

PREFACE

These notes are to serve as a blessing and help to those studying the word with Pastor Neil Spencer. Pastor Neil does not claim to fully agree with all the thoughts, beliefs, writings, or teachings of every named source/person in these notes. The Bible is the ultimate authority & ALL believers are to be Bereans (Acts 17.10-11).

INTRODUCTION: Teaching Notes (2 Slides)**1. JESUS LOVES CHURCH**

1. In Chapters 1—5, we see Jesus' **LOVE** for the **CHURCH** — **REVEALED**

2. Rev 1.19 gives us what many would call the **DIVINE OUTLINE** of the book; John is told **19** "*Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen.*

1. CH 1 — the things you have seen

2. CH 2-3 — the things that are

3. CH 4-22 — the things the will happen

3. This Spring, in chapters 1-5 we're learning about Jesus' **LOVE** for the **CHURCH** — **REVEALED**

2. REVEALED — that's an important word that I want you to remember ... why?

1. Revelation simply means "*unveiling or revealing*" ... "*to uncover, to reveal, to make manifest.*"

1. **ILLUS**: revealing — **VIDEO**

2. This book is the revelation of JESUS, and... look at v1 of chapter 1

3. **1** *This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John,*

1. KJV — of JESUS

2. Revealing of JESUS & the events that must soon take place — the content & the priority

3. Jesus was a humble/servant who came to die... that's who He was... now, He is... **Rev 1.12** *When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. 13 And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. 14 His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire. 15 His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. 16 He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance.*

4. Jesus isn't a humble/marginalized peasant, but He is the one who has ALL authority/ power

2. And here's the thing about the book of Revelation... God has given it to **prepare** us, not to **scare** us.

1. God doesn't seek to **conceal** things from us, but to **reveal** them to us.

2. Prophecy isn't given to **overstimulate** our brains, but to **motivate** our hearts & hands to worship.

3. Revelation brings **sense** to the **suffering** we experience; God is not done; more is coming.

3. In Revelation, we are given a fuller/greater revelation of JESUS... that's the primary focus of Revelation!

4. In chapters 2/3 we see 7 letters/msg's to 7 churches ... These letters follow a similar pattern:

1. **Church**—Identification the city where the church resides.
2. **Characterization** — Insightful/Relevant description of Jesus to that local church
3. **Commendation**—Encouragement from Jesus
4. **Critique/Complaint**—Warning of something erroneous or even egregious.
5. **Command**—Instruction of how do/get/stay right...
6. **Counsel/Caution** — Exhortation & even warning to all believes
7. **Comfort**—Jesus offers the genuine believers words of comfort & encouragement for the future.

5. So far we've considered 5 of these letters: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, & Sardis

6. So, let's consider the 6th church that Jesus wrote a letter to, the church in Philadelphia

REVELATION 3.7—13

7 "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Philadelphia. This is the message from the one who is holy and true, the one who has the key of David. What he opens, no one can close; and what he closes, no one can open:

1. **Church:** Philadelphia

1. This isn't a church located in PA, USA... but in modern day Turkey...
 1. Philadelphia — the name means *brotherly love*
 2. Named after its founder – Attalus the 2nd – who was nicknamed *Philadelphos*.
2. The city originally founded as a missionary/advocacy/ambassador outpost for GK Culture
 1. Located in a strategic place on the route from Rome to the East // called the “gateway to the East”
 2. The city was to be a center for spreading GK language, culture, throughout Asian provinces.
3. Philadelphia was a beautiful city, but it was located near a fault line, in AD 17 a massive earthquake devastated the entire region, many ppl lived in constant mindfulness of the challenge of this...
4. The church was small ... and undergoing rejection/isolation/persecution b/c of who they were in Jesus

2. **Characterization:** how Jesus connects to this church...

1. The One who is HOLY & TRUE — Why is this significant? —
 1. Could be translated “Holy One” — which is a title for God (Isa 40.25, Habakkuk 3.3, John 6.69)
 2. **Holy** — He is uniquely set apart from everything/one else — no-one/thing is comparable to Him
 3. **True** — GK indicates true in all of who He is; He is the *real* God & the *real* man.
 4. Jesus is not a humble/marginalized peasant, but He is Holy + True — He is God.

2. The One who has the “Key of David”

1. This is a quotation from Isaiah 22; most of those to whom this letter was intended were Jewish, they were familiar w/ this quote, originally given to a Jewish hero, Eliakim, who was a

dependable leader for God's ppl.

2. The one who holds the keys has the authority — "Key of David" — implies control of David's domain — Jerusalem, the City of David, & the kingdom of Israel.

3. He alone can open doors that no one else can... and closes doors that no one can open.

3. The church in Philadelphia is struggling...

1. I am HOLY & TRUE...

2. I've got the keys... when you're struggling you need to know that JESUS is in CONTROL!

3. Hang w/ me, before we learn more about how this applies to our story... let's continue reading... In the remainder of this letter we see how Jesus brings commendation, command, counsel, & comfort to the church... all this without any critique/complaint.

