

Introduction

1. These 7 churches very different.
2. Things which the Lord praises.
3. Things which He blames – with warnings
DOCTRINE: The church's duty is to take care to please Christ –
not to please man.

1. PHILADELPHIA WAS AN EXEMPLARY CHURCH

- 1) No adverse criticism – perhaps a mild reproof.
- 2) They had kept to the Bible: v.8, 10.
OBSERVE: Churches come under pressure to change – because truth is spiritual.
ILLUSTRATION: the F.C. in Victorian times – see article by Iain Murray in new book.
- 3) They had weathered a storm of criticism from those who were unfaithful: v.9
OBSERVE: Christ sees when we are faithful in times of criticism + He will one day put all persons + things in their places: v.9
APPLICATION: Christ uses judgmental language and not politically-correct talk. O let us learn from this!

2. PHILADELPHIA WAS A BLESSED CHURCH

- 1) I do not think "great" ("a little strength")
- 2) But they had been faithful, where many had not been (v.8)
OBSERVE: You can only be faithful to Christ if you DO what is right – not mere talk.
ILLUSTRATION: "Talk-Talk"

- 3) The Blessing I refer to is this "Open Door" – not the only one here: see v.10: protection; v.12: marvelous!!
- 4) What "open doors" do we long for?
 - (i) The OPEN DOOR of conversation
 - Only Christ can open the heart: Lydia
 - Our adherents + young people.
 - The old gospel in its saving power
APPLICATION: Let us pray for this!
 - (ii) The OPEN DOOR of USEFULNESS
 - To be a blessing in the community
 - Doors of service into people's lives
 - To see new people rejoicing in Christ
APPLICATION: O pray for it!
 - (iii) The OPEN DOOR of FAVOUR
 - People who are spiritually hungry say, "There is my home".
 - Non-churched people ready to say, "They are real Christians."
APPLICATION: Pray that it be so!

CONCLUSION

1. That is what we want here and now.
2. That is what we want if God gives us a new building

PSALM

118:1 – 6

118: 7 – 9

118: 19 – 23

118: 27 - 29