

The Commendable Church – Part I

Intro: Concerning this congregation of Believers, we do not find any condemnation such as we found in the other six churches. While these seven churches were not the only churches in Asia Minor, these churches were pointed out by the Lord Jesus as being emblematic of many other churches throughout the known world then. And there can be no doubt that this would apply to various generations and ages to come. Certainly, in our present church age there are churches very much like any one of the seven churches addressed in Revelation chapters 2 & 3, to which Christ would have the same message to them. The church of the Laodiceans is usually accepted as the church's character in the Tribulation. If we are truly in the final stages of the last days, then the compromising churches of these last days will naturally morph into everything that the church of Laodicea was warned against. This also means for those churches wanting to remain faithful to Christ in every sense of the word, then Revelation 3:11 needs to be our focus. This means we have to be busy about the Lord's business and that the Bible is not merely a book to read, it is survival guide to live our daily lives by.

So, what are the characteristics that makes for a commendable church? There are at least 5 notable characteristics given to us by the Lord Himself.

I. They were commended for their _____ – (strength) – Revelation 3:8.

- A. Before we get too uppity, we should notice that _____ said they "hast a little strength."
1. This would suggest that they had at one time been very strong in their _____ to the truth.
 2. As Jesus presented Himself via John in verse 7, Jesus is encouraging them to _____ Him,
 - a. His true _____, He is holy and He is the truth.
 - b. The connection here is that truth is linked with _____.
 - c. Therefore, sound biblical _____ (truth) & holy living go together, I Peter 1:15 & 16.
 - d. It may seem obvious, but there can be no true holiness with absolute truth.
 - e. Hence, holiness is so much more than mere morality, more than just being good!
 3. One can have morality without truth be it in civil laws, religious rights etc.
 4. But one cannot be holy without truth, truth comes from the _____ of Christ – John 14:6
 5. And this truth is given to us via the Word of God – John 17:17.
 6. If we want to be _____ in the faith, then we have to be in the Word of God – Romans 10:17.
- B. Christ also addresses this congregation's _____ for reaching out with the Gospel – "open door".
1. Because of their faithfulness (strength), Jesus was going to provide opportunities to _____.
 2. We see this in the early church, though in troubling times, Acts 14:26 – 28; I Cor. 16:8 & 9;
II Cor. 2:12; Colossians 4:3. Today we even have the internet, what an open door!
 3. The Lord will open doors for those who are _____ and unashamed of the name of Jesus! Rev. 3:8.
 4. What does it mean to "not deny the name of Jesus?" What are ways one could deny Jesus?
 5. Jesus is the one who _____ these doors and here there is a need to recognize His Lordship.

- a. This city was on a coastal route and given a great opportunity by God.
 - b. This was an imperial route with the opportunity to reach the world.
 - c. God places us as _____ we can be used to minister the Gospel of Christ.
 - d. Will we be like the members of the church of Laodicea or those of Philadelphia?
 - e. Are we _____ for God to open doors or are we content like the Laodiceans?
 - f. Are we going to wait for folks to _____ in or create an appetite in our Christ-like walk.
- C. The model this church sets forth is not determined by what comes at us, regardless, we are to hold to the Truth of the Word of God. (II Tim. 1:13; Hebrews 4:14; 10:23)
- D. The character of any given church is made up of the characteristics of the hearts of its people!
- E. Not the circumstances we face, but who we are in the midst of our circumstances – Rev. 3:8.