

*“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:*

*These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars – I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.*

*I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

The city, Philadelphia, takes its name from the reconciliation between two brothers: the king of Pergamum and the king of Lydia. To celebrate the burial of the hatchet, they built this city between their two cities.

We see essential truths (verse 8):

- I have put before you an open door: that is to say no one can close it, because the control of this church is Jesus himself. It is only through Jesus that the Church will live and function in the truth.
- Little power: Having little power implies here that it does not have the power according to men. It is more important not to have power and to keep the truth, than to have prestige without really having the truth.
- You have kept my word: it has remained consistent with the teachings of Jesus which were taught to the church. We must follow the teachings given to us in the Word of God and act righteously in this truth.
- You have not denied the name of Jesus: what Satan wants to do is to extract every Christian from the vow he made to dedicate his life to Christ. We must be attentive to the whispers of the enemy who wants to, in a sneaky and unspectacular way, move us away little by little from Jesus until the day when the name of Jesus no longer has any effect on us!

We must seek out and possess these 4 key phrases today in the Church. We will not arrive by our own strength, but only if it is Jesus who guides the Church.

We see that this church had persevered in Jesus (verse 10), despite the difficulties. As they did not compromise with the world or prestige, they did not accept false doctrines (as we see in the other letters), then Jesus promises to preserve them from future trials.

We can be saved from great tribulation or suffering if we truly follow Jesus, but this requires “remaining” in the love of Jesus (see John 15).

And here is the reward (verse 12) for the one who trusts in Jesus and perseveres:

- A pillar in the temple of my God: to remain firmly anchored in Jesus in the truth and holiness of God.
- The name of God Himself: literary style to say that we belong to God. Let the name of God remain engraved in our hearts, so that Satan sees that we belong to God.
- The name of the city: we are full citizens of the Kingdom of God.
- The new name of Jesus: we belong to Jesus and we will be with him for eternity.

Isn't it wonderful what is promised to the overcomers?

But, to be entitled to this reward, we must listen with attentive ears (verse 13) to God's warnings, to remain faithful to Jesus and live in the truth of God's Word, to persevere and stand firm in all circumstances.