

“A SUCESSFUL CHURCH”

BIBLICAL BASIS: REVELATION 3:7-13

The Message to the Church at Philadelphia

Revelation 3:7-13

⁷ *“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens*

and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.

⁸ *“ ‘I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.*

⁹ *Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come*

and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved

you.

¹⁰ *Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to*

try those who dwell on the earth.

¹¹ *I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.*

¹² *The one who conquers (overcomes), I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him*

the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new

Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my

own new name.

¹³ *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’*

Introduction: The famous golfer, Arnold Palmer, had a plaque in his office that said: **If you think you are beat, you are. If you like to win, but believe that you cannot, it is almost assured that you will lose. SOONER OR LATER, THE MAN WHO WINS IS THE MAN WHO BELIEVES HE IS ABLE.**

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through him (Christ) who strengthens me.*

We need to keep moving forward. Nothing in the world can take the place of PERSISTENCE. Former U.S. President Calvin Coolidge wrote: ONLY PERSISTANCE AND DETERMINATION ARE OMNIPOTENTE.

We are called to be totally, continually and completely dependent on God.

Prov.3:5-6 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

Acts 9:6 *So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” NKJV*

NOW: WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT A SUSCESSFUL CHURCH SHOULD HAVE?

BELOVED CHURCH, I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OR A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH.

1. A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH MUST BE FAITHFUL

Revelation 3:8 *“ ‘I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.*

Numbers 12:7 *Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.*

Moses was faithful to God and to his people, because of this he maintained a friendship with God and an intimate communion.

“God spoke to Moses FACE TO FACE, as a reward for His faithfulness.

Our beloved Savior Jesus Christ was faithful in everything that the Father gave him to do.

Jn.4:34. *“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work”.*

Jn.17:4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

-Every moment we must imitate our Savior’s example.

Jn.8:29 *I have glorified you on the earth; I have completed the work that you gave me to do.*

The apostle Paul expressed: **1 Tim.1:12** *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, NKJV*

WE CANNOT FAIL OUR PRECIOUS SHEPHERD. HE HAS COUNTED ON OUR FAITHFULLNESS. WE CANNOT DEFRAUD OUR LORD AND TEACHER.

Charles Swindoll wrote in his book “The Bride of Christ”:
“We are called to carry out our ministries under the watchful eyes of our omnipresent and holy God. No one is faced with a stricter judgement than those who stand before this holy judge.”

WE MUST BE LESS FEARFUL OF MAN AND HAVE MORE FEAR OF GOD!

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: **1 Cor.4:2** *Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.*

WE ARE TO BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS
(ADMINISTRATORS) OF GOD

2. A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH MUST SERVE

Luke 22:27 *For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.*

Dr. Mc Call, famous missionary to Cuba: “YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU FOR YOU TO SERVE,”

ILL. The director of a prestigious symphony orchestra was once asked: which is the most difficult instrument to play?

—He answered THE SECOND VIOLIN.

I CAN ALWAYS FIND THOSE WHO WANT TO PLAY FIRST VIOLIN. THERE ARE MANY OF THEM, BUT WHERE DO YOU FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN PLAY SECOND VIOLIN ENTHUSIASTICALLY?

This is the problem. If we don’t have a SECOND VIOLIN, we don’t have harmony.