

PHILADELPHIA, THE REVIVING CHURCH

Revelation 3:7-13

Introduction:

- A. Our last lesson concerned the “dead church.” True churches had been forced into hiding by the cruel, tortuous execution of the Jezebel of Christianity – the Roman Catholic Church – against all who dared to oppose her idolatry and false teachings.
- B. All the world could see of the Christian movement was the Roman Catholic Church and her idolatry and false teachings and practices.
- C. After centuries of persecutions, truth began to make itself known within the folds of this monstrous thing that had corrupted and controlled Christianity for centuries.
- D. God began to raise up preachers and teachers within the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church who search and found the truth and began to challenge the teachings and practices of their own religion.
- E. John Wycliffe was born in 1324. Although he was a Roman Catholic, he recognized much of the church’s teachings and practices were contrary to the Scriptures. He spent his adult life working to correct these errors. He recognized the need for the common man to have a Bible he could read and interpret under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Although he was able to live out his life, after his death the Catholic priests dug up his body, burned the bones and drown them in the river. He was never a member of a true church, but God used him greatly to get the truth into the hands of the common man.
- F. Then came Martin Luther, who was born in 1483. He was a member of the Roman Catholic Church who studied the Scriptures and concluded that justification before God was by faith. He also preached against the indulgences and the excesses of the priests. He published a book contending for a change in the observances of communion; and another book, “Against Masses and the Consecration of Priests.” While carrying on this work of the Reformation, he was also combating the ANABAPTIST and other fanatical sects which had taken advantage of his contest with the Church of Rome to establish themselves in several places. Just before he died in his sixty-third year, *he admonished those that were about him to pray to God for the propagation of the Gospel, because, said he, the Council of Trent and the Pope will devise strange things against it.* He lived and died a Roman Catholic, but his life’s work did much to bring the true churches out of hiding to carry the truth around the world.
- G. William Tyndale, an Englishman lived and died a Roman Catholic; but he spent his life standing against popery and in making it possible for the common man to know the Bible. He translated the Bible into the English language. Once in a dispute with a high church man he said, “I defy the pope, and all his laws; and if God will spare my life for many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scripture than the pope.” This statement and his translation of the Bible into common man’s English earned him a martyr’s death. He was burned at the stake in 1536.
- H. Many more names, such as George Fox, John Bunyan, John Wesley, could be added to the list of non-Baptist who rose up against the evils of the Church of Rome. Their actions relieved much of the pressure against the true churches permitting them to again worship and serve openly.

- I. This time was also marked with true churches and Protestants moving west to the new world and some on to India and China.
- J. The dead church was coming alive. And from that time until now, 2008, the true gospel has continued to be carried into the entire world.
- K. Let us learn some practical lessons from this letter.

I. LEARN THAT THE LORD HAS SET BEFORE EACH OF HIS CHURCHES AN OPEN DOOR WHICH NO MAN CAN CLOSE.

- A. The door of witnessing is open wide to the Lord's true churches. We have the freedom to witness wherever we go. Each of us has that freedom.
- B. Since our lives are a great means of witnessing, no man can close the door against our witnessing.
- C. We alone control our witnessing; the door is open. We must enter and serve.

II. LEARN THAT CHRIST RECOGNIZES FAITHFULNESS IN HIS PEOPLE.

- A. V. 8 I know thou hast a little strength. The martyred church had a little strength. She had kept His Word and not denied His Name even when it cost their lives.
- B. This establishes the most important thing in the life of a church. A church may grow weak in numbers, but as long as she keeps the Word of God and holds up the name of Jesus Christ, He still claims her as His.

III. LEARN THAT THE LORD WILL CAUSE THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TO KNOW HIS LOVE FOR HIS TRUE CHURCH.

- A. Since the beginning of the church age, there have been true churches and false churches. The Roman Catholic Church and all of Protestantism are false churches; local churches that hold firmly to the teaching of the Bible are true.
- B. Jesus calls the false churches "the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie."
- C. Jesus Christ will cause all false religions to come and confess that they were false and the true churches are the only true churches.
- D. Jesus shall cause all to know that He loves His true churches.

IV. LEARN THAT JESUS SHALL KEEP HIS PEOPLE FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPATION. V. 10

- A. There is coming a time of temptation – testings. The tribulation, the great.
- B. Because of the faithfulness, Jesus promises to keep true churches from the time of temptations and testings.
- C. "Ek" is the Greek preposition translated "from." "Ek" is translated 25 different ways – of, from, out of, through.
- D. The language can mean – He keeps us from; He keep or preserves us through; He takes us out of.
- E. Jesus prayed to the Father concerning His church He was leaving in the world (John 17:15). *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.* We know for sure Jesus asked the Father to preserve His people through all the evil that would come upon them in the world.
- F. The language of verse 10 can be interpreted both ways and is best understood as it harmonizes with other teachings of this subject.

**V. LEARN SOMETHING CONCERNING THE SECOND COMING
OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. Vs. 11, 12**

A. When He comes, He will come quickly.

**B. His people need to hold fast that which the Lord has given us – His truth and His charges.
There will be no opportunity to make amends when He comes. Failure to hold fast can
cost us crowns of rewarding.**

C. There are special blessings awaiting His people who are overcomers.

**VI. LEARN THAT THE LORD CHARGES HIS TRUE CHURCHES
TO HEAR WHAT HE HAS SAID TO THE CHURCHES.**