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SERIES: Revelation (God's Message To The Church)

TITLE: Program 14 – An Open Door!

THURSDAY

OPEN

Are there times my friend when you think if I just had more power as a Christian, I could be so much more effective for God? Beloved, if you have even a little power and you keep God's Word and you don't deny His name then He has nothing but commendation for you. He gives you the power you need when you need it. The thing is for you to stay faithful and keep His Word. We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

If you were to get on a bus with me, and we were to go to Sardis, then 25 miles southeast of that, we would come to Philadelphia, the city that Jesus is writing to, the church at Philadelphia. Philadelphia was on two main routes. It was a very strategically placed city. And one of those main routes was a trade route. The other main route was the Imperial road. It's the way that they got their messages very quickly along that Imperial road to wherever

they wanted to go. So it was a very, very strategic city. And as we look at this strategic city, Jesus presents Himself as the One who is holy. He says, "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut and who shuts and no one will open says this: 'I know your deeds. Behold I have put before you an open door, which no one can shut because you have a little power and because you have kept My word and have not denied my name.'" Why has He given them an open door? And how is He able to give them an open door? Well we have to remember that Jesus has a key chain. And on that key chain He has, as Revelation, chapter 1 says, He has the keys to Hades. He has the keys to death. And what He shuts no one can open and what He opens no one can shut. He has the master lock and He never lets go of those keys. And when you come to Him in Revelation, chapter 3, He has the key of David and they have trouble. They have trouble knowing exactly what does He mean by the key of David? But I think if we would go back and we would understand that God made a covenant with David. Remember when David wanted to build a temple for God and God wouldn't let David build that temple because he was a man of blood? And he says God; I want to build a house for you. And God says, no, you can't David. But David, you know what? I will build a house for you. I'm going to build you a house that will endure forever. David was absolutely overwhelmed. He sat before the Lord and you can just almost hear him speaking through those tears overwhelmed with the goodness of God, overwhelmed with the goodness of God, that from David's loins, that from David's seed, that from the root of David would come the Messiah, who would rule, not only over Israel, but rule over all the earth. This is the One that is speaking, that is writing to the church at Philadelphia. And He says, "I am the One who is holy. I am the One who is true." Remember in Revelation, chapter 1 He's described as the faithful witness. He's the One that's been set apart. He's the One that is the faithful witness and He's writing to a group of people that have been faithful also. He's writing to a church that has not denied His name. He is writing to

a church that has kept His word. He is writing to a church that has a little power. But listen, it's a power that will never wear down. It's a power that will keep on going. Have you ever had a battery-operated toy that maybe spoke and maybe moved at the same time? And then all of a sudden the battery was getting old. How did you know it? Because the little toy started moving slower and his voice got slower and you knew hey, it's running out of power. Do you know what God is saying to you? God is saying to you, you be faithful. "You be like the church at Philadelphia and you know this that if you will take that little power that you have and if you will not deny My name and if you will keep My word, then I have no reproof for you, no complaint against you. I don't need to tell you to repent at all because that's what I require. I require you to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. I require you to keep, to guard My word, to be faithful to My word, and I call you and ask you and require you to hold fast to My name. You know who I am. I'm the One from the root of David. I am the Messiah. I'm the One that has the key of David. I'm the One that shuts and no one opens and I am the One that opens and no one shuts." These are messages that you and I need. These are messages for the churches, not just those seven churches. But they were preserved in the Word of God because somewhere along the line we relate to some issue in these two chapters, issues of life. And the issue to you today is look; don't think I'm no big deal. I don't have any power. I'm not on a platform. I'm not working all these miracles. I'm not having visions and dreams. He says listen, that's not what I require. I require you to keep My word and I require you to be faithful to My name, to not deny Me. When you do that, I want you to know I'm not going to reprove you. Now He's not reproving them also because this is a good church. They don't have the wrong teaching that Thyatira and Pergamum had. And they're not dead like the church at Sardis. This is a church that He is very happy with. Listen there's only one other church and that's the church at Smyrna, the suffering church, that He has no reproof for them. Of the seven churches, the church at Smyrna and the church at Philadelphia get no reproof from the lips of God,

