

An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages

Chapter Eight The Philadelphian Church Age

Revelation 3:7-13

"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;

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.

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.

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.

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

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.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Philadelphia

Philadelphia was seventy-five miles southeast of Sardis. It was the second largest city in Lydia. It was built upon several hills in a famous wine-growing district. Its coins bore the head of Bacchus and the figure of a Baccante (priestess of Bacchus). The population of the city included Jews, Christians of Jewish origin, and converts from heathenism. The city suffered frequent earthquakes, yet its duration was the longest of the seven cities of Revelation. In fact the city still exists under the Turkish name of Alasehir, or City of God.

The mintage of the coins suggests the deity of the city to be Bacchus. Now Bacchus is the same as Ninus or Nimrod. He is the 'lamented one', though most of us think of him in terms of revelry and drunkenness.

What illumination this brings to our minds. Here is a coin with the god on one side and the priestess or prophetess on the other. Now flip a coin. Does it matter which way it comes down? No sir, it is still the same coin. That is the Romish religion of Jesus and Mary.

But we are not thinking of Rome only. No, there is not only the great harlot. Certainly not; for she, by her fornications has become a mother. Her daughters now are coins of the same mintage. There on one side of the coin they have drawn up a worship of Jesus and on the other side they have their priestess or prophetess also and she writes her creeds and dogmas and tenets and sells them to the people for salvation insisting that she and she alone has the true light.

How remarkable is the fact that this age is characterized by the coin. For the mother and daughters are all buying their way to heaven. Money and not blood is the purchase price. Money and not Spirit is the power that moves them ahead. The god of this world (mammon) hath blinded their eyes.

But their dealings in death will end soon, for this is the age that the Spirit cries, "Behold I come quickly". Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!

The Age

The Philadelphia Church Age lasted from 1750 to about 1906. This age, due to the meaning of the name of the city, has been called The Age of Brotherly Love, as

Philadelphia means, "love of brethren".

The Messenger

The messenger to this age was without doubt John Wesley. John Wesley was born at Epworth, June 17, 1703 and was one of nineteen children born to Samuel and Susanna Wesley. His father was a chaplain in the Church of England; but it is more than likely that the religious turn of John's mind was based more upon his mother's exemplary life than upon his father's theology. John was a brilliant scholar. It was while he was at Orford that he and Charles became part of a group who were spiritually exercised to worship on the basis of experientially living the truth rather than making doctrine their standard. They drew up a spiritual guide of works, such as giving to the poor, visiting the sick and the imprisoned. For this they were called Methodists, and other derisive titles. Now John was sufficiently imbued by his vision of the need of religion for the peoples of the world that he went to America (Georgia) as a missionary amongst the Indians. On his way there he found that many of the ship's passengers were Moravians. He was deeply impressed by their meekness, peace, and courage in all circumstances. His labors in Georgia in spite of self denials and hard work was a failure. He returned to England crying, "I went to America to convert the Indians but oh! who shall convert me?"

Back in London he again met the Moravians. It was Peter Boehler who showed him the way of salvation. He was truly born again much to the dismay and evident anger of his brother, Charles, who could not understand how such a spiritual man as John should say he was not formerly right with God. It was, however, not long after that Charles, too, was saved by grace.

Wesley now began to preach the Gospel in those pulpits in London to which he formerly had access; but soon they turned him out. It was at this time that his old friend, George Whitefield, stood him in good stead for he invited John to come and help him preach in the fields where thousands were listening to the Word. Wesley at first was incredulous that he should preach in the open instead of a building, but when he saw the throngs and saw the working of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit he turned wholeheartedly to such preaching.

The work soon took on such proportions that he began sending out numerous laymen to preach the Word. This seemed like a parallel to Pentecost where the Spirit raised up men with power to preach and teach the Word almost overnight.

There was violent opposition to his work but God was with him. The workings of the Spirit were mightily manifested and often such a spirit of conviction took hold of the people as to take away their strength and they would fall to the ground crying in great distress over their sins.

Wesley was a remarkably strong man. He says of himself that he could not remember to have felt lowness of spirits for even a quarter hour since he was born. He slept no more than six hours a day; arose in time to start preaching at five practically every day of his ministry; preached up to four times on a single day so that in a year he would average over 800 sermons.

He traveled multiple thousands of miles as did his circuit riders who carried the Gospel near and far. In fact Wesley traveled 4500 miles per year by horse.

He was a believer in the power of God and he prayed for the sick with great faith and wonderful results.

Many of his meetings saw the manifestation of Spiritual gifts.

Wesley was not in favor of organization. His associates did have a "United Society" who were, "a company of men having the form, and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the Word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." The only condition of those entering was they should be of those, "who had a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." As time went on they worked out a strict set of rules to be used in self discipline for the good of their souls. Wesley recognized that after his death the movement could be organized and the Spirit of God leave them to dead form. He once remarked that he did not fear that the name of Methodist would leave the earth but that the Spirit might take His flight.

During his lifetime he could have acquired vast wealth; but he did not. His favorite

saying on the subject of money was, "Get all you can, save all you can, and give all you can." How strange it would be for Wesley to come back and see the denomination that bears the name of Methodist today. They are rich—vastly rich. But the life and power of John Wesley is missing.

It should also be mentioned that Wesley never did desire to build a work upon a denominational or sectarian basis. Though he was an Arminian in his beliefs, he did not want to separate himself from brethren on the grounds of doctrine. He was a good candidate for James: He based his eternal life on faith and works, or the living of the life, rather than simply accepting a creed or a doctrinal statement.

John Wesley died at the age of 88 having served God as few men would dare to even think they might.

The Salutation

Revelation 3:7,

"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;"

Oh, how beautiful are those words. How majestic is even the sound of them. How thrilling to think that all those attributes can be applied to one person. Who would dare to say such things about himself but Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory? I believe the key to interpreting exactly what each of these wonderfully descriptive phrases means is found in verse 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."

