

To the Saints of God at Topeka, Kansas

March 6, 2016

The Church at Philadelphia - Part 1

Rev. 3:7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.

9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

I. Philadelphia – “Brotherly Love” - Is an Important Aspect of the Church and the Bride of Christ

The Greek word “philadelphia”: 5360 φιλαδελφία philadelphia fil-ad-el-fee'-ah
AV-brotherly love 3, brotherly kindness 2, love of the brethren 1;

1) love of brothers or sisters, brotherly love

2) in the NT the love which Christians cherish for each other as brethren



The ancient city of Philadelphia was in the Roman province of Asia Minor. It was established in 189 B.C. by King Eumenes II of Pergamon. Eumenes II named the city for the love of his brother, who would be his successor, Attalus II, whose loyalty earned him the nickname, "Philadelphos", literally meaning "one who

loves his brother."



So how does it come to be that the U.S. has a major metropolis named Philadelphia, Pennsylvania? When William Penn received his charter for Pennsylvania from Charles II of England he named the City of Philadelphia (meaning "brotherly love") after the city in Revelation 3. Penn had experienced religious persecution and wanted his colony to be a place where anyone could worship freely despite their religion.

It was Penn's hope that his "Holy Experiment" would be found blameless at the Last Judgment. Fat chance. Philadelphia, PA gives "Philadelphia" a bad name. Probably very few of its millions of inhabitants even know about Christ's Church in Revelation three or remotely understand its significance. It is the 5th largest city in the U.S. and is one of the birthplaces of this country. Now, there is little in Philadelphia that bares any resemblance to the church in the Bible. It is full of gross sin, crime, and anything other than "brotherly kindness." You may recall the horrors of the abortion clinic in Philadelphia in 2013, where late term abortions took place. It was reported in court testimony that you could hear the screams of babies, that there was blood all over the clinic, that the doctor snipped the spinal cords of living babies after delivery and where they were baby parts stored in glass jars.

In the providence of God there is no mistake that this little church in Revelation was in a city named for "brotherly love." When I first contemplated this church I thought the expositors had gone a little overboard on this. That they took a lot of license in the brotherly love concept – just from the name of the city. The text itself does not say that the members had this, but in studying this church for many years, I believe the expositors are correct. Here is what Seiss says: *The church at*

Philadelphia shows no interminglings of evil...they were an exceptional band, joined by cords of loving fraternity. I believe that for Christ from the throne to pronounce that this church “had a little strength,” (which is a lot to say Beloved – compared to the church at Laodecia which He found to be wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked) that they did in fact have great love and affection for one another and were of one mind (AND, by implication they had NOT left their first love like the church at Ephesus). This love for the brethren is an amazing attribute of a true church of God. And, this is a major tenet of a New Testament church. It is a unique thing to have true brotherly kindness and affection that permeates a church. Philadelphia does not occur naturally in a church, in occurs only by the Holy Ghost spiritually. It goes against all human attributes of man. I turn your attention to what I for shorthand refer to as the New Testament Conflict Resolution document or my new title for it Philadelphia “Brother Kindness” Defined (see last pages). This is what good looks like in conduct and behavior between the members of a church of God where there is a CANDLESTICK.

Someone might say that the elders have spent a lot of sermons talking about how we are to treat each other. And, that is probably true. But we go where the Holy Ghost and the Word takes us. This topic is not a small and insignificant part of the New Testament. It is a large one – and one we better not gloss over if we intend to have a candlestick here. It is throughout the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation. I did not endeavor to preach about how we are supposed to treat each other when I undertook to speak about these seven churches. Look at where we are in the New Testament. We are at the end of the Bible. In Revelation we are talking about eschatology – the end of things. Christ is talking about the wrapping up of the human experiment, the destruction of this sinful race and its works, the bride (i.e., the church) preparing herself (including “philadelphia”), Christ returning to take His proper bride (i.e., the perfected church), the war with Satan and his army and Christ’s victory, Christ ascending to His proper throne and all things being under Him, and Christ with his bride, the church ruling from heaven during His millennial reign and thereafter. A proper functioning church with philadelphia is an important aspect of all of this.

II. A “Band of Brothers”

This brotherly love for one another reminds me of the concept of the love and camaraderie of soldiers in combat, that I loosely refer to as the “band of brothers.” Here is a social scientist’s description of it.

“Band of Brothers” - *It’s no surprise for anyone to find that soldiers fighting together on the front-line are tied together by a special relationship. They have to be. Soldiers need to know they can wholeheartedly depend on each other, put faith in the other’s ability. It’s not just about survival. It’s about comfort; knowing there’s someone close to you that can perfectly relate to the hell you’re going through. You’ll often hear warring bands of brothers speak of their unit as a “family,” but how deep or intense is this link? A study made by researchers who joined front-line warriors ... suggests that the bonds soldiers formed in times of great adversity were as strong as those they had with their own kin, literally.*

Right now, as I speak, there is a raging war between the Saint and Satan, and that so bloody a one, that the cruelest which ever was fought by men, will be found by sport and child’s play to this. Alas, what is the killing of bodies to the destroying of everlasting souls? The Christian in Complete Armour, William Gurnall.