through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now watch, He says, “Behold I will cause those who are of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie, behold I will make them to come and bow down at your feet and to know that I have loved you.” When Jews begin to adamantly persecute Christians and I want you to know, we know in history about Christians, those bearing the name of Christ, persecuting Jews and I want to tell you, those that bore the name of Christ and persecuted Jews were ignorant men. They had denied His name and they had denied His word and they were killing in the name of Christ and they didn’t even know what they were doing. They were coming against God’s anointed kingdom, His anointed people and God says don’t you touch My anointed. And we hear about that and we hear about that during the crusades. But the thing that we don’t hear about is that there is a persecution by Jews against Christians. I remember being in Israel and we have a work in Israel and we have our Bible studies in Hebrew. So if you know some Jews and they want to study the Word of God, Old Testament, New Testament, we have them in Hebrew. And you can send them to them. You can just pick up the phone and call us. But I remember going by the Israeli Bible Society where I had friends and they had bars on the window. And I said why do you have bars on the window? And he says because religious Jews have come and taken stones and smashed them through our windows. And I thought wait a minute. What are you doing? What are you doing? You complain because Christians or because this was done to you in the name of Christianity and yet you do the same thing. That is a synagogue of Satan. And he says, and those people think God only loves me. God only loves the Jews. God only loves the Jews that are real Jews that are real, real orthodox, that keep the law and He hates all the others. That is not true. When God gave to Abraham the promise that of him, He would make a great nation, He also said to Abraham, “... and in you all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.” And Galatians lets us know that he not only preached the gospel to the Jews at that point, to Abraham who was the first Jew, the first Hebrew, but He also preached it to the

Gentiles. You can read about that in Galatians, chapter 3. Do you see how important it is to know the Word of God, to study it book by book like we're doing, to mark the text, to become familiar with it because then scripture interprets scripture? And that's what it's all about. And the best and most accurate interpreter of scripture is scripture. So He says, "These people that say that they are Jews and are not ...," He says, "... I'm going to make them come and I'm going to make them bow down at your feet." And you know what? When they do, they will know this: "... they will know that I love you." When you look at Philadelphia, you see the word *phileo*. And the word *phileo* in Philadelphia means a brotherly love. It means an affectionate love. It means a love of appreciation. In a marriage, the glue, the love that holds a marriage together is *agape* kind of love, an unconditional love, a love, I will love you regardless. But the thing that makes marriage fun and makes marriage wonderful is a *phileo* love, because it's a love of friendship. Are you a friend of God? You know if you're a friend of God you do keep His word. If you're a friend of God you don't deny His name. If you're a friend of God, then whatever power you have you use for Him and that's what we see at the church of Philadelphia. But there's something exciting prophetically to see and we'll see that right after this word.

PART TWO

Do you know about prophecy? Do you know what the future holds? Have you studied the books of Daniel and Ezekiel and Jeremiah and Isaiah and Joel and Amos and Zechariah and Malachi? Have you studied those books? Have you studied the book of Revelation, the rest of the book of Revelation? All those prophecies point to a terrible day. It's called the day of the Lord, a day of gloom, a day of judgment, a day of trembling, a day of fear, because it's a day when God is going to pour out His wrath on the earth. As you study through Revelation you see seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls. After that sixth trumpet I believe this terrible and great day of the

