

Welcome To Sunday Night Bible Fellowship

Every word inspired.



Every word proclaimed.

“We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ.” Col 1:28

The Church at Philadelphia

“Little But Faithful”

Rev. 3:7-13

Feb.19, 2017

Seven Churches of Revelation

Chapters 2-3

- 1 Ephesus
- 2 Smyrna
- 3 Pergamos
- 4 Thyatira
- 5 Sardis
- 6 Philadelphia
- 7 Laodicea

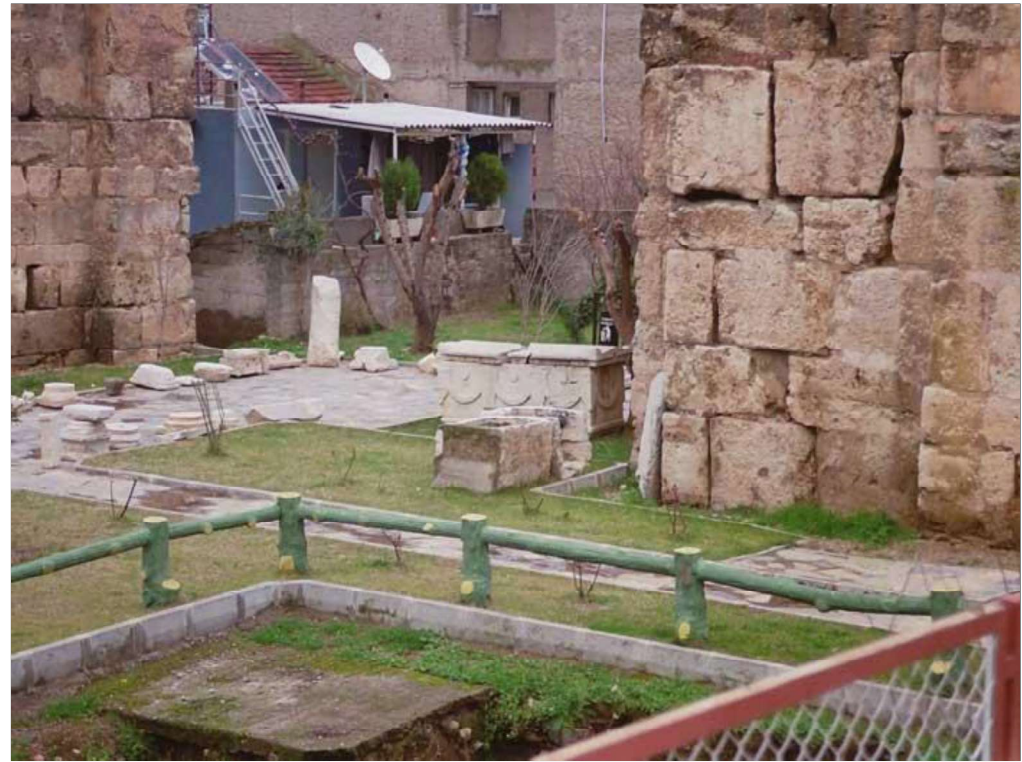
Island of Patmos: where John received the vision



Rev 3:7-13

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City of Philadelphia

1. Founded in 189 BC by Attalus, King of Pergamum. Called “Gateway to the East” because of the trade route passing through it. Philadelphia was on the Imperial Post Rd. which meant that letters, documents, and correspondence passed through this city on its way to the East. It was founded to promote Hellenism and Greek culture. It was founded to be a missionary of Greek culture and the Greek language to Lydia and Phrygia.



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2. It was named Philadelphia because of the King’s love and admiration for his brother, Eumenes. He thus became known as Attalus Philadelphus (lover of a brother) and he had the city named after him.
3. It became known for its grapes and wine because of the rich volcanic soil it was grown in.
4. Jews had a large synagogue here.
5. It was known as “little Athens” because of the many temples to the gods, Dionysus being the chief deity, the god of the vine and wine.
6. Philadelphia was located on the Anatolian fault and in 17 A.D. was leveled along with Sardis by an earthquake. The after-shocks continued for years and many of the people moved out of the city and lived in tents, shacks, etc.

The Church at Philadelphia

1. Nothing is known about its past or origin but probably received the gospel from Ephesus.
2. Very small church, maybe 100 – 200.