2 Tim. 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus... the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

Beloved, we do not fight against Satan individually, we are supported by the host in heaven (an innumerable company of angels [Heb. 12:22] and perfected saints), on the ground we fight against “principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places” [Eph. 6:12] and we do so in groups of people called churches that make up a larger collective, called the Church/Bride whose Captain is Christ. We all are unified and have this “band of brothers” mentality that is consistent in every age with Christ’s experience and which forms a basis by which all church members in every age can identify with. A church with a proper candlestick is a cohesive unit of men and women that fight against the wiles of Satan, that all love each other deeply, without exception, without partiality, beyond human ties and who are truly and thoroughly committed to serving Christ though thick and thicker (thick and thin - alludes to penetrating a forest with both thick and sparse undergrowth – we do not have “thin” on this road – *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*) or you do not have a true church of Christ. **For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother** (Mark 3:35).

When we are *strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus* (2 Tim. 2:1) and we are close to one another in this church and focusing on one another and on our mission to preach these words (and not entangled with the affairs of this life) and are in close communion with Christ and doing His will, then we have a little strength.

III. The Church of One Accord

A few weeks ago Brother Steve preached on Eph. 4:3 *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. It was a wonderful sermon and he said at the beginning that “[A] *pastoral career could be spent on this subject*. He spent a lot of time drilling down and expounding Eph. 4 and it was very good. But, I would like to, in contrast, give you the 30,000 foot view, so you can see the depth of coverage in the New Testament of being likeminded and striving toward a single purpose. I believe this is one of the attributes of the church at Philadelphia that made it, through Christ, to have a little “strength” and be such an effective fighting unit and force against Satan.

The Holy Ghost comes at this issue of being like-minded in many different ways and in many different passages.

No.	Verse
1.	Ex. 24:3 - <i>And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.</i>
2.	Psalms 133:1 - <i>Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!</i>
3.	John 17:22 <i>That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.</i>
4.	Acts 1:14 - <i>These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.</i>
5.	Acts 2:1 - <i>And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.</i>
6.	Acts 2:46 <i>And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.</i>

7.	Acts 4:32 <i>And the multitude of them that believed <u>were of one heart and of one soul...</u></i>
8.	Acts 5:12 <i>... and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.</i>
9.	Acts 15:25 <i>It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul.</i>
10.	Rom. 12:5 <i>So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.</i>
11.	Rom. 12:16 <i><u>Be of the same mind one toward another.</u> Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.</i>
12.	Rom. 15:5 <i>Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:</i>
13.	Rom. 15:6 <i>That ye may with one mind and <u>one mouth</u> glorify God...</i>
14.	1 Cor. 1:10 <i>Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; <u>but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.</u></i>
15.	1 Cor. 3:3 <i>For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?...6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.</i>
16.	1 Cor. 12:4 <i>Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.</i>
17.	1 Cor. 12:25 <i>That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have <u>the same care one for another.</u></i>
18.	2 Cor. 13:11 <i>Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.</i>
19.	Gal. 3:28 <i>There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.</i>
20.	Eph. 4:2 <i>With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.</i>

21.	Eph. 4:12 <i>For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.</i>
22.	Eph. 4:15 <i>But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part...</i>
23.	Phil 2:1 <i>If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, ²Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, ...⁵Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.</i>
24.	Phil 3:15 <i>Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: ... let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.</i>
25.	Phil. 4:2 <i>I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.</i>
26.	1 Pet. 3:8 <i>Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.</i>
27.	1 Pet. 4:1 <i>Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind...</i>

Beloved, we must strive daily to: 1) have one voice, 2) dwell together in unity, 3) be one, 4) continue in one accord in prayer and supplication, 5) have gladness and singleness of heart, 6) be of one heart and one soul, 7) be one body in Christ and be members of one another, 8) be of the same mind and like-minded toward one another, 9) have one mouth to glorify God, 10) speak the same thing, 11) be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment, 12) have the same care for one another, 13) keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and, 14) have the same love for one another.

I will continue this discussion Lord willing next Sunday. I love you all. Amen.

