

"The Letters to the 7 Churches"

Part 8

Revelation 2:1-3:22

Introduction: Today we are coming back to the letter to the church at Philadelphia for the 3rd time. Let me give you a quick review before we get to where we are going in our study today.

Last week we looked at the open door that was set before the believers at Philadelphia. It was an open door of evangelism and it was open to them because they had been faithful in their lives to the Word of God. Their faithful walk was then honored by God with this open door. This church was small in number but they were deep in spirituality.

Notice Revelation 3:8

Application:

In all of this last week we were able to see that if we desire to see God open doors and to work within our lives that we need to first of all show Him that we are committed. The Biblical illustration which we looked last week was when Israel crossed the Jordan River under the leadership of Moses. It was required by God that before He would stop the water the priests would need to step off the bank. Then they would need the faith to pass through the walls of water without being able to see the hand which held them back.

So if we desire to see God work His power in our lives we must show Him that we are committed to following Him. God moves when we are committed and devoted. When He opens the doors we also must walk by faith through the situations. Too many believers stand before the open door and are fearful to proceed.

We also talked about the persecution which these believers were exposed to and we talked about how we too can expect resistance when we take a stand for God. Let us NOT forget that this opposition often comes from our own families because they are the most difficult to stand up against.

Notice Revelation 3:9

Here we see that God would not remove the opposition but He would eventually bring the opposition to justice. There would be a day when the opposition would bow the knee to

Jesus Christ. So the believers at Philadelphia were not to seek vengeance on the opposition but they were to let that up to God.

Romans 12:17-21

¹⁷ *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

¹⁸ *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

¹⁹ *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

²⁰ *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*

²¹ *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

This now brings us to where we are today.

I. **The Promise**

Notice Revelation 3:10

Before we get into the promise made to this church I need to remind you that this promise is for THE CHURCH of Jesus Christ. In other words it applies to every one of us who are saved.

In this verse Jesus promises to this church that because they have kept the Word of His patience He will keep them from the hour of temptation which will come upon the all the world. There are several questions which we need to consider here in order to understand this verse.

1. **What is the time period Jesus is speaking of here?**

In other words, what is the time of testing which will come upon all the world? This is without a doubt the Tribulation Period. The Tribulation will last 7 years but the Great Tribulation will last 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Revelation 13:1-8

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

² *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

³ And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

⁴ And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

⁵ And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

⁶ And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

⁷ And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Here we see that the Kingdom of the Anti-Christ will be a WORLD WIDE KINGDOM. So when Jesus references the period of time when all that live on the EARTH will be tried this is the time period which He is talking about. Let me show you what Jesus said concerning this time in Matthew.

Matthew 24:7-10, 15-21

⁷ For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.

⁹ Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

¹⁰ And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

¹⁵ When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

¹⁷ Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

¹⁸ Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

¹⁹ And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

²⁰ But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

This will be the worse time EVER to come upon the face of the Earth and on mankind. It will even be worse than the flood of Noah's day.

BUT ACCORDING TO WHAT JESUS SAID HERE THE CHURCH WILL NOT GO THROUGH THE TRIBULATION.

Notice Revelation 3:10 again.

The word "FROM" here is very important. It means "OUT OF" or "OUT FROM". The church will be raptured away before the Tribulation period.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

*¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain **shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

The words "shall be caught up" mean **"to snatch out or away"**.

The church will be SNATCHED AWAY before the tribulation starts. But it is possible we will see much of the stage set for the tribulation.

So the time period is the Great Tribulation.

2. **If this is the Rapture then why did Jesus make the promise to THIS church because they have all died and the Rapture has still not happened?**

This can be explained with the Words of Jesus in a verse.

Mark 13:32-33

*³² But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, **neither the Son**, but the Father.*

³³ Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Jesus did not know the day and so He made a promise to the church at Philadelphia and it is also a promise to us today.

3. **When will this happen?**

The tribulation will start following the Rapture of the church.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-8

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;*

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.*

⁵ *Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?*

⁶ *And now ye know what **withholdeth** that he might be revealed in his time.*

⁷ *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, **until he be taken out of the way.***

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:*

4. **Why is this promise based upon the fact that they had kept the Word of His patience?**

Notice Revelation 3:10

This is a reference to TRUE believers. The word "PATIENCE" means "ENDURANCE". Two of the marks of a TRUE believer is the person will walk in obedience to the Word and then endure in their faith no matter the circumstances.

1 John 2:3-5

³ *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

⁴ *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

⁵ *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

Matthew 10:21, 22

²¹ *And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.*

²² *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: **but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.***

Hebrews 3:14

¹⁴ *For we are made partakers of Christ, **if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;***

Hebrews 10:38

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Conclusion:

The church will not go through the Tribulation but people who are not saved will. Now I want you to listen to what I am about to say:

If you are not saved and the Rapture happens and you have heard the Gospel and rejected God's love you will NOT get saved during the Tribulation.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

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.

¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.