

## LETTER 6 **PHILADELPHIA**



### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

## PHILADELPHIA: **THE ENDURING CHURCH**

Revelation 3:7-13

#### **WORSHIP**

Read and meditate on Proverbs 3:1-18.

#### **FELLOWSHIP**

What is one thing you've learned about Christ as we've been studying Revelation 2-3? Is there a description or promise of Christ that has been particularly impactful to you?

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### **Read Revelation 3:7-13**

Philadelphia earned the name "Gateway to the East" for being at the crossing of multiple important trade routes. Not only were leather and textiles an important part of their economy, but so were their vineyards. The city worshipped the god Dionysus to gain a productive harvest, but Jewish believers worshipping Christ risked excommunication and non-Jewish believers risked being considered traitors. In 17 AD, an enormous earthquake devastated the city, and the hardship continued for 20 years. The church of Philadelphia experienced economic and spiritual persecution on multiple fronts.

1. How is this letter different from the other letters to the churches? What is Christ's attitude toward this church?
2. The church of Philadelphia faced persecution and financial difficulties, but still followed Christ (v.8). What things in your own life might tempt you to "deny his name"? How can we stay strong?
3. Compare the church of Philadelphia with Paul's example in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. Have you ever kept his word in a time when you had little strength? What is the relationship between our weakness and God's strength?
4. What kind of behavior or attitudes might have led Jesus to call some people a "synagogue of Satan" and "liars" (v.9)?
5. How do you understand Jesus' promises in verses 10-12? What does "Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown" (v.11) mean?
6. What is one way you can ground yourself in the promises, hope, and acceptance of Christ in the face of rejection or other challenges this week?

## **LETTER WRITING CHALLENGE**

Write a letter to a good friend.

## **PRAYER**

*Lord, thank You for being my great provider.*

*Thank You for being merciful in all circumstances.*

*Father, I ask that You would show me the ways in which I hide or lack trust in You.*

*Reveal to me ways in which I have been self-righteous and have belittled or thought less of others that are in Your church.*

*I ask for forgiveness for having little faith and little compassion.*

*Lord, change me to be a better friend to those around me and to follow You faithfully.*

*Thank You for being honest with me about what in my life needs to change and what in my life is honoring to You.*

*I thank You for Your mercy and transformative power.*

*Amen.*