Luke 12:32

32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

3. Christ gave no criticism or reproof of the church, only commendations.
4. Contrast this church with the church of Sardis – neither church was condemned for false teachers, false doctrine, etc. but Sardis let it all happen and was dead and Philadelphia did not let it happen and was alive.
5. The church existed in a less than ideal environment – earthquakes, idolatry, hostile Jews.

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“He Who is holy”

1. **αγιος** – to be wholly separate from sin.
2. God alone is holy.

Isa 6:3

"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts,
The whole earth is full of His glory."

Job 6:10

10 "But it is still my consolation,
And I rejoice in unsparing pain,
That I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

Ps 71:22

2 I will also praise You with a harp,
Even Your truth, O my God;
To You I will sing praises with the lyre,
O Holy One of Israel.

Hab 3:3

3 God comes from Teman,
And the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah.
His splendor covers the heavens,
And the earth is full of His praise.

Mark 1:24

24 saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth?
Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!"

John 6:69

69 "We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."

3. It is the attribute of God that is the foundation for all of the other of His attributes.
4. Using the word "holy" to describe other objects rather than God, diminishes the person of God as the only one who is separate from sin.
 - "Holy mackerel"
 - "Holy cow"
 - "Holy smoke"
 - "Holy moly"

“Who is true”

1. **αληθινος** – that which is true, reality, real, genuine, authentic. (Jn. 14:6)
2. God speaks only that which is the truth.
3. There is no falsehood in Him.
4. Therefore He can be trusted to give a true and right evaluation of a church.

“key of David”

1. Isa 22:22

"Then I will set the key of the house of David on his (Eliakim) shoulder,
When he opens no one will shut,
When he shuts no one will open.

2. David represents the messianic kingdom.
3. Keys represent 2 things:
 - authority
 - control
4. Christ has the authority and control over:
 - Who gets into the kingdom and who does not.
 - Who gets blessed and who does not.
 - Who gets into heaven and who does not.

Rev 1:17-18

17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last,

18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

“Who opens and no one shuts and Who shuts and no one opens”

1. Here is the Lord Jesus Christ declaring His sovereign power to control every and all situations, all persons involved with those situations, and determining the outcomes of all situations and events.
2. No one can shut a door that Christ opens and no one can open a door that He shuts.

Acts 16:6-10

- 6 They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;
- 7 and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them;
- 8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.
- 9 A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
- 10 When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

1 Cor 16:5-9

- 5 But I will come to you after I go through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia;
- 6 and perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go.
- 7 For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits.
- 8 But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost;
- 9 for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Col 4:2-3

- 2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;
- 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ,

1 Thess 2:18

- 18 For we wanted to come to you — I, Paul, more than once — and yet Satan hindered us.

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1. Here is the Lord Jesus Christ declaring His sovereign power to control every and all situations, all persons involved with those situations, and determining the outcomes of all situations and events.
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3. That has massive implications to individual believers, churches, and mission agencies.



Open doors today which had been shut: Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary

Closed door: Albania, on the shores of the Adriatic.

- most closed country in the world to the gospel.
- Christians are forbidden to practice their faith there.
- No churches are allowed.
- It is a tightly closed door.

Rev 3:7-13

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10 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.'

11 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.'

12 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.'

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What was the church at Philadelphia doing right?

1. Good works.
2. Depending on God for power in their weakness.

2 Cor 12:10

10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

3. Obedient to God's Word.
4. Did not deny His name.

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Who are real Jews?

Rev 2:9

9 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Rom 2:28-29

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter;

John 8:44

44 "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

- They were physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob but they were not spiritual descendants.
- They were physically circumcised but not spiritually circumcised.
- They had the circumcision of the flesh but not the circumcision of the heart.
- According to the NT, a true Jew is one who is both a physical descendant of Jacob as well as a one who has believed in the Messiahship of Jesus.
- These unbelieving Jews will one day be involved in "Operation Footstool".

