

## The Church at Philadelphia was a Faithful Church

### I. The Faithful Church

A) Jesus analyzes this church (v. 8) – Just as He has done for the others – And this is what He found:

#### 1) Jesus Found the Church was Obedient

- a) When He had presented an open door to them – They went through it
- b) What was this open door? – We aren't told – Perhaps it was an opportunity for a mission outreach  
The time for this opportunity was limited – And they needed to act upon it

This is what happened to me when they built a new prison at Rush City, MN – 2 other people went with me for about 2 years to minister Jesus to the inmates – The I moved from Cambridge and the opportunity was closed

For the church at Philadelphia, they had a desire to be obedient to the Lord

#### 2) Jesus Found the Church was Small

- a) That's what makes this especially important because they were just a small church – A little power
- b) The church was a small congregation with limited resources
- c) This flies right in the face of today's philosophy — **If you're not large – You're not effective**  
But Jesus does not criticize them for their size – In fact this is the only statement about church size that Jesus made to any of the churches
- d) Rather, you see the church's faith in action  
When presented with an open door – They went through it – Even though they probably didn't have the resources to do it!

They knew what it was to live by faith – “For we walk by faith, and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7)

#### 3) Jesus Found the Church Held True

- a) They had kept the word of Christ (v. 8)  
They hadn't given into the liberal thinkers of the day that deny that the Scriptures are the inerrant Word of God  
  
They were present then as they are today
- b) They also had not denied His name – They held to a personal faith in Jesus  
They preached and taught and experienced personal salvation  
This comes to anyone who will repent of their sins and receive Christ as their Savior  
This church stood against all other forms of salvation

#### 4) Jesus Found the Church Persevered (v. 10)

- a) This is commendable when you consider that that there was opposition against them (v. 9)
- b) This synagogue of Satan is the gathering of false Jews who persecuted the true way of Salvation
- c) There is going to be opposition against any church that is seeking to expand the Kingdom of God  
Christian Free Lutheran

But this little church stood true in spite of the opposition – This was an open door that no one could shut  
Regardless of how bleak the outlook and how hard the path – They went forward

Perseverance is a valuable trait

Napoleon Hill, who studied the lives of many successful people, stated, “I had the happy privilege of analyzing both Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, year by year, over a long period of years, and therefore the opportunity to study them at close range, so I speak from actual knowledge when I say that I found no quality except persistence, in either of them, that even remotely suggested the major source of their stupendous achievements.”

It was because they were true to Jesus that He could open a door for them

He could trust them – Jesus is true to those who are true to Him – **Individually and corporately**

So Jesus Promises this Little Church Great Blessings

## **II The Faithful Lord**

### **A) Christ Will Make Them Useful (v. 8)**

- 1) He will open a door of opportunity – Nothing will be able to close it – Because Jesus uses the Power of God
- 2) Note how He describes Himself to this little Church (v. 7)

He who is Holy – Perfect in His Character – Spotless in His Perfection

He is True – Everything He is and says is absolute Truth – It is beyond His very character to bring any falsehood

He has the Key of David – Picture of Kingly authority

This is an allusion to Isa. 22:22 – Where Eliakim was a trusted man and given the key to the palace

Now Jesus stands as exercising Kingly Authority

He demonstrates this as the One opening and Keeping Open this door (vv. 7-8) – Jesus has greater power than all His foes – Because He is the Lord

### **B) Christ Will Confess Them and Fight Against their enemies (v. 9)**

- 1) To this faithful church – The faithful Lord opposes their opposition for them! – **I WILL MAKE!**
- 2) The best way to fight spiritual battles is to be faithful to the Lord and let Him fight for you  
Gideon took on a vast army of Midianites with only 300 people and won

Notice here that the very people who opposed the church are the ones who will turn around and honor them! – **I WILL MAKE!**

Then they will know that it is Jesus who loves them – Only church that Jesus said this to was this small, faithful church

### **C) Christ will keep them from severe testing (v. 10)**

- 1) Jesus warned them of a coming time of persecution and testing –  
Not speaking about the rapture here – But of some fierce persecution that would come
- 2) Because this church was faithful to Jesus – He would keep them from this severe testing  
That might happen through their physical death – One way that the Lord does it  
It also might mean to remove all fear in the face of even the greatest persecution

Nikki Cruz held a switchblade to the throat of David Wilkerson and said, “I’m gonna cut you in a thousand pieces” – To which David replied, “And very piece will still tell you that Jesus Loves You” – **God removed all fear**

It also might mean that the Lord would keep them free from this persecution

### **D) Christ Will Give Them Eternal Rewards (v. 12)**

- 1) They will be a pillar in the Temple of God – Inner Sanctuary
  - a) A Pillar is permanent – It does not go in and come out
  - b) A pillar is a symbol of prominence & strength & beauty

This is a timely word to this church because a massive earthquake hit in AD 17 and virtually leveled 12 cities in the province of Asia, and was especially severe in Philadelphia

Now Jesus promises to not have these people go through this kind of destruction again, but to be absolute pillars in the future Kingdom of God

2) A New Name – Names in Hebrew reflect upon the character of what the person is or what the person should be

a) Jesus promises that these people would receive a 3-fold new name:

The Name of My God – The Father Almighty – To Have Him be Your own Heavenly Father – You are His Child

The Name of the New City – New Jerusalem – The City of Peace, the City of God – The eternal dwelling of God and Man – It will be written upon you as you will be a citizen of this place

My New Name – Christian – Meaning Christ within – One redeemed by Christ and are now His very Temple

## CONCLUSION

Do you hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the church – Our Church?

Philadelphia was a Church that was Faithful to Christ

They were obedient – Lived By Faith – Held True – Persevered – Even though they were small

Therefore, Jesus was faithful to Them – Of all the churches addressed here – This one received No Words of Condemnation from the Lord – No complaints

He spoke words of adoration to them – Know that I have Loved You – Not spoken to any other church as well

This church was the greatest in Jesus' evaluation – Even though it was small – Because they remained true to Him

Therefore, Jesus would provide for them an open door of opportunity – Fight their battles – Keep them from testing – Give them rewards in eternity

Is this not an encouragement for us as well – Small church that remains true to the Lord?

Then hear the Lord's exhortation to Philadelphia and us (**v. 11**)

Can we then pray that the Lord would show us what open door He is setting before us?