I say this verse is the key because it deals with the Jews who have always called themselves the children of God to the exclusion of everyone else. They crucified and killed the Lord Jesus Christ. Their terrible deed brought their own blood upon their own heads for centuries. All because they refused Jesus as their Messiah, Which indeed He was. To them He was not the Coming One, or the Son of David; to them He was Beelzebub, or some unrighteous one fit only for destruction. But not so. He was indeed Emmanuel, God manifest in the flesh. He is indeed, Messiah. Surely, He was exactly as He now sets Himself forth to be. There He is, THE SAME JESUS—Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever. That Holy One in the midst of the lampstands is the very same Jesus Who walked the shores of Galilee, Who healed the sick, Who raised the dead, and Who in spite of irrefutable proof was crucified and killed. But He arose again, and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

The Jews did not call Him holy then. They do not call Him holy now. But He is the HOLY ONE.

Psalms 16:10;

"For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine HOLY ONE to see corruption."

They sought their righteousness after the law and failed miserably, for by the law can no flesh be justified. By the law can no man be made holy. Holiness is of the Lord.

I Corinthians 1:30,

"But of HIM are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

II Corinthians 5:21,b,

"That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

It was Christ or perish, and they perished for they refused Him.

And men of that age as even today were making the same mistake. As the Jews took refuge in the synagogue form of worship, so in the Philadelphian Age they were taking refuge in the church. It is not joining a church that counts. The life is not in the church. The life is in Christ. "This is the record that God hath given us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Man is made holy by the Spirit. It is the Spirit of Holiness that raised Jesus from the dead that in-dwells us and makes us holy with His holiness.

There He stands, the HOLY ONE. And we will stand with Him clothed in His righteousness, holy with His holiness.

Now this age is the sixth age. In the eyes of God, time is drawing to a close. He will soon be coming back. Soon the cry will go forth as He comes,

"And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

Revelation 22:11b

Oh, I am so glad that my holiness is not of myself. I am glad that I am in Christ, with all His wonderful attributes of righteousness imputed, yea imparted unto me. Blessed be God forever!

"These things saith He That is true." Now this word, 'true', is a very wonderful word. It does not mean true in just the sense that it is opposite to false. It expresses the Perfect Realization of an idea as contrasted with its Partial Realization.

For example we recall that Jesus said in John 6:32,

"Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."

John 15:1,

"I am the true vine."

Hebrews 9:24,

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

I John 2:8,

"Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

Since this word, indeed, expresses Perfect Realization as against the idea of Partial Realization as illustrated in these verses, we can now understand as never before Antitype contrasted with type, and substance with shadow. Take the example now of manna from heaven. God sent down angel bread from heaven for Israel. But that bread did not satisfy. It was only good for a day. Those who ate it were hungry again the next day. If it was left around it became contaminated. But Jesus is the TRUE bread from heaven, whereof manna was just a type. And if any man eats of that BREAD that came from heaven he will never hunger again. He does not need to come back and eat again. The moment he partook, he had eternal life. Here indeed was REALITY. No need any longer for a shadow. No need for a partial salvation. Here is the WHOLE of it. Just like Jesus isn't a part of God; He IS God.

No one could deny that Israel had light. They were the only people who had light as a nation. It was as when Egypt was so dark that one could feel it. But in the homes of the Israelites there was light. But now true light is come. The light of the world is Jesus. Moses and the prophets brought the light by means of the Scripture relative to the Messiah. Thus Israel had light. But now the Fulfillment of the light has come, and what was but glowing Word has now broken forth in the Brightness of God manifested amongst His people. As the pillar of fire gave light at night, and that was wonderful, now light and life were manifested in the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Israel used to take the red heifer and sacrifice her upon the altar for the remission of sins. For a year the sins of the guilty one was covered. But that covering could not take away the desire for sin. It was not a perfect offering. It was a shadow until the real came along. So each year the man would sacrifice and each year come back because he still had the same desire to sin. The life of the animal atoned for his sin, but being animal blood that was shed and animal life that was given it could not come back upon the man. If it had come back, it still would not have availed. But when Christ the perfect substitute was given, and His blood was shed, then the life that was in Christ came back upon the repentant sinner and that life being the perfect life of Christ, sinless and righteous, then the guilty one could go free for he had no desire to sin. The life of Jesus had come back upon him.

That is what is meant in Romans 8:2,

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

But the Jews back there in the time of Jesus did not want to accept that sacrifice. The

blood of bulls and goats made nothing perfect. It was once God's ordained method. But now Christ having appeared in the flesh, and by the shedding of His own blood has put away sin and by that offering of Himself has made us perfect. The Jews would not take that. But what about that Philadelphian Age, and, yes, the other ages, too? Did they really accept this reality in Christ? No sir. Even though Luther brought the truth of justification, the Romish Church, and its eastern counterpart, the Orthodox Church, still clung to works.

Now works are fine, but they don't save you. They don't make you perfect. It is Christ or perish. And it is not even Christ AND works. It is Christ alone. This age began the years of Arminianism that does not believe in Christ as the REALITY. It does not sing of "Nothing but the Blood," for it sings of "Nothing but the blood AND my own conduct". Now I believe in good conduct. If you are saved you will do righteously. We have already gone over that. But let me tell you now, salvation is NOT Jesus PLUS. It is Jesus ALONE. SALVATION IS OF THE LORD. From start to finish it is all GOD. Let His life be in me. Let it be His blood that cleanses me. Let it be His Spirit that fills me. Let it be His Word in my heart and mouth. Let it be His stripes that heal me. Let it be Jesus, and Jesus Alone. Not by works of righteousness which I have done. No sir. Christ is my life. Amen.

I feel I could just go on and on about these truths, but I will give you one more thought. It is about that wonderful hymn that A. B. Simpson wrote.

"Once it was the blessing,
Now it is the Lord.
Once it was the feeling,
Now it is His Word.
Once His Gift I wanted,
Now the Giver own.
Once I sought for healing,
Now Himself Alone.
All in All forever,
Jesus will I sing.
Everything in Jesus,
And Jesus everything."

There isn't anything in this life, satisfying as it may be, as good and as fine as it may be, but you will find the sum total of all perfection in Christ. Everything fades into insignificance beside Him.