Lord starts. According to 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2 it's when the antichrist, when the man of lawlessness, when the little horn of the beast of Daniel, chapter 7 takes his seat in that rebuilt Jewish temple in Jerusalem, walks into the holy of holies and declares himself to be God. Then according to Daniel 7 and according to Daniel, chapter 9, there is three and one half years of absolute hell on the face of this earth. And it's also according to Daniel, chapter 12. And it's numbered as three and one half years or forty-two months or one thousand, two hundred and sixty days. Now all of that is laid out for us in Scripture. And I'm giving it to you very quickly. But there is a day of the Lord coming. It's a day of wrath and he wrote to the church at Thessalonica, Paul did, under the inspiration of God, taught that brand new church about the coming of Jesus Christ, taught them about this terrible day of the Lord that's going to come like a thief in the night. And he wrote them in the second epistle because all of a sudden they were afraid that the day of the Lord had come. And he said I want you to know that the day of the Lord cannot come unless there's an apostasy that comes first and number two, unless the man of lawlessness is revealed and he takes his seat in the temple and number three: until he who restrains is taken away and then Satan comes in all of his power and really the lines are drawn. And as it says, "... in that seventh trumpet that the kingdom of our God and His Christ has come" And those two kingdoms, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God come into direct conflict. The question is: where will the church be? You've heard bout the church being caught up to meet Jesus Christ in the air. You've heard that. Let's go back to 1 Thessalonians, chapter 1, in verse 10, "... they're waiting for His Son from heaven whom He, God raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath which is to come." Now the wrath which is to come I do not believe is the lake of fire. The wrath which is to come, I believe is the day of the Lord, the wrath that's going to come on the face of the earth. All right and now, when you come to 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, he says in verse 13, "I do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, concerning those who are asleep ...," When he talks

about people being asleep, he's talking about believers. In other words they died, but it's called sleep because they woke up immediately in the presence of God. He says, "... that you may not grieve as the rest who do not have any hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again ...," You believe that don't you? "... even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus." Now what is he saying? He's saying this: a believer dies. The minute a believer dies his spirit goes to be with Jesus. All right, when his spirit and I'm throwing my hand up in the air, when his spirit goes to be with Jesus there is a time coming when Jesus is going to leave heaven. When He leaves heaven He is not going to come to earth, but He's going to stop somewhere in the atmosphere. He's going to bring the spirits, the souls of all those who died in Christ with Him. Now listen to what he says: "... even so God will bring with Him, with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord ...," until Jesus Christ comes in the air to get us, he says, "... those that are alive and remain will be caught up together with them, the bodies of those that have died, be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." You know what? I have more fun teaching this in Thessalonica. And when we do it, we have somebody that represents Jesus, one of our staff. The group doesn't know we're going to do this and we have one of our staff and he's in a white robe and we have two people and one dies and then their spirit, and we also have another person coming out of 'em, like their spirit goes to be with Jesus. Then when Jesus comes He brings that person. That person runs down those stairs where we're teaching and unites himself so to speak, with the dead. Then the dead rise and the one that is alive and remain rises also and goes to meet the Lord where? In the air. And so it says, "... and so shall we ever be with the Lord." All right now, the question is, when does this happen? Does this happen before Jesus breaks these seven seals which are in Revelation, chapter 6, that bring all this chaos and pain and famine and death and pestilence and drying up of the sea and drying up of the oceans and all of that and changing them into

blood? Where's the church when all that happens? Well I believe from Revelation, chapter 3, verse 10 that the church is out of here before it happens. Listen, verse 10. His word, His promise to the church at Philadelphia: "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, because you've not denied My name, because you've kept the faith...", He says, "... I also, I, Jesus will keep you, the church, from the hour of testing, the testing, that hour which is to come upon the whole world." When you read through Revelation you will see that this is going to come on the earth dwellers. "To test those who dwell upon the earth." So what is He saying? He's saying I am going to "ray-o" ek I am going to keep, that's to "ray-o" ek, out of. I'm going to keep you out of this. I believe that this is the verse that shows us that the church isn't going to be here. The church, I believe, will not personally, and if you don't agree its fine. It's absolutely fine. We'll find out. But I can tell you this; I believe that the church is going to be gone at least seven years before Jesus Christ returns. But I know, without a shadow of a doubt from studying very, very carefully 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, that the church will not, absolutely will not, be here during the day of the Lord. All right, so here is the promise. And so He says, "I am coming quickly. Hold fast what you have in order that no one may take your crown." I have a crown for you. "He who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of My God ...," And you read about that in Revelation, chapter 21. "... and He will not go out from it anymore. And I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem ...," We've already looked at it, "... which comes down out of heaven from My God and I will write on Him My new name. He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit's saying." He's saying you have that power. You keep it. You keep My word; you don't deny My name.