

Checkin' Out My Walk
#25 - Philadelphia - Kept From The Hour Of Trial

Jesus Christ Appears To The Church of Philadelphia:

Rev. 3:7a These things says He who is holy, He who is true,

1. Philadelphia was a temple warden and gave to the emperor the title "The Son of the Holy One." It is undoubtedly for this reason the Lord is called, "He who is holy, who is true."
2. Philadelphia, filled with heathenism and paganism, had pagan temples on every corner. There were hundreds of manufactured Greek false gods and goddesses, but only Jesus Christ could rightfully claim to be the one and only true God. "Jesus is genuine...He that is original!"

Rev. 3: 7b-11 "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": ⁸ "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

⁹ Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

¹¹ Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

Smyrna: Rev. 2:10 Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Note: Both letters speak of a coming time of trouble and stress the brevity compared to the glory that follows.

1. Smyrna > Tribulation caused by the devil and suffered by the church
2. Philadelphia > Judgmental tribulation sent by the Lord and suffered by men who dwell on the earth.

Note: Christ's judgment of the church will be at The Judgment Seat of Christ. (II Cor. 5:10)

Faithful Church of Philadelphia:

a. Little strength = "but little strength" > The fact they have but little strength is the source of their power. They must depend wholly on the Lord.

II Cor. 12:9 My strength is made perfect in weakness.

Nothing of man's strength can yield an effective ministry. The Lord alone has opened the door; He gives the increase.

I Cor. 3:7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

b. Kept My Word - There are pressures to repudiate God's Word, distort, dilute, allegorize or even ignore God's Word which compromises your witness. Scripture warns:

I Tim. 6:20-21 Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane *and* idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.

Jude 1:3 Earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Col. 1:23 Continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard,

c. Have Not Denied My Name

When you deal loosely with God's Word, you will sooner or later deny the name of Christ. His name stands for his character, his position, his work - all he is.

His formal name is "the Lord Jesus Christ."

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

We are to honor him in all 3 names:

Jesus = Salvation > Accept His salvation provided by His sacrificial death & resurrection

Christ = the anointed One > Acknowledge His 3 fold eminence as God's anointed prophet, priest and king

Lord = Honor Him as "Lord" by obeying and believing His Word

d. Kept My Command to Persevere

I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

1. The test is future. "I also will keep you."

2. It is a limited test. "I will keep you from the hour of testing."

This indicates it is a controlled duration: not eternal or permanent.

3. It is called "an hour of testing."

Peirasmos is used in the Bible for trial or temptation. A test exposes you, reveals your character and what you know. It puts you under a severe test to determine your actions.

4. The test is world-wide.

5. It is for unbelievers. "It is to test those who DWELL UPON THE EARTH."

Note: 12x in Revelation > 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8

a. Refers to a "kind" of people > live for the earth and for things of the earth.

b. Contrast earth dweller with a citizen of heaven.

Phil. 3:18-21 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* their belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

²⁰ For our citizenship *is* in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

6. This hour of testing is also for Israel. Daniel calls it the seventieth week, the one seven-year period still left in which Israel will believe and be saved. (Dan. 9:24-27; #28-Gates)

The Earth Dwellers: Unbelievers

1. 5th Seal - Cry Of The Martyrs

Rev. 6:9-10 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. The saints who have been martyred for the cause of Christ are under the altar and they are crying out with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed.

Note: Their sacrifice is an appointment, not an accident.

Others will join them before Christ returns and establishes His kingdom.

Promise > Rev. 2:10b Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

2. 4th Trumpet - The Heavens Are Struck - Judgment Affects Entire World

Rev. 8:12-13 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.¹³ And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

3. The 2 Witnesses Are Killed

Rev. 11:3,7-10 And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." (Note: This is the first 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years of the tribulation period.) When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.⁸ And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.⁹ Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.¹⁰ And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

4. Satan Is Cast Out Of Heaven

Rev. 12:9, 12 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

5. Worship Of Antichrist

Rev. 13:8 During the reign of Antichrist: All who dwell on the earth will worship him whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Earth dwellers are not born again.)

Consider: a. Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. The Beast is Satan in a human body.

b. The world would not receive Christ, but it will receive Antichrist > counterfeit Christ.

c. The world would not believe the truth, but they will believe the lie.

II Thess. 2:7-12 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

d. Jesus speaks gracious words of salvation and men turn a deaf ear, but they will listen to the blasphemous words of "the beast."

e. The world will not worship THE Christ, but they will bow down to Antichrist.

6. Lamb That Speaks Like A Dragon

Rev. 13:11-12 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth (false prophet = counterfeit Holy Spirit), and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹² And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast (Antichrist), whose deadly wound was healed.

Rev. 13:14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

Contrast Holy Spirit with False Prophet

a. Holy Spirit will glorify Christ and lead people to trust and worship Him. (John 16:7-15)

b. False Prophet will point to Antichrist and his image and compel people to worship Satan through "the beast."

7. Angel Preaching The Everlasting Gospel To Earth Dwellers

Rev. 14:6-7 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

8. Earth Dwellers Engulfed In False Religion

Rev. 17:1-2 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot (false religious system)

who sits on many waters,² with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

Note: Pure bride in lovely garden in Gen. 2. Now civilization has degenerated to an impure harlot in a wilderness. Sin's effect on the world!