"He That hath the key of David." This beautiful phrase follows and comes out of the preceding phrase, "He that is true".—Christ, the Perfect Realization, contrasted with Partial Realization. Here it is. Moses was a prophet of God, but Jesus (like unto Moses) was THE Prophet of God. David (a man after God's own heart) was king of Israel, but Jesus is the Greater David, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, God very God. Now David was born of the tribe of Judah out of whom no priests came, yet he ate of the shewbread reserved for priests. He was the great warrior overcoming the enemy, establishing the people; as king he sat on the throne. He was a prophet. He was a wonderful type of Christ.

Now it says in Isaiah 22:22,

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon His shoulder; so He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut, and none shall open."

The Spirit uses this Old Testament reference concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and His ministry in the church. What the key of David signified at that time is mere shadow, which is now fulfilled in Jesus standing in the midst of the lampstands. It has to do with our Lord AFTER His resurrection and not His earthly pilgrimage. But what does this key signify? The answer lies in the POSITION of the key. It is NOT in His hand. It is not worn around His neck. It is not placed in the hands of other men, or the verse could not be saying that HE ALONE HAS THE USE OF THAT KEY—FOR HE ALONE OPENS AND SHUTS, AND NO MAN has that right but Jesus Himself. Isn't that right? But where is the key? IT IS ON HIS SHOULDER. But what does SHOULDER have to do with it?

Read Isaiah 9:6,

"And the government shall be upon His shoulder."

But what does this mean? The answer is this. The phrase, "government upon His shoulder" comes from the wedding ceremony of the East. When the bride has been committed to the groom she takes off her veil and places it over the groom's shoulders, signifying that not only is she under his dominion—that she has transferred her rights to him—that he is the head—but also that he bears the responsibility and the care and that HE AND HE ALONE—NO ONE ELSE—NO OTHER MAN—NO OTHER POWER—HAS ANY RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY. And that, beloved, is the KEY of David. God being Sovereign, He foreknew by Divine decree exactly who would be in His bride. He chose her. She did not choose Him. He called her. She did not come on her own. He died for her. He washed her in His own blood. He paid the price for her. She belongs to Him and to Him alone. She is wholly committed to Him and He accepts the obligation. He is her head, for Christ is the head of His church. As Sarah called Abraham, Lord, even so the bride is happy that He is her Lord. He speaks and she obeys for that is her delight.

But have men heeded this truth? Have they esteemed His Person Who alone has the full sovereign authority over His church? I say, "NO". For in every age the church has been governed by a hierarchy—a priesthood—an apostolic succession—closing the door of mercy and grace to whom it will, and instead of assuming the love and responsibility of the church it has with mercenary lust preyed upon her and destroyed her. The clergy lived in luxury while the poor church fed on the husks of abuse. And not one age did any different. Each bound itself to organization and put the government upon men and committed the church to that government. Dare let the people rise up, and they were brutally suppressed or cast out. Every denomination has the same spirit. Every denomination swears that it has the key to the government of the church. Every denomination claims that it opens the door. But that is not true. It is Jesus and Jesus, alone. He sets the members in the Body. He endows them with their ministries. He puts the gifts at her disposal. He cares for her and guides her. She is His sole property and He has no other one but her.

What a far cry from reality is this church age in which we live. And one day soon these men that even now purport to speak for the church will be rising up in the ecumenical move to place a living antichrist at the head of their organization which deposes the Lord and we will find Him (Christ) outside the church saying,

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Revelation 3:20.

But let me say this. Our Lord is not defeated. Men claim to open the door to God and shut that door, but they are liars. All that the Father has given Him will come to Him, and he that cometh to Him in no wise will be cast out; He will lose NONE of them. John 6:37-39. And when that last elected member to the body of Christ comes in, then will our Lord appear.

The key of David. Was not David the king of Israel—all Israel? And is not Jesus the Son of David according to the fact that He will sit upon the throne of David in the millennium and reign and rule over His heritage? Surely. So the key of David signifies that it is Jesus Who will bring in the millennium. He Who has the keys to death and hell will raise up His own that they may share in His reign of righteousness upon the earth.

How wonderful that our Lord has all the answers. Truly in Him are all the promises of God fulfilled. Truly by being IN Him we are heirs to what He has purchased for us.

Yes, there He stands, the Lord of Glory. Once as the Father, He was surrounded by the angels, the archangels, the cherubims, and seraphims and the whole host of heaven, crying, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of Hosts". Such was His holiness that no man could approach unto Him. But now we see Him in the church, sharing His own holiness with us, until in Him we have become the very righteousness of God. Yes, and there He stands, "Jesus, Perfect Everything,"—Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star, the Fairest of Ten Thousand, Alpha and Omega, Root and Offspring of David, Father, Son and Holy Ghost—the All and in All.

Isaiah 9:6,

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

In Him is perfect fulfillment. Though once we esteemed Him not, now we love Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In the midst of the church He stands, and we will sing His praise, for He the Mighty Conqueror is head over the church which is His bride. He bought that bride. He owns her. She is His and His alone and He cares for her. He is our king and we are His kingdom, His eternal possession.

Now you will recall that at the beginning of verse 7, I said that verse 9 would help us to understand it. I hope you saw what I meant. Jesus set Himself forth as He That is holy, true, (or the only reality) the One with the key of David, the One Who opened and shut. And that is exactly true. Those phrases describe Him perfectly. But the Jews in His day refused Him and all He was. They rejected their Saviour and all He meant to them. And the nominal Christian has now done the same. They have done what the Jews did exactly. The Jews crucified Him and then turned on the true believer. The nominal Christian has crucified Him afresh and turned on the true church to destroy it. But God is true, and He Who is above all will yet return, and when He does He will show Who the only Potentate is. And as He proves Himself to the world, and all the world bows at His feet, at that time all the world will bow at the feet of the saints, proving that they were right in their stand with Him. Blessed be God forever!

The Age Of The Open Door

Revelation 3:8,

"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."

The first phrase of this verse, "I know thy works," is analyzed in the rest of the verse, for their works had to do with 'the open door,' 'little strength,' 'the Word and the Name.'

In order to understand the wealth of meaning involved in "behold I set before you an open door, and no man can shut it," we must now recall what has been said about each age running over into another age. There is an overlapping, a melting or fading into, rather than an abrupt end and a clear cut start. This age particularly flows into the next age. And not only does this age overflow into the last age, but the last age is in many respects simply a carrying on of the sixth age. The seventh age (a very short age) gathers up into itself for one quick work, all the evil of every age, and yet all the reality of Pentecost. Once the Philadelphian Age has about run its course, the Laodicean Age quickly comes in, bringing both the tares and the wheat to harvest,

"First bind the tares to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

Matthew 13:30.