4. **Commendation: 8** *"I know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can close. You have little strength, yet you obeyed my word and did not deny me.*

1. Jesus sees all you do...

1. This is encouraging for those who feel like (or even really do) serve in small/insignificant ways

2. Jesus sees... and He's the one who matters.

2. Jesus is the one who opens/closes doors — like the Psalmist says in **Psalm 75:6-7** *For exaltation comes neither from the east, Nor from the west nor from the south. 7 But God is the Judge: He puts down one, And exalts another.*

3. And what Jesus likes is simple... obeyed My Word... and did not deny me... they stick/stay with Jesus.

1. I like this...

2. VIDEO ILLUS

4. Just simply following JESUS... this is available to us all... walk through the doors he opens

1. Service/Evangelism

2. Opportunities. — **ILLUS** — Coldplay

5. **Counsel: 9** *Look, I will force those who belong to Satan's synagogue—those liars who say they are Jews but are not—to come and bow down at your feet. They will acknowledge that you are the ones I love. 10 "Because you have obeyed my command to persevere, I will protect you from the great time of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who belong to this world.*

1. The point of this is — reckoning... wrong being made right...

1. At this time for Jews/Jewish Christian believers, synagogue was the center of social/economic life

2. Christians were being shunned/put out of the synagogue b/c of their faith in Jesus

3. Isolated, disgraced, embarrassed, shunned

2. What does Jesus say...

1. Synagogue of Satan... calls them liars... says they will bow down at your feet... they will acknowledge that you are the ones I love...
2. I will protect you... from the great time of testing that will come upon the whole world.
3. The point of this is — a reckoning — wrong being made right...
 1. Now many Bible teachers/scholars see as more than just an immediate trouble...
 2. **(PP)** Warren Wiersbe, *“He would keep them from tribulation (Rev. 3:10). This is surely a reference to the time of tribulation that John described in Revelation 6—19, “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” This is not speaking about some local trial, because it involves “them that dwell on the earth” (see Rev. 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8). The immediate reference would be to the official Roman persecutions that would come, but the ultimate reference is to the tribulation that will encompass the earth before Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom. In many Bible scholars’ understanding, Revelation 3:10 is a promise that the church will not go through the tribulation, but will be taken to heaven before it begins (see 1 Thess. 4:13—5:11).”*
 3. I love the promise that Jesus will protect us from that great time testing to come!
6. **Command: 11** *I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take away your crown.*
 1. Hold on... Hang in there...
 2. This isn’t that someone is coming to like a thief to steal something valuable... but for you to miss out on what God has for you b/c you give in/give up...
 3. One author writes... *“Never forget that the man most likely to steal your crown is yourself. ‘Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life’ (Proverbs 4:23). You are in no greater danger from anyone or anything than from yourself.”*
 4. Be one who (like Greg Laurie shares)... just keeps showing up.
 1. **ILLUS** — Coastline BiFold
 2. We never get/stay healthy alone... we do it in community.
7. **Comfort: 12** *All who are victorious will become pillars in the Temple of my God, and they will never have to leave it. And I will write on them the name of my God, and they will be citizens in the city of my God—the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven from my God. And I will also write on them my new name. And, Jesus closes this little letter with that same caveat: 13 “Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.*
 1. Jesus says, all who are victorious:
 1. They will become pillars in the Temple of my God
 1. Guzik: *“The ancient city of Philadelphia suffered from frequent earthquakes. When a building collapsed in an earthquake often all that remained standing were the huge pillars. Jesus offers*

us this same strength, to remain standing in Him when everything around us crumbles. The pillar holds up the building. The only thing supporting the pillar is the foundation. True pillars in the church support the church, and they look to Jesus as their support foundation.”

2. Jesus' ability to connect the ppl is amazing!

2. Jesus says, they will never have to leave

1. B/c of the tremors from the earthquakes & the excommunication from the Jews these Christians most of undoubtedly felt unsettled & insecure

2. Jesus says, with me... you'll never have to leave...

3. Jesus says, they will be citizen of the city of my God — you'll have a permanent home...

4. Jesus says, they will have His name written on them

1. Guzik: *“This works together well with the image of a pillar. In the ancient world, having a special inscribed pillar added to one of the temples sometimes honored a faithful city servant or distinguished priest. “Philadelphia honored its illustrious sons by putting their names on the pillars of its temples, so that all who came to worship might see and remember.”*

2. I love the intimacy & identity this speaks of with Jesus.

2. When you're struggling... you need to know you're not alone & there will be end... Jesus Wins!

CONCLUSION:

1. As we close, we're reminded today that the book Revelation — is the revealing, the unpacking, the opening up of something to us

2. We see JESUS revealed in this book of Revelation & specifically here, in His love for the Church...

1. This church was challenged... but faithful in just — Sticking & Staying with Jesus

2. Jesus will right/wrongs... He will remain faithful... He can open/close doors... He is with us.

APPLICATION:

1. As we take communion this morning, may we be reminded of the simplicity & power of the Gospel

2. That Jesus is with us... may we simply stick & stay with Jesus.

EXHORTATION: This Spring, as we **GATHER** on Sundays & **GROUP** together during the week may we continue to **LEARN** & **LIVE** this truth that **JESUS LOVES CHURCH** ... so may be those who simply **LOVE JESUS** and **LOVE HIS PEOPLE!**