Note: The world is engulfed in this false religion.

Rev. 17:8 The beast you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. Those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Those who dwell on the earth: A term for people:

1. Names are not written in the Book of Life
2. The ungodly and unregenerate
3. The objects of God's wrath because of rejection and rebellion against Him

Rev. 3:10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Thoughts:

1. I don't believe this time is to test believers.
2. It cannot be a present time of distress.
3. It cannot be a permanent, local or partial kind of testing.
4. Not a time of testing designed for the church.

What Happens When This Time Of Severe Testing Comes On The Wicked?

1. Some repent and are saved.

Rev. 6:9-11 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

They cry with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth? And there was given to each of them a white robe and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed, even as they had been, should be completed also."

Note: Some are going to pass the test, repent and be saved.

Rev.7:9-11 John says, After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches (symbolize victory) in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

Note: There is a multitude of saved people with the angels and elders. When were they saved?

Rev. 7:14 "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation (time of testing), and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

During this time of Antichrist's reign of terror some saints will believe and persevere.

Rev. 13:10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience (perseverance) and the faith of the saints.

Rev. 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

The Gospel During The Hour Of Testing Will Be Preached By:

1. The Two Witnesses
2. 144 Thousand Jews
3. A Flying Angel In Mid Heaven

2. Others Will Reject The Gospel And Be Damned.

Revelation 6:15-17 "And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains and they said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come and who is able to stand?"

Note: Worldwide convulsions; 1st of 3 earthquakes

Dr. Vance Havner: The day will come when the most expensive piece of real estate will be a hole in the ground.

Consider: The people mentioned are impertinent.

1. They refuse to submit to God's will.
2. They would rather hide from God in fear than run to Him in faith. (Adam & Eve)
3. Proof > Judgment by itself does not change the human heart.
4. They will also blaspheme Him: Rev. 16:9, 11, 21

Six Of Seven Trumpets Have Sounded.

1. 1/3 of trees and grass burned.
2. Great mountain of fire thrown into the sea; 1/3 of sea became blood; 1/3 of living creatures in the sea died; 1/3 of ships destroyed
3. Wormwood > Great Star affected 1/3 of waters which became bitter
4. Darkness; 1/3 sun, moon and stars
5. Demon locusts > torment for 5 months
6. Angels from the Euphrates > kill 1/3 of mankind
7. $\frac{1}{2}$ of world's population will be dead by the end of the 6th trumpet.

Rev. 9:20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver,

brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Rev. 16:11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

Rev. 16:20-21 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹ And great hail from heaven fell upon men, *each hailstone* about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great. God continues to pour out His fury on these people who will not believe.

Rev.19 The Lord comes with a bloody robe.

Rev. 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great."

Judgment is poured out in the world. There is holocaust after holocaust and devastation. The Antichrist rises in his blasphemous attack on God, wreaks his havoc. Then God Himself moves in the fury of His own judgments. Through it all the gospel is preached and proclaimed. The test or time of trial is on! Some believe and are saved. Some reject and are damned.

Promise To The Faithful Church, Jesus says, Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

People who believe the church will go through the hour of testing say this verse can mean... I will also keep you within the hour of testing.

The verb tereo which means to keep or guard is followed by a little preposition ek = out of. Some people would like to make it mean "in" = en

The word for through = dia.

Jesus used ek, "I'll keep you out of it."

Some say, "He will keep you from divine wrath." NO!

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus."

I Thess. 1:10 to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

I Thess. 5:9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Compare with Rev.2:20-22 the letter to Thyatira. "I have this against you, you tolerate the woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess and teaches and leads My bondservants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

And I gave her time to repent and she doesn't want to repent of her immorality. I'll cast her upon a bed of sickness and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation."

Note: To a sinning wicked church > I'll put you in great tribulation.

To a loyal, faithful church > I'll keep you out of the hour of testing.

Rev. 3:11 Behold, I am coming quickly!

This cannot mean the coming described in Revelation 19 when He comes in bloody garments with a sword to slaughter the world. The 2nd coming is known to be 3 ½ years after the abomination of desolation.

His coming for the church (rapture) will deliver them out of the time of testing.

After the rapture, the hour of testing will commence with the signing of the treaty between the Jews and the Antichrist. The events described in Rev. 6-18 will follow.

Rev. 3:11b "Hold fast what you have in order that no one take your crown."

Note: I Cor. 3:14-15 There is the possibility of losing your rewards.

Perseverance Of The Saints - Suffer Without Wavering

I Pet. 2:20 For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently?

But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God.

²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

Phil. 1:29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

Rom. 5:3-5a but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ Now hope does not disappoint

James 1:3 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

James 1:12 Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Heb. 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

Heb. 10:35-36 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

"Put on Christ" in Rom. 13:11, 14: Knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

I Peter 4:7 "The end of all things is at hand, it's near."

James 5:8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

You are promised deliverance from the final hour of testing!

You can live in the hope of the coming of Jesus Christ.

You can say with John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus...Come and gather us to Yourself."