Remember, please, that the Sardisian Age started the reformation that must still go on until the grain that was planted at Pentecost goes through the full cycle of planting, watering, nourishing, etc., until it comes right back to original seed. While this is going on, the tares that were sown will have to go through their cycle and be harvested also. That is exactly what we see happening. If you can just think of the seasons, you can get a very good picture of this. The plant that you see growing in full strength in summer suddenly appears to be going to seed. You can't tell exactly when summer became autumn—it just faded into it. That is how the ages are, and especially these last two.

It is to this age that Jesus says, 'I come QUICKLY' verse 11. That makes the last age a very short one. Laodicea is the age of the quick work. It is cut short.

Now we will specifically dwell on the OPEN DOOR that no man can shut. First of all I want to dwell on the open door as signifying the tremendous missionary effort of that age. Paul called a new missionary endeavor for the Lord an open door.

II Corinthians 2:12,

"Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord."

So we can see by the comparison of Scriptures that this open door signified the greatest spreading of the Gospel that the world has ever seen.

I want you to see something here. God works in threes, doesn't He? It was in the third or Pergamean Age that the church was married to the state. The deeds of the Nicolaitanes had become the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. That age was the OPEN DOOR for the false vine. Once it was backed up by the power of the state it became actually a world system even though it bore the name, Christian. Thus it spread like wildfire. But

now, three ages later, after a long and hard struggle of faith, here comes the OPEN DOOR to the truth. The Word of the Lord now has its day. Of course the fifth age had set the stage for this mighty move, as that age gave us exploration, colonization, the printing of books, etc.

It would have been wonderful if this 'open door' had followed the Divine pattern of Pentecost which was set forth in Hebrews 2:1-4, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the Word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?" Now you know that this is the pattern for Jesus, Himself, said so.

Mark 16:15-20,

"And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen."

He never told them to go into all the world and establish Bible colleges; nor did He tell them to pass out literature. Now those things are fine, but what Jesus told them to do was to PREACH THE GOSPEL—stick with the WORD—and then the signs would follow. The very first introduction we have in the way the Kingdom of God was to be preached was when He sent out the twelve. In Matthew 10:1-8, He commissioned and instructed them on this wise,

"And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

This ministry that He gave them was actually the sharing of His own ministry with them, for it says in Matthew 9:35-38,

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Now many people have the idea that just the apostles had this ministry given them by our Lord Jesus, and so when they died, the ministry was over. That is not so.

Here in Luke 10:1-9, we find that in the days of His earthly sojourn He had already started to give ministries of power to His own,

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, wither He Himself would come."

Therefore said He unto them. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.

Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

And if the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

Who would dare deny the mighty ministry of Philip? Who would dare to deny the mighty ministries of Irenaeus, Martin, Columba, Patrick and countless scores of others who have had God's anointing upon them?

Yes. The Bible way is the real way of the open door. And I want to add my testimony to that. The reason I have to do that is because I can only speak with assurance concerning what God has done in my own life. So if you'll excuse a personal note here I will tell you how I know for a surety that Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever and that the power of God is still available to those who will believe and receive.

During my missionary trip to South Africa, God so blessed that when I came to Durban the only place that could begin to accommodate the people was the huge race track which is the second largest in the world. The crowd was well over 100,000. In order to keep law and order they had to put up fences to separate the various tribes. They posted hundreds of policemen to keep the throngs quieted down. Those hungry souls had come for many miles. A queen from Rhodesia had come with a train of 27 coaches loaded with African natives. They struggled in across the fields and mountains bearing on their backs for many and many a mile some loved one that needed help. The whole country was stirred by the mighty works that had been manifested by the Holy Spirit.

One afternoon as I began to minister, one of thousands of the Mohammedans came up on the platform. As she stood before me, a missionary to the Mohammedans began to softly implore the Lord, "Oh, for that precious soul. Oh, for that precious soul." He had been over there for years and years, and according to his own testimony, he had seen only ONE Mohammedan come to receive Jesus Christ as Saviour. They were originally the Medo-Persians whose laws change not. They are so hard to win. It seems that "once a Mohammedan always a Mohammedan" is a law amongst them.

Well, as she stood before me, I began to speak to her and to all those thousands through the interpreters. I said, "Is it not so that the missionaries have told you of a JESUS Who came to save you?" You should have seen the people look at each other when I said that. Then when they had answered that was correct I went on and said, "But did the missionaries read to you out of this Book (I held my Bible aloft for them to see) that this same Jesus was a mighty healer, and that He would live in His people down through the ages until He came again to receive them unto Himself? Did they tell you that because of that same Spirit in them that was in Jesus that they would be able to do mighty works even as Jesus did? Did they tell you that you can be healed, even as you can be saved? How many of you would like to see this same Jesus come down amongst us and do the same things that He did when He was here on earth long ago?" They all wanted that. That is one thing they surely agreed on.

I then went on, "If Jesus by His Spirit will do what He did when upon earth, will you believe His Word, then?" And here was that Mohammedan woman in front of me. The

Spirit began to move through me.

I said to her, "Now, you know that I don't know you. I can't even speak your language." She admitted that. I said, "As for healing you, you know I cannot. But you heard the message this afternoon and understood me." Her Indian interpreter answered back for her that she understood, for she had read the New Testament.

Now the Mohammedans are descendants of Abraham. They believe in One God. But they reject Jesus as the Son of God and instead they take Mohammed as His prophet. They say that Jesus never died and rose again. They are taught that by their priests and they believe it.

I said, "But Jesus did die and rise again. He sent His Spirit back upon the church. That Spirit that was in Him is the very same Spirit in the church now and It can and will produce what Jesus produced."

He said in John 5:19,

"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

Now then, if Jesus will come and reveal to me what your trouble is or what you are here for—if He can tell me what your past is, surely you can believe for the future?"

She said through her interpreter, "Yes, I can."

I said, "All right, may He do it."

Those Mohammedans were watching intently. They were all leaning forward to see what would happen.

