

The 6th Church: Philadelphia

The ancient city of Philadelphia is on the site modern city of Alysir in Turkey. It was named after Attalus Philadelphia, the King of Pergamon. The city is best known for its Greek meaning “the City of Brotherly Love.” From a prophetic perspective, the church in Philadelphia represents the church from the beginning of the 19th century to the Rapture of the Church. This church age represents the modern church age of the spread of the Gospel around the World. This church and the one at Smyrna are the only churches not to have anything against them.

The Designation of the Church:

As Jesus has so far in all churches, He greets them by describing Himself in terms of an attribute: “These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.’”

- 1) Jesus is _____: “Holy” means set apart for a unique use- specifically, to be set apart for God. By GRACE, Jesus calls us to be Holy, just He is Holy. (1 Peter 1:13-15)
- 2) Jesus is _____: it is a reference to His Genuineness. He is not Holy, set apart without sin wholly unto God, but He is true, genuine, full of integrity. “I am the Way , the TRUTH, and the Life...”
- 3) Jesus is _____: the reference here is to “having the key of David.” It comes from Isaiah 22:22. Eliakim was given authority over the treasure of the King and the power to open and shut the door. Figuratively speaking, it’s the door to salvation opened by Jesus’ death, which no person can shut -salvation is secured through relationship with Jesus. It also says “what He shuts no one can open.” In other words, once the door is closed by Jesus, no one can open it-judgement is assured. The message is one of sovereign authority and power.

The Diagnosis of the Church:

Jesus gave the Church 4 commendations

- 1) They have an _____: Remember Jesus' words about Himself, that He has the key by which to open and close doors? This metaphor of an open door has particular relevance to the Church at Philadelphia: She was a gateway city to a larger region that included other cities. Christ was reminding them that they were in a strategic location for ministry. What doors He opens no man can shut! And the same is true for every church that will pray for Him to open doors for it.
- 2) They have "_____": a weird commendation but one nonetheless. Jesus presents their situation as almost problematic: "You have a big opportunity but only a little strength." Their strength is not important but His! 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My STRENGTH is made perfect in weakness." This is the message for all the churches in all the ages. What we do in our strength has no staying power, but what Christ does for us in His strength will last for eternity!
- 3) They have kept _____: What is the one thing responsible for the erosion of biblical standards in the Church? When we stop preaching the Word. When we don't know what God desires or what His Standards are, We cant keep them. One of the reasons why the church at Philadelphia was blessed was because of their faithfulness to His word.
- 4) They have not denied _____: they were faithful both the Word of the Lord and the Lord Himself. They would not participate in idol worship so common in their day even in the face of persecution.

Jesus' Promises to the Church:

- 1) Jesus promises to _____: The same group that attacked the church in Smyrna was attacking them: Jews or people who claimed to be Jews and serving God under false pretenses. Jesus says, "I will them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you."

- 2) Jesus promises that He will _____: This is the primary verse for a "Pre-Tribulation" Rapture. It make sense as we look at the rest of the book: the Church is only mentioned in chapters 1-4, but never again. The rest of the book is about the Tribulation. The "Hour of Trial" can be translated hour of testing. It is a reference to the 7 year tribulation that will precede Jesus Second Coming.

- 3) Jesus promises to come "_____": "Quickly" doesn't mean immediately as we think of time. This is not a reference of _____ but _____. 1 Corinthians says, "...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet." It will happen quickly in a moment of time.