**New Testament Conflict Resolution
Philadelphia (Brotherly Kindness) Defined**

Updated: 2/18/2016

Steps to Avoid and Resolve Conflict in the Church		
1.	BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY, SUBJECT TO ONE ANOTHER	<i>Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility (1Pet. 5:5-6). And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner (Luke 18:13). Humility – A feeling of insignificance and low in rank/importance/status. All members of the church should submit themselves to their fellow members, seek the opinions of others and count them better than their own and not be tenacious in their own way of thinking. See Mat 18:4.</i>
2.	BE OF THE MIND TO CONDESCEND TO WASH ONE ANOTHER’S FEET LIKE CHRIST	<i>After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded (John 13:5). Christ, as the Lord of All, for an example, condescended to wash the feet of the apostles and perform a servile and lowly function so he would teach them to behave in a spirit of humility and condescension to one another. This spirit was mutual to all the apostles and was to be daily and constantly practiced. <i>“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”</i> John 13:1-17.</i>
3.	ESTEEM EACH OTHER BETTER THAN YOURSELF	<i>Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves (Phil. 2:3). Be severe upon our own faults and charitable in our judgment of others. We must esteem the good which is in others above that which is in ourselves and thus peace, love and unity are preserved in the Church.</i>
4.	BE EASILY INTREATED, PEACEABLE, FULL OF MERCY	<i>But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy (Jas. 3:17). Easily intreated means to be open to the requests of others and to be easily persuaded. It is one who is ready to yield when truth requires him to do it, and who is willing to sacrifice his own convenience for the good of others. Those who are truly wise do what they can to preserve peace, that it may not be broken. They are gentle, moderate, and humane, so as that they bear, and forbear; they bear with the infirmities of the weak; readily forgive injuries done to them; cover them with the mantle of love.</i>
5.	LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF	<i>And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these (Mark 12:31). Men should love their neighbours, in</i>

		things temporal do them all the good they can, and do no injury to their persons or property; and in things spiritual pray for them, instruct them, and advise as they would their own souls, or their nearest and dearest relations.
6.	ABOVE ALL THINGS HAVE FERVENT CHARITY	<i>And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins</i> (1 Pet. 4:8). Charity is brotherly love, mutual/reciprocal affection, good will, and warm love for the saints. It must be constant and continual. Charity puts the best construction upon the words and actions of fellow Church members.
7.	NOT RENDERING EVIL FOR EVIL	<i>See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men</i> (1 Thes. 5:15). There is no retaliation or private vengeance. We are to do that which is good, benevolent, kind, just and generous at all times to all.
8.	PUT AWAY ALL PRIDE	<i>God resisteth the proud, but gives grace unto the humble</i> (James 4:6). <i>If everyone has great humility there will be no contention in the Church.</i> Pride makes men impatient of others opinions and impatient of competition and rivalry which is why there is contention in churches.
9.	BE SLOW TO WRATH, SLOW TO SPEAK, SWIFT TO HEAR	<i>Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God</i> (James 1:19-20). We should be slow to wrath and to govern and restrain our temper. We should be slow to listen to God and to the instruction of others. We should be slow to speak against what is heard, without thoroughly weighing and considering what is said.
10.	FORGIVE THOSE THAT TRESPASS AGAINST YOU 70x7	<i>Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven</i> (Mat. 18:21-22). <i>Forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses</i> (Mat. 6:14-15).
11.	ACT WITH BOWELS OF MERCIES, KINDNESS, HUMBLENESS OF MIND, MEEKNESS AND LONG SUFFERING	<i>Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye</i> (Col. 3:12-13). Bowels of mercies = a sympathizing spirit; Kindness = inward and tender mercy in act and exercise. Humbleness = looking upon yourself as the chiefest of all sinners. Meekness = quietly submitting to the will of God; Long Suffering – patiently bear evil words and is not easily provoked to wrath but puts up with injuries.

12.	BE KIND, TENDERHEARTED & FORGIVING	<i>And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Eph. 4:32). Kind = Courteous and polite in looks and words, not rough, crabbed or sour. Tenderhearted = having a heart disposed to pity, compassion and to show kindness to the faults of erring brethren.</i>
13.	IF A BROTHER IS TAKEN IN A FAULT YE THAT ARE SPIRITUAL RESTORE HIM IN MEEKNESS	<i>Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself (Gal 6:1-3). Gently tell our brother his fault with mild reproof and by speaking comfortably with the spirit of meekness not bearing hard upon them know you are subject to temptations.</i>
14.	DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM DO UNTO YOU	<i>Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets (Mat. 7:12).</i>
15.	HAVING UNITY OF THE SPIRIT; BEING OF ONE ACCORD AND HAVING THE SAME MIND	<i>With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:2-3). These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren (Acts 1:14). Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate... (Rom 12:16).</i>
16.	GO TO YOUR BROTHER DIRECTLY & TELL HIM HIS FAULT	<i>Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother (Mat 18:15). If your brother offends you in a private matter (in some considerable matter/not trivial), you must not rail behind his back; but go to him privately/directly and kindly tell him his fault. He should not be despised or ill-used. You should listen to his response, that he may have opportunity to acknowledge his offense or make reparation.</i>
17.	IF HE DOESN'T HEAR YOU, TAKE 1 OR 2 MORE WITH YOU	<i>But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established (Mat. 18:16). If he does not hear you, take 1 or 2 more, perhaps of weight and reputation and character who know something of the matter to bring the person to acknowledgement.</i>
18.	IF HE NEGLECTS TO HEAR THEM TELL IT TO THE CHURCH	<i>And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican (Mat 18:17). If he neglects to hear you and the witnesses, the last stage is to tell it to the church and make the whole body acquainted with it.</i>