Then the Holy Spirit spoke, "Your husband is a short, heavy-set man, with a black mustache. You have two children. You were at the doctors about three days ago and he gave you an examination. You have a cyst on the womb."

She bowed her head and said, "That is true."

I asked her, "How is it you came to me, a Christian? Why didn't you go to your Mohammedan prophet?"

She said, "I think you can help me."

I said, "I can't help you, but if you receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, He Who is here now, and knows all about you, He'll help you."

She said, "I accept Jesus as my Saviour." That did it. She was healed and about ten thousand Mohammedans came to Christ that day because the Gospel was preached in both Word and power. God never told a man to labor thirty years and harvest nothing. He gave us the open door of Word and power and that is what we are supposed to use. That is what gave Paul his great and effective ministry. I Corinthians 2:4, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Listen to me now. It was while on this same trip that as I was boarding a plane at New Salisbury, Rhodesia, that I saw a party of four with American passports. I went over to them and said, "Hello there, I see you have American passports. Are you traveling somewhere?"

The young man answered me, "No, we are all missionaries here."

"How nice," I replied. "Are you on your own or do you work with some organization?"

"We are Methodists. We come from Wilmore, Kentucky," he said.

"Well, that is almost in my back yard," I replied.

"You wouldn't be that Brother Branham that comes from up that way would you?"

I said, "Yes, that's right." That cured him. He wouldn't say another thing—and the way he and those three girls just looked back and forth at each other. So I said, "Just a minute son, I'd like to speak to all of you about some principles, seeing we are all Christians and here for a great purpose. Now you say you have all four been here two years. Can you say in the Name of Jesus that you can put your finger on one soul that you know you have won to the Lord?" They could not do it.

"I don't want to hurt your feelings, girls," I said, "but you all ought to be home helping your mothers with the dishes. You haven't any business out on the field unless you are filled with the Holy Ghost and preaching the true Gospel in the demonstration of the power of the Holy Ghost. If you are not seeing the results that Jesus said you would see,

it's because you are not preaching the true Gospel."

Let me go a step further and show you just how things can be on the mission field. I don't say it is all this way, but I am afraid too much of it is. It was while I was on this same trip and touring around Durban with the mayor that I saw a native with a tag around his neck and he was packing an idol. I asked my friend what that tag was for and he said that when a native embraced Christianity they put a tag on him. That sure surprised me, for here was a man calling himself a Christian and carrying that idol, so I asked how that could be.

He said, "I can speak his language. Let us go over and talk to him."

So we went over and the mayor acted as my interpreter. I asked the native if he was a Christian. He affirmed that he surely was a Christian. I then asked why he carried the idol if he was a Christian. He answered that it was an idol his father had carried and he left it to him. When I told him that no Christian ought to carry idols he replied that this idol had been of great use to his father. I was curious to know how, and he said that one day his father was being stalked by a lion, so he built a fire and spoke to the idol the way he had been taught by the witch doctor. The lion left. I informed him that it was the fire that sent the lion off as fire scares all wild animals. I will never forget his reply. He said, "Well, it is this way, if Amoyah (the Spirit) fails, then this idol won't."

(A detailed account of the African campaign may be found in the book, "A Prophet Visits Africa.")

That is just about all the strength the Christian multitudes have because the Word was not brought to them by the original open door of Pentecost.

Now getting back to the open mission door of the Philadelphian Age. It did not have the open door of power it ought to have had. Notice in the same verse He mentions this open door. He says, "Thou hast little strength". That is right. The POWER of the Spirit was missing in that age. The Word was well preached. It was well able to make souls wise unto salvation. But the great power of God that showed forth His mighty works, that made bare His arm in behalf of His own was missing except amongst the scattered groups. Yet, praise God, it was growing and had increased over what they had in the Reformation.

It was in this age that the man we often call the father of missions went out. William Carey, a village shoemaker, who pastored the Particular Baptist Church at Moulton, England, mightily aroused the people by preaching on, "whether the command given to the Apostles to teach all nations was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent." He was fought by the Calvinists who had gone to the extreme of the doctrine of election believing that all who will be saved WILL be saved and missionary work would be against the work of the Spirit. But Andrew Fuller helped Mr. Carey by his preaching and fund raising. Such was their effect that a society was formed to spread the Gospel to all nations, in 1792. This society sent out Carey who was signally blessed of God in winning souls in India. In 1795 an aroused Christianity formed the London Missionary Society which we well know raised millions of pounds, and sent thousands of missionaries over the years to accomplish the desires of the Lord. The Spirit of God was moving and "Other Sheep" might well have been the cry of the heart of those earnest believers.

"I have set before thee an open door." I want to look at these words again. This time, though I am not going to disassociate them from missions, I am going to bring you a thought which carries deep into the last age. As I have already stated, this age melts into the last age. It was in this age Jesus said, "I come quickly" (verse 11), and of the last age He was going "to finish the work and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Romans 9:28. Notice how this verse of Revelation 3:8 goes—"open door—little strength, Word, Name." That open door has to do with all three. Now what does the door signify?

In John 10:7, it says,

"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I AM THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP."

That is right: 'I AM' IS the door of the sheep. Now this is not just a quaint expression. This is actually so. Notice in John 10 when Jesus is giving this parable, He calls Himself the shepherd. Then He calls Himself the door. And that is what the shepherd is to the sheep. He is actually their door.

When I was over in the East I saw that at nighttime the shepherd would gather all his sheep together. He would put them into the fold. Then he would count them. When he was sure that they were all in, he would lie down in the open door of the fold and literally become the door to the fold. No one could get in or out except by him. He was the door. The next day as I went riding with a friend in a jeep I noticed that a shepherd began to lead his flock into the city. Right away all traffic came to a stop so that the sheep could go through. Now the cities over in the East aren't like they are here. We keep all our merchandise inside; but there, it is like a big farmers' market with all the produce on the pavement for passers-by to see and buy. I thought, "Oh my, here is where the riot begins. Wait till those sheep see all that food out there." But as the shepherd went ahead, those sheep just followed right along exactly in each step. They would look at all those goodies, but not a sheep touched a thing. Oh, if I could only have known their language, I would have stopped traffic myself and preached them a sermon on what I had just seen.

