

The Book of Revelation

Week Seven: In depth on the letter to Philadelphia

- About the City:
 - It should not be confused with another important Biblical City: Philippi referenced in the book of Philippians.
 - This is another letter where the church gets all praise (similar to Smyrna)
 - Later on in the history of the seven churches, when the Islamic faith takes over this region in the 6-800's. Smyrna and Philadelphia will hold out the longest.
- Letter to Philadelphia:
 - Identification: The one who holds the keys of David
 - There are lots of references to doors in this letter, what is open, what is shut, what is locked.
 - Synagogue of Satan:
 - Again, there seems to be major conflict between the early Christians and the Jewish faith (following the pattern of the book of Acts).
 - Given all the door-talk and who is in and who is out talk, it is likely that the Philadelphian Christians had been kicked out of the Jewish Synagogue. This is something that happened in the first century.
 - "I know your deeds" – a powerful statement that in *this* letter is meant to be an encouragement. This is a faithful church that has endured much.
 - PROMISE: Whoever conquers will have a permanent place in the temple of God, never again will they leave it. Again this seems like a letter to people who have been kicked out or excluded.
- The discussion this week was lively. It revolved around church conflict and how to handle a deep theological divide. Both the Jewish and the Christian believers were working to please God and yet clearly one was right, and the other in error.

Scripture worth reading:

- Jesus discusses conflict resolution within the church in Matthew chapter 18.
- There is a powerful parable in Matthew 25 that has the "I know your deeds" feel to it.