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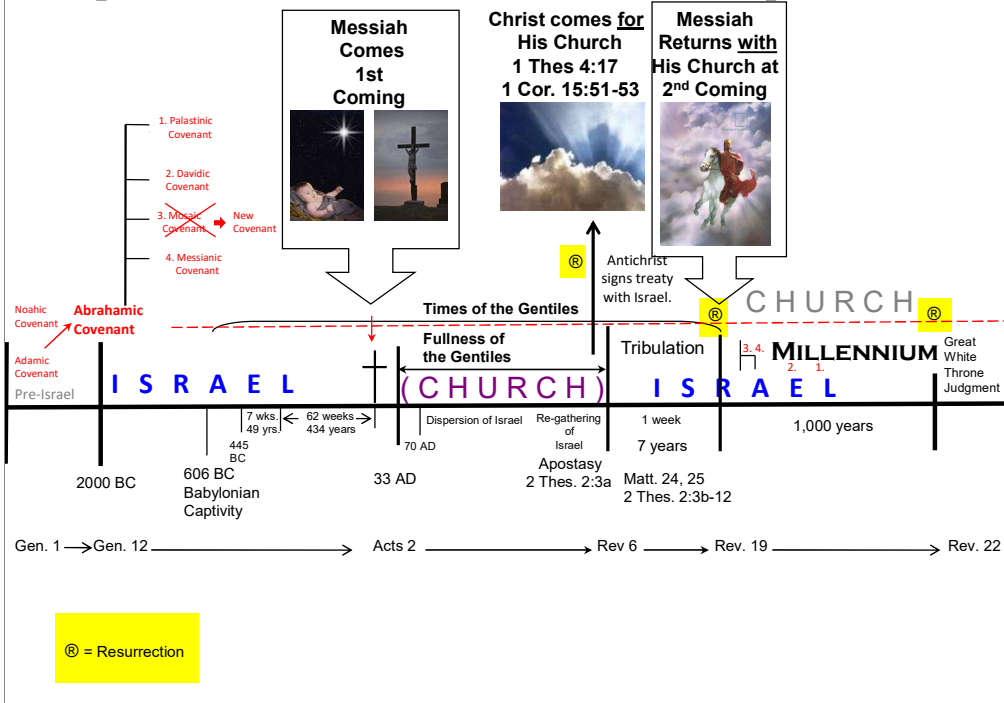
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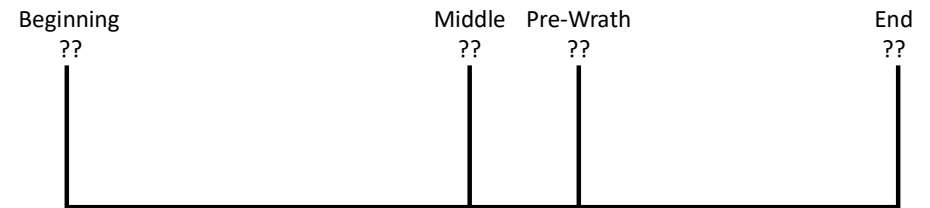
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Comprehensive Biblical View of Future Prophetic Events



When is the Church removed from the earth?

7 year Tribulation



10 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.'

1. "will" – still future.
2. "keep from"

"keep from or out"

τερειω εκ

"τερειω" - to keep, to withhold

- not αιρειω εκ – to lift out or take out
- "τερειω" – is not a motion verb but a static verb.
ex. "Keep out of the reach of children"

"εκ" – from, out of

- not "τερειω εν" – to keep in
- not "τερειω δια" – to keep through

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1. "will" – still future.
2. "keep from"
3. "the" – specific
4. "hour" – definite time period, not permanent.
5. "testing" – to test, temptation, to put on trial, to expose.
6. "whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" - unbelievers

"... whole world to test those who dwell on the earth"