When you are sheep that belong to the Great Shepherd, you follow right along in each of His steps, just as those sheep did. You won't be tempted to turn aside for some big flower of a church, or listen to the voice of some D.D. or Ph.D. or L.L.D., but you will stay with the Shepherd. The Bible says that the sheep know His voice and they follow HIM, but a stranger's voice will only cause them to flee and run after their true Shepherd. Praise God.

But that was not all I saw and learned over there. One day I got to thinking about having seen men out in the fields herding different kinds of animals. One fellow would be tending some pigs, another some goats, another some camels, another some mules, etc. So I asked a friend who lived there, what they called those men. "Oh," he replied, "they are shepherds."

I couldn't take that. I said, "You don't mean to say they are ALL shepherds. Shepherds only herd sheep, don't they?"

"No," he said, "a shepherd is a herder or grazer, so anyone who grazes animals is a shepherd."

Well, that did surprise me. But I noticed a difference between those herders and the ones that took care of the sheep. Come nighttime all the others but the shepherd of the sheep left his animals in the fields and went on home. The shepherd took his sheep with him, and put them into the fold and then lay down and became the door of the sheep. Oh, praise God, our Shepherd never leaves us or forsakes us. When nighttime comes I want to be in His fold. I want to be in his care.

Now then, we can see that JESUS IS THE DOOR. He is the door of the sheep. And notice that it speaks now of the DOOR OPENING. What is that but a revelation of Him? And that Revelation is opening up to bring us Strength, to illuminate the Word and glorify His Name. It was in the midst of the two last ages that the Revelation of the Deity of Jesus Christ blossomed out before us. Yes, we knew He was God. How else could He be our Saviour? But to know that He was ONLY GOD, OR GOD ALONE, that He was the Alpha and the Omega, that this "Jesus was BOTH LORD AND CHRIST— MAKING HIM LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER, THE SON AND HOLY GHOST, ALL ONE PERSON—that had been lost since the first church ages, but now we are seeing it again. The revelation of WHO HE WAS had come back. Indeed Godhead is not a three-person God with one personality, for it takes personality to make a person. If there is ONE personality, there is but one person. But they who believe in three persons have a three god Godhead and are guilty of breaking the first commandment.

But the revelation of Godhead is back. Now the true church can build in strength again. After all this time she finally knows Who her Lord is. Once again we are BAPTIZING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS just as they did at Pentecost.

Let me tell you of a God-given dream I had about triune baptism. This was not a vision, but a dream. You know, I am sure, that one of the blessings of the church ages was to receive dreams by the Holy Ghost, just the same as one can receive visions. It was about 3 a.m. on a Saturday morning. I had just gotten up to get Joseph a drink of water. When I lay down I fell asleep instantly and dreamed this dream. I saw a man that I supposed was my father. He was a great big burly man. I also saw a woman who was supposed to be my mother, but she didn't look like her, even as the man did not look like my father. This man was very mean to his wife. He had a large club with three corners on it. You know when you take a log and set it up on end and hit it with an axe,

it makes a three cornered wedge-like piece of fire wood. It was like that. He would take this club and hit her with it, and knock her down. As she would lie there crying, he would walk around with his chest stuck out and on his face was such a proud, boastful look that he appeared to take great pride and satisfaction in beating up a poor little woman. Every time she tried to get up he would hit her. I did not like what he was doing, but as I considered stopping him, I thought, "I can't tackle that man—he is too big. Then he's supposed to be my father." But down inside I knew he wasn't my father, and I knew that no man had the right to treat a woman like that. I went over and grabbed him by the collar and turned him around and said, "You have no right to strike her." And when I said that my muscles grew and I looked like a giant. The man saw them and then he was scared of me. I said, "You strike her again and you'll deal with me." He hesitated to strike her again, and then the dream left me.

I awoke immediately after the dream. I thought, how strange that was. I wondered why I had dreamed about that woman, when suddenly there He came, and the presence of God became known to me and the interpretation of the dream came from Him. (Now you people know that not only have I interpreted your dreams exactly; but I have many, many times, told you what you dreamed so that you never had to tell me.) The woman represents the church of the world today. I was born right into this mess—the mess that she is in. She was supposed to be a kind of mother (she is the mother of harlots). Her husband is the denominations that rule her. The three cornered block is false triune baptism unto a trinity. Every time she started to rise up (that means the congregations began to accept truth) he would drive her right down again with that false doctrine. He was so big that I was afraid of him at first, but when I came against him I found I had great and powerful muscles. They were FAITH MUSCLES. The outcome of the dream was that, "since God is with me, and can give me such strength, then let me stand up for her against the denominational power of the world and make him quit striking her."

Now I am not trying to build a doctrine upon a dream. Nor am I trying to vindicate any doctrine I stand for by a dream. Oneness of the Godhead is all the way from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. But the people have been blinded by an unscriptural dogma of a trinity, and that dogma is so universally accepted that to try to see a "One God Person" is all but impossible. If people can't see the TRUTH of the Godhead, but fight it; they can't ever see the rest of the truth because the REVELATION IS JESUS CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH AND HIS WORKS IN THE MIDST OF THE CHURCH FOR THE SEVEN AGES. Did you get that? Now I am sure you understand.

"Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word and not denied My Name." Now we have already mentioned how the strength was returning. It was. The power of the inquisition had waned. People had left their home lands and demanded a freedom of worship. The yoke of the hierarchy was being broken. The governments were finding it wise not to champion one segment against another. In fact, well meaning but poorly led people were willing to wage war to defend their religious rights. Perhaps the greatest show of strength of religion in this age was the fact, that though France fell in revolution, the great Wesleyan revival kept the revolution away from Great Britain and saved her to be an instrument in the hand of God for many glorious years.

The preaching of the Word was never greater. As Satan raised up his hordes of free thinkers, as the originators of communism rose up, as liberal theologians spread their filthy wares, God raised up mighty warriors of faith, and the greatest works of Christian literature and teaching and preaching came from this era. Never has its preachers and teachers been matched and never will they be. The Spurgeons, Parkers, McClarens, the Edwards, Bunyans, Meullers, Brainards, Barnes, Bishops, all came from this era. They preached, taught and wrote the Word. They glorified His Name.

