

## Group/Individual Study

Series - Dear Church: Letter to the church of Philadelphia

REFLECT on the message heard on Sunday, 11/11

### To Discouraged Christians

1. Do you remember experiencing an actual earthquake or other natural disasters, as the Philadelphian Christians did? How did it impact your sense of security?
2. Have you ever been discouraged when one thing after another seems to go wrong in life? What helped you?
3. Jesus tells these discouraged people, hammered by earthquakes, bad government, persecution, and more, some very encouraging things:
  - First he tells them that he is the “true” one, meaning he will stay true and faithful. He will not betray them. How would this encourage you if you were in their situation?
  - Next he tells them he “knows your works.” How is it encouraging to a suffering, persecuted minority to hear that God knows what good they are doing?
  - He promises them that they will be “pillars.” How was this an image of comfort particularly to these people?
  - Then he says he will write on them three things: The name of God, the name of the city of God, and Jesus’ own heavenly name. It’s a poetic way of reminding them what to “tattoo” on their hearts. The worship of the true God, the hope of the eternal city, and the love of Jesus for us is where we find our strength. How is this a comfort to suffering people?
4. If you have undergone times of suffering, what particularly was it about your faith that was important for your endurance? Does it relate to any of the things Jesus tells the Philadelphians here?
5. What can Christ’s words tell us about how to pray for and comfort those going through times of trouble?
6. How does it encourage you to know that this tiny band of suffering Christians became a consistent witness of Christ, sending missionaries to the world for centuries after this was written?