Rev 6:10

10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Rev 8:13

13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth,

Rev 11:10

10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

Rev 13:8

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Rev 13:8,12-14

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

12 He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.

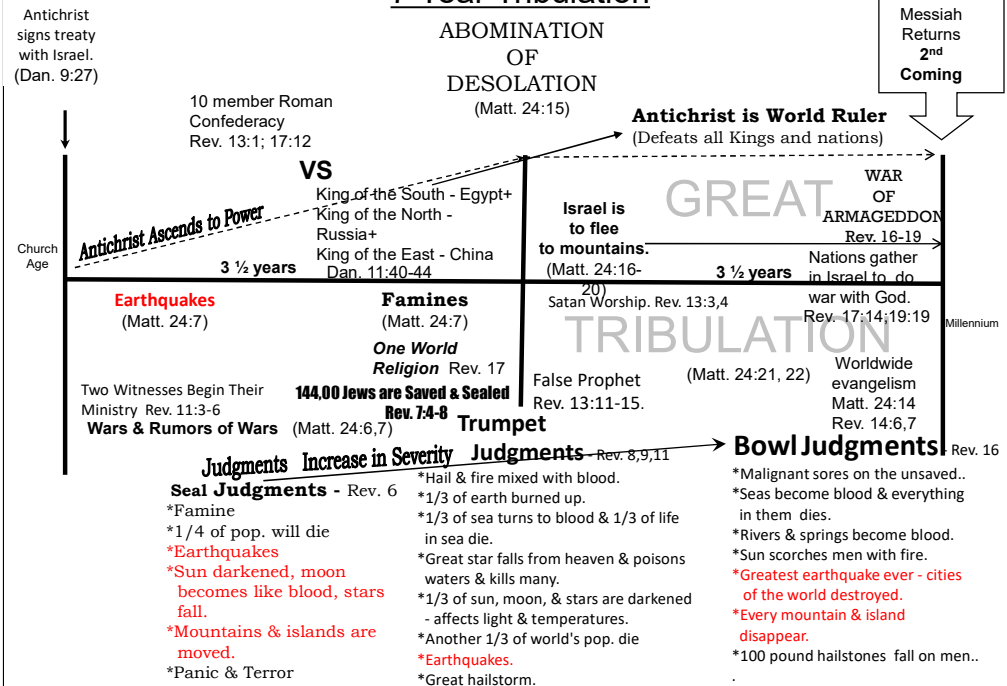
14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

Rev 17:2

2 with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."

** During the Tribulation believers are being killed on a massive scale (Rev. 6:9-11+; 11:7+; 12:11+; 13:7+, 15+; 14:13+; 17:6+; 18:24+). Therefore Rev. 3: 10 cannot be a promise to keep believers safe in or through the Tribulation.

7 Year Tribulation



1 Thess 1:10

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 Thess 5:9-10

9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.

Notice: Christ does not specify how church-age believers will be kept from the Tribulation.

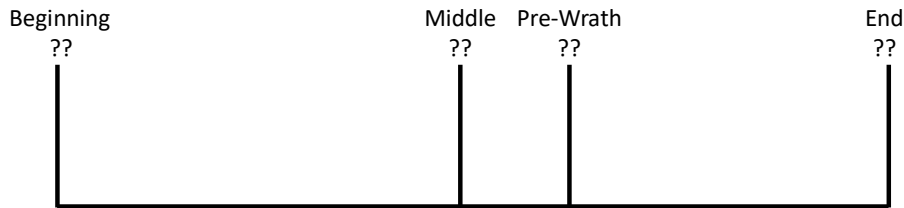
Only 2 ways:

1. Most will be kept from the Tribulation by physical death.
2. The final generation of believers will escape the tribulation by Rapture.

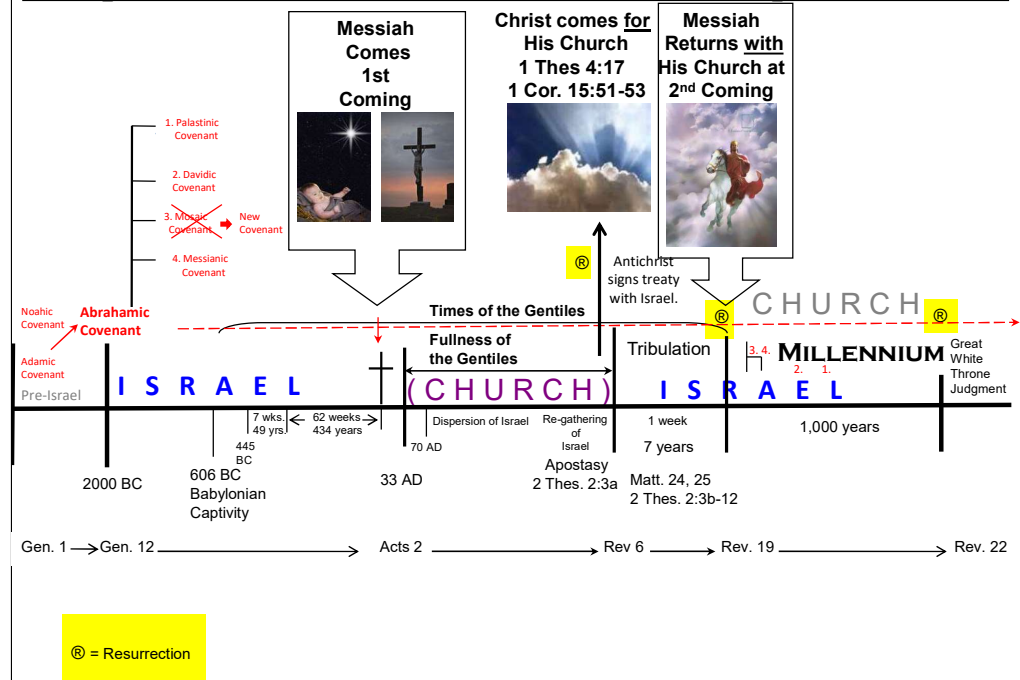
******Christ fulfilled His promise to the Philadelphian Christians by means of physical death.