The Judgment of the False Jew

Revelation 3:9.

"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."

Now we can note immediately that this problem of the false Jew or false believers was already in existence in the second age. These who falsely called themselves Jews appeared right after the first outpouring of the first age, and now they appear again in the second age after the reformation. This is hardly an accident. Indeed, it is not an

accident. It is a principle of Satan. That principle is to organize and claim originality and therefore be entitled to special rights and privileges. Let me show you. Back there in the Smyrnaean Age these people lied and said they were actually Jews (or believers) when they definitely were not. They were of the synagogue of Satan. They were Satan's organized crowd, for it was in that age we saw the start of men in the ministry taking an unwarranted leadership over their ministering brethren. (Bishops set up in districts, over elders). The next thing we saw was that in the third age there was definitely a place called "Satan's seat". That age gave us church and state marriage. With the power of the state behind her the church was literally physically invincible.

But God broke that hold in spite of the power of the state and the reformation brought great light. But what happened? The Lutherans organized and joined with the state and again we see the synagogue of Satan manifested in this sixth age. Now of course this synagogue group wouldn't say they are of Satan. No sir. They say they are of God. But they lie. For he that is a true Jew (that is what they claimed to be) is one who is a Jew inwardly—in the Spirit. So then if they are false Jews it means that they are as Jude 19 says, "having NOT the Spirit". Children of God are born of the Spirit. These have not the Spirit and therefore they are NOT children of God no matter how fervently they protest and to what lengths they go to try to prove that they are. They are DEAD. They are children of organization, and the true fruits are missing. They are built upon their own creeds, dogmas and doctrines and the truth is not in them for they have taken their own counsels above the Word of God.

Let me show you what I have been trying to teach all along about the two vines which come from two different spirits. Take the example of Jesus and Judas this time. Jesus was the Son of God. Judas was the son of perdition. God entered into Jesus. Satan entered into Judas.

Jesus had a full Holy Ghost ministry for

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."

Acts 10:38. It says

"For he (Judas) was numbered with us, and had obtained PART of this ministry,"

Acts 1:17. Matthew 10:1,

"And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

That spirit that was in Judas went right along through the ministry of Jesus. Then they both came to the cross. Jesus was hanged upon the cross, gladly giving His Life for sinners and commended His Spirit to God. His Spirit went to God and then was poured out into the church at Pentecost. But Judas hanged himself and his spirit went back to Satan, but after Pentecost that same spirit that was in Judas came back to the false vine that grows right along with the true vine. But notice, Judas' spirit never got to Pentecost. It never went up to receive the Holy Spirit. It could not. But what did that Judas spirit go for? It went for the bag of gold. How it loved money. It still loves money. If it goes about in the Name of Jesus doing mighty things and holding great meetings, it still makes more of money and buildings, and education and everything with a material concept. Just watch that spirit that is upon them and don't be fooled. Judas went about as one of the twelve and he did miracles, too. But he did NOT have the Spirit of God as his own. He did have a ministry. He never got to Pentecost as he was not true seed. He was not a true child of God. No sir. And it is that way right now in the synagogue of Satan. Don't be fooled. You won't be fooled if you are of the very elect. Jesus said you wouldn't be fooled.

Yes, these folks say they are Christians but they aren't.

"I will make them come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

I Corinthians 6:2,

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"

Not only will there be twelve apostles on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel but the saints, also, will judge the world. That is when these who claim to belong

to God and claim that God loves them will find out exactly who is the child of God and who is loved of the Son. Yes, that day is coming when it will be made manifest. These who are now ruling the world in a measure, and who during the last age will build an image to the beast whereby they will actually rule the world, will one day be humbled when Jesus comes with His saints to judge the world in righteousness. That is exactly what we saw in Matthew 25 when "All" the ones who missed the first resurrection will stand before the Judge and His bride.

The Eulogy And The Promise

Revelation 3:10,

"Because thou has 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."

What does He mean by the "word of His patience?" Hebrews 6:13-15. *"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."* You see the Spirit is speaking about the Word of God which is given to us. To wait for the fulfillment of that Word required patience even as it did in the case of Abraham. He endured as seeing Him Who is invisible. He was patient and then the Word finally was fulfilled. This is the way God teaches His people patience. Why, if He fulfilled His Word in physical manifestations the very instant you prayed, you would never learn patience, but would become even more impatient with life. Let me show you this truth even more fully set forth.

Hebrews 11:17,

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises (the Word of God) offered up his only begotten son."

There it is: Abraham was tried AFTER he received the Word of Promise. Most think that as soon as we pray in Jesus' Name over the good promises of God that there could not be a trial. But here it says that Abraham was tried after he received the promise.

That is exactly correct according to the Psalmist referring to Joseph, 105:19,

"Until the time that his word came: the Word of the Lord tried him."

God gives us exceeding great and precious promises. He has promised to fulfill them. He will. But from the time we pray until the time we get the answer we must learn to receive patience into our souls for only in patience do we possess life. May God help us to learn this lesson even as we know the people of this sixth age learned patience. We read the history of the lives of these great Christians; what a contrast we see between their lives and ours for they were so patient and quiet, and today we are all but overcome in over-impatience and haste.

He goes on to say to them, *"Because you have taken my Word and lived it and thereby become patient, I will keep you from the hour of temptation which shall come upon the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."* Now here again we see the overlapping of the two ages; for this promise has to do with the end of the Gentile period which culminates in the Great Tribulation.

"I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." This verse is not a declaration that the true church will go into and through the tribulation. If it meant that it would have said that. But it said, *"I will keep thee from the hour of temptation."* This temptation is exactly like the temptation in Eden. It will be a very inviting proposition held up in direct opposition to God's commanded Word, and yet from the standpoint of human reasoning it will be so very right, so enlightening and life-giving as to fool the world.

Only the very elect will not be fooled. The temptation will come as follows. The ecumenical move that has started on what seems such a beautiful and blessed principle (fulfilling Christ's prayer that we all might be one) becomes so strong politically that she bears pressure upon the government to cause all to join with her either directly or through adherence to principles enacted into law so that no people will be recognized as actual churches unless under direct or indirect domination of this council. Little groups will lose charters, privileges, etc., until they lose all property and spiritual rights with the people.

