

Each one of these seven letters that John was to send to the seven churches in Asia, ends with the words: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. These letters are for all the churches and all the people of God in every age. Conditions that existed in the seven churches have been found in all the ages of the church and will be found until the coming of the Lord. Hence, it is very profitable to read and to understand what God is saying to us.

We come now, to the Sixth Church, the church at Philadelphia. This city was among the cluster of seven churches in what is now western Turkey who received letters from Jesus. The city had numerous earthquakes which caused terrible trials to the population. It was a church of which Christ had nothing bad to say. But let us read the words:

“7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is new Jerusalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him my new name*.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Re 3:7-13)

----- Let us examine the words. There are three things to speak of: I. The Description of Christ; II. The Good Things Of This Church III. The Wonderful Promises.

I. The Description of Christ. Vs. 7.

A. He is holy and true.

1. Holy: There is nothing defiling in Him. Jesus is pure throughout and there is no unrighteousness in Him.
 - a. There is none of His own words. Joh 12:49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

- b. There is none of His own works. John 8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.
- c. There is none of His own honor: John 8:54 Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:
2. True. Words, works, honor No one was ever commissioned by God as was Jesus when he came and lived among us. His words, His works, His honor are true through and through; there is no puffery in them; nothing artificial and of the world. He said, “I am not of the world.”
3. His words [None of them will be found to be manipulative or false], works [None of them will be found to be other than the apostles recorded them to be], and honor is like gold tried in the fire. [Lance Armstrong—fleeting, phony honor.]

B. He has the key of David.

1. This is from a reference to the key of the Temple being taken from the wicked Shebna and given to the faithful Eliakim. This is a prophecy of Christ, who would have authority over the Temple of the Lord. The Temple of David which Solomon built of materials gathered by David passed into the control of Eliakim, a figure of Christ.
2. Christ is the head of all the churches: He opens and shuts and no man can hinder Him. Amen and Amen.

II. The Good Things About.

A. Their witness: vs. 8

1. They had maintained their profession: Not denied His Name. Confessing Church.
2. They had maintained their obedience: Kept His Word.

B. Their patience. Vs.9, 10

1. They had maintained their adoption: against the Jews and their persecution. The key of David had passed to Christ, but the Jews denied this They would be vindicated by Christ
2. They had endured tribulation.
 - a. No Christian escapes this testing and tribulation. The world is not tested and tried; only Christians are, for they profess the true gold of faith, which must be tested. The world has no gold to test.
 - b. Christ will keep them during this testing.

III. The Wonderful Promises

A. They will reign with Christ forever and ever Several figures here:

1. Crown: We have been made kings and priests forever.
2. Pillar: The church is the pillar and ground of the church; you are a living stone and can be a pillar. Amen.
3. Name of God; Adoption. You are a Child of God and can call God your father.
4. New Jerusalem: The city of the Great King; Citizenship in Heaven.

5. New Name; You are a Christian; wear the name gladly and proudly.

B. Finally: verse 8

1. God has given you and me a little strength. Some have one pound, some have five pounds; some have ten pounds while the King is away. But we are to be faithful and do business until He come.
2. But a little strength from Christ is a little bit of infinite strength, so do not discount it. It is effective for what you are supposed to do. John the Baptist: Go baptize, say “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand”; Look for him who will baptize with the Holy Ghost and show him to the world. What a simple, and yet profound task.
3. Because you have a little strength, you have an open door. Do not think of great things; think of your little strength and the open door. Jesus gave you the little strength, and gave you the open door.

a. Mothers; Fathers

b. Sunday School Teachers

c. Deacons; Elders, Preachers. We all have such a little strength, but we have strength enough to go through the open door that God has given us.

d. Don't butt your head against the wall where there is no door; look for the door that God has given you. Go through that door.

See Ecclesiastes 7 Solomon wrote this Old Testament language, but it fits this text: Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

9 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun.

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

e. In itself, this life is vanity and empty, but when lived in terms of the little strength given by God, through the open door that He gives you and me, it becomes greatness and glory. He has the key of David, and not man can shut what He has opened, and no man can close what He has closed.

4. Young people: Walk in Faith. If you have faith in Christ, then you have a little strength: find the open door and go through it in faith. He will lead you by His hand, and there may be other open doors, but if not, whatsoever you find to do, do it with your might, but be certain that that door of service will be according to His eternal which like Christ will include all these things:

a. Faith and Trust

b. The glory of God

c. Energetic, not slothful, service to the people of God and the world in which you live.

Amen and Amen. May God bless you.