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The Four Crowns of Scripture



The Crown of Righteousness

- 2 Tim. 4:6-8
- 1 Cor. 9:24-27

Faithfulness for fighting the good fight.



The Crown of Life

- James 1:12
- Rev. 2:10

Faithfulness in trials.



The Crown of Joy

- 1 Thes. 2:19
- Phil. 4:1

Faithfulness in evangelism & making disciples.



The Crown of Glory

- 1 Pet. 5:1-4
- 1 Cor. 3:12-15

Faithfulness in shepherding the flock of God.

5 promises to the believer at Philadelphia:

1. He will be a pillar in the temple.

"In Philadelphia, if a magistrate, or a philanthropist, or a benefactor had done something unusually fine and good for the city, they commemorated him, they memorialized him by erecting a pillar in one of the temples upon which they inscribed his name."

- Pillars are a sign of strength and permanence.

Gal 2:9

9 and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars,

1 Tim 3:15

15 but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.



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Rev 21:22

22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

2. He will not go out from it anymore.

- We will never be separated from God. We are eternally secure. Forever.

3. He will have the name of God on him.

- His name on us shows ownership – we eternally belong to Him.

4. He will have the New Jerusalem written on him.

- Our citizenship is in the New Jerusalem.

5. He will have written on him Christ's new name.

- God not only owns you but Christ also owns you.

Rev 19:11-12

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

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Stop!

Look!

Listen!

Hear what the Spirit is saying!

Think through these letters.



Steve Green

The son of missionary parents, Steve was raised in South America. "My initial recognition of need for Christ was at age 8 while attending a boarding school in Argentina. On a Sunday afternoon, I knelt by my bed and prayed, trusting Jesus as my Savior. However, that was just the beginning of a grace-filled journey. Today the gospel is more precious to me than ever. I realize that God's grip on me far surpasses my ability to hold on to Him."

Following a significant spiritual awakening, Steve and Marijea began responding to invitations from churches all over America. "Looking back on it," Steve recalls, "I'm amazed at God's patience and condescending love. In my case it is certainly true that He seems to delight in choosing the least likely to be used in His Kingdom. I was full of zeal and determined to get it all right, but blind to much self-righteousness and pharisaical pride. Thank God for His mercy!"

Steve desires the kind of spiritual growth that J. C. Ryle describes. "When I speak of a man growing in grace, I mean simply this – that his sense of sin is becoming deeper, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, his love more extensive, his spiritual mindedness more marked."

"Twenty-seven years is a significant marker," Steve muses. "I've been able to communicate the gospel in almost 50 countries around the world, and as God gives grace and strength, I look forward to many years to come. There are more songs to record, more people who need to hear God's truth and more segments of our culture to be redeemed for God's glory."

Steve knows that God's grace is most clearly seen against the backdrop of his own foolishness, sin and shame. While he labored most his life to have an impressive record, he now confesses his need for the perfect record of another. "That's why I desperately need Jesus," Steve says. "In the end it will be clear that He alone is the hero of not only my story, but of all our stories."

On a mission trip to South America Steve heard part of a song that Jon Mohr was working on... "may all who come behind us find us faithful." The song would become an anthem for the church, giving voice to our common desire to finish the race well.

"Find Us Faithful"

1. We're pilgrims on the journey
Of the narrow road
And those who've gone before us line the way
Cheering on the faithful, encouraging the weary
Their lives a stirring testament to God's sustaining grace
2. Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses
Let us run the race not only for the prize
But as those who've gone before us
Let us leave to those behind us
The heritage of faithfulness passed on through godly lives
3. After all our hopes and dreams have come and gone
And our children sift through all we've left behind
May the clues that they discover and the memories they uncover
Become the light that leads them to the road we each must find

CHORUS:

Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion light their way
May the footprints that we leave
Lead them to believe
And the lives we live inspire them to obey
Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful