesus and my wife and have no intentions on losing either.

Then Jesus tells us what will happen if we hold fast to what we have, ***“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more.”***

When it speaks of ***“a pillar”*** it is: *indicating a firm and permanent position in the spiritual, heavenly and eternal Temple of God;*

So what is this temple of God? We are!

† **1 Cor 3:17** *If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.*

† **2 Cor 6:16-18** *And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:  
“I will dwell in them*



***And walk among them.  
I will be their God,  
And they shall be My people."  
Therefore  
"Come out from among them  
And be separate, says the Lord.  
Do not touch what is unclean,  
And I will receive you."  
"I will be a Father to you,  
And you shall be My sons and daughters,  
Says the LORD Almighty."***

In order for a pillar to be strong, it must be full and firm. In other words, it shouldn't be hollow or empty inside. Any impurity in the structure could cause the pillar to crumble. We as pillars in God's temple in heaven are to be full of the Holy Spirit with no impurities in us. Once we are in heaven, we will never leave (*a firm and permanent position*), but then who would want to!

Jesus also tells us more of what to expect if we hold fast to what we have, ***"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."***

So what is the name of God? *As the name of Jehovah ("Holiness to the Lord") was on the golden plate on the high priest's forehead (Ex 28:36-38); so the saints in their heavenly royal priesthood shall bear His name openly, as consecrated to Him.*

The New Jerusalem is only mentioned one other time in the bible and it's here in the book of Revelation.

† ***Rev 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.***

So what will be the new name of Jesus? I don't know, we'll just have to find out when the time comes.

Finally, to end this sixth letter, Jesus says, ***"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."***

What has the Holy Spirit been saying to you today in this study?

or

What has the Holy Spirit been saying to you lately?

Are you listening? If you are, will you be obedient?

That's it for this week. Next week the final letter to the seventh church known as the lukewarm church. One church I think we all fear the most that we may be.

May the Lord richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy and may you prepare yourself as a pure spotless bride for Jesus when He returns for her!