For example, right now unless the local ministerial association approves in many, if not

most cities, one cannot rent a building for religious services. To become chaplains in the armed services, hospitals, etc., it is now almost mandatory to be recognized as acceptable to the trinitarian ecumenical groups. As this pressure increases, and it will, it will be harder to resist, for to resist is to lose privilege. And so many will be tempted to go along, for they will feel it is better to serve God publicly in the framework of this organization than not to serve God at all publicly. But they err. To believe the devil's lie is to serve Satan, even though you may want to call him Jehovah. But the elect will not be deceived.

Furthermore, the elect will not only be kept, but as this move becomes the "IMAGE ERECTED TO THE BEAST," the saints will be gone in the rapture. And this little delightful, winsome movement that started out in fellowship at Ephesus will become the monster of Satan that defiles and deceives the whole world. For the church system of the Roman Catholic and the Protestant in coming together will control the whole wealth of the world system and force the whole earth into its religious trap, or will kill them, by refusing them the privilege of buying and selling whereby they would make a living. This will be accomplished simply, for the harlot's daughters are all but gone back to her. In the meantime, Rome has acquired nearly all the supplies of gold. The Jews have the bonds and all the paper. At the right time, the harlot will destroy the present day money system by calling in all the paper, and demanding gold. With no gold, the system falls. The Jews will be trapped and come into the alliance, and the harlot church will take over the whole world.

The Promise To His Own

Revelation 3:11-12,

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

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: I will write upon him My new Name."

We don't need to comment on the thought that He is coming quickly. We know that He is because we are in the end of the last days, aren't we? But He goes on to say, "Hold fast what you have, that no man take your crown."

It is in the midst of a time of great trouble that Jesus comes. And with His coming there is a resurrection. Many are to come forth out of the dust and rise with those who are alive but waiting for His return. And these will be given crowns. Why? Because they are Sons of God. They are kings with Him. They are reigning with Him. That is what the crown signifies—reigning and ruling with the Great King, Himself. That is the promise to all those who suffer with Him here on earth—all those who endured patiently knowing that God, the Just Judge would reward them. They who gave up all for Him and committed all to Him will sit down in His throne and share in His glorious kingdom.

Oh, we have a word for us all at this time. It is hold fast— persevere. Don't give up. Put on the whole armour of God—use every weapon He has given us—use every gift at our disposal and look ahead with joy, because we are going to be crowned by Him Who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Now He is not only giving crowns but He says that these in the bride will be made pillars in the temple of God. But what is the temple of God? Jesus spoke of His body as being the temple. It was. It was the temple of God. But now that we are His body, the true church is the temple of God by the Holy Ghost within us. Now He is going to make the overcomer a pillar in that temple. But what is a pillar? A pillar is actually a part of the foundation for it holds up the superstructure. Praise God, that puts the overcomer right in with the apostles and prophets, for it says in Ephesians 2:19-22,

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone;

In Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Yes, that verse 22 says that we are builded together with them. Everything went through the DOOR (Jesus) and is a part of that body or temple. Now when God puts a

man in the temple as a pillar and makes him a part of that foundation group what is He doing? He is giving him the revelation of the Word and of Himself, because that is exactly what the apostles and prophets had. Matthew 16:17. There he is in that Word. There he stands. No one can get him out.

Ponder that word, "overcometh". John asks the question, "Who is he that overcometh?" and the answer comes right back, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ." He doesn't say that the overcomer is one that believes in 'A' Jesus and in 'A' Christ, but believes that Jesus IS THE CHRIST—ONE person—not two. He is the one who is baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is talking about the bride here. Do you want to see another picture of her?

It is over in Revelation 7:4-17,

"And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb Which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Jesus has come. He has sealed the 144,000. He took 12,000 out of each tribe. But there is another group that doesn't belong in this 144,000 who are seen in verses 9-18. Who are they? These are in the bride taken from amongst the Gentiles. They are before His throne day and night. They serve Him in the temple. They are the special care of the Lord. They are His bride.

The bride goes wherever the Bridegroom is. She will never be left by Him. She will never leave His side. She will share the throne with Him. She will be crowned with His glory and honor.

And I will write upon him the Name of My God, and the name of the city of My God. And what is the Name of God? Well, He was God with us, or Emmanuel, but that was not His given name. "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus." Jesus said, "I came in My Father's Name, and you received Me not." Therefore the Name of God is JESUS, for that is the Name He came in. He is LORD JESUS CHRIST. And what name does a woman take when she marries the man? She takes his name. It will be His Name that is given unto the bride when He takes her to Himself.

Revelation 21:1-4.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

How wonderful. All of God's wonderful promises fulfilled. It will be all over. The change will have been completed. The Lamb and His bride forever settled in all the perfections of God. Describe it? Who is able to do that? No one. Think about it? Dream about it? Read what the Word says about it? Yes we can do all of that, yet we can only know an infinitesimal part of it until it becomes reality in the first resurrection.

"And I will write my NEW Name upon him."

My New Name. When ALL becomes new, then He will take upon Him a new Name and that Name will be the Name of the bride also. What that Name is, none dare conjecture. It would have to be a revelation of the Spirit given so conclusively that none would dare deny it. But no doubt He will leave that revelation to the day when He desires to give that Name forth. Suffice it to know that it will be more wonderful than we could ever imagine.

The Final Admonition To The Age

Revelation 3:13,

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

Every age ends with this same warning. It is the constant plea that the churches listen to the voice of the Lord. In this age the plea is even more insistent than in former ages, for in this age the coming of the Lord truly draweth nigh. The question would perhaps arise, "If there is another age beyond this one, why the urgency?" The answer lies herein. The last age will be a short one—a quick work of consummation. And not only is this so, but one must always remember that in the eyes of God time is so very fleeting; yea, a thousand years are but a day. And if He is coming within a few hours as He views time, then He surely must warn us with all urgency and His voice must continually sound in our hearts to be ready against that coming.

Oh, there are so many voices in the world—so many problems and needs crying for attention; but there will never be a voice so important and so worth attending as the voice of the Spirit. So, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."



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Sermons By
William Marrion Branham
"... in the days of the voice ..." Rev. 10:7