



# Citadel Of Faith Covenant Church

August 24, 2016

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ALPHA AND OMEGA

We now turn our attention to the church at Philadelphia. This name is familiar to man of us in the United States since it is the city in Pennsylvania that bears the same name, “The City of Brotherly Love”. It is said that this name was ascribed to this city long before they had Christian roots. There seemed to be a level of civility and love that they shared for each other as citizens. Revelation 3:7 begins with yet another disclosure of the character of Jesus. As mentioned before, Jesus is multi-faceted and is indeed unfathomable in His nature. We can never exhaust the nature of God as it relates to His qualities, etc. He says that He is the one who is holy and true and these are His words. You can trust someone whose very nature is holy. This means that everything that comes out of Jesus mouth can be trusted because it’s spoken from the nature of truth. If Jesus ever made a false claim, or just a slight embellishment, He would be disqualified from being God. Because God by definition is holy and without flaw. To lie would be a flaw. Jesus’ words are true! We can trust them. If the very nature of God is tied to His Words being true, how much more should we lay our lives on the line for His Word. Not only can we trust His words, we can also trust His authority. He holds the keys of David. Jesus was of the lineage of the house of David. But this reference takes it’s cue from Isaiah 22:22 (read). Here we notice that this is a reference to the righteous rule of Hezekiah. Under his reign, a man named Eliakim served as the royal treasurer. One of his responsibilities was to guard the treasury. He was given a key that opened the vault, and he alone possessed the authority to access the vast riches. Well, in the same way, Jesus has been given those keys which enables Him to open doors of access and close them as well. Jesus then declares what He opens, no one can shut and what He shuts no one can open. This is such a powerful verse and calls for deep reflection and mediation. The implications of this text in the life of the believer is most impactful. One of the greatest lessons that we the “creature” must learn from the creator is that of both trust and surrender. It is human nature (minus God’s nature) to want to control things. We want to control not only our lives, but others as well. “If I WERE PRESIDENT; if I WERE A MILLIONAIRE; if I WERE A PASTOR, etc.” If God doesn’t move fast enough or the way in which we want Him to, we often will try to pry open doors that are closed or to tie a door shut that God has opened. Jesus is the one who opens doors and closes them and both actions don’t need nor can be swayed by our influence!! This is sobering, but so key. The church as Philadelphia is thought to be a small church. Vs. 8 speaks of little strength. This comes from two Greek words: mikros and dynamis (little strength (power). Many scholars things this refers to the natural state of the Philadelphian church, having little strength. Yet Jesus says immediately, “yet you’ve kept my Word and not denied my name”.



Even with the challenge of not having much, the Philadelphian church excelled in what was needed most, faith and faithfulness. Although many other cities of the day, had many more resources, they lacked in the greatest resource that any Christian or church could ever have and that is a revelation of Jesus and all that He offers us. This “open door” that he has placed before the church of Philadelphia has also been placed before you! We have to have an understanding of what happened in the fall and the ultimate redemption of Christ to have a full understanding of what it means to have Christ and the open door he promises. In Genesis we see the making of man (and all that exists). When God made man he gave us dominion over all of His creation. We were His representatives in the earth realm. In chapter three of Genesis when Adam disobeyed God’s command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he sinned. As a result we handed over authority in the earth realm to Satan. This is why we see the dialogue that Jesus had with Satan in Luke 4:5-7 (read). If you notice here that Satan says that all authority has been given to him and if Jesus would but worship him, he would give him the ability to have what he needed in the moment (food power, etc.). Well, this is true in our fallen world, Satan has a measure of power that WE have abdicated because of our disobedience and the fall. As a result, there are many closed doors, insurmountable odds etc. However, when Jesus died on the cross and satisfied God’s justice to pay the penalty for sin, and then rose from the grave, He has been given the keys and the power. (Read Matthew 28:18). Since we are in Christ, the authority which has been given to Him has been given to us! WE can now approach closed doors as Jesus would, having the power to open every closed situation. God want us to share the faith of the church at Philadelphia who in the midst of not having much naturally, they abounded spiritually. Not only was there a wide open door of opportunity to this church because of their location, they also had the ability to have supernatural favor extended to them because of their great faith. Jesus continues to condemn the “church of Satan” this band of Judaizers who continue to nullify the gospel of grace to one of works. He promises that these will bow down to the feet of the ones that He loves (the Philadelphians) because of their faithfulness. He then promises that He will keep them from the trial that is going to face the whole world. He concludes by saying that He is coming soon, hold on to what they have, and that He will write on them the name of God and He will write on them His new name. Can you hear this?

1. How do YOU view adversity...(closed doors)
2. How do you see yourself in Christ...be specific.
  - a. How do you take authority over the devil
  - b. What Biblical stance to do you take to exercise your authority?
3. Do you strive to be in control?
  - a. What are steps you take to surrender daily to Christ?
  - b. What are some examples of failure as a result of YOUR being in control?
4. What does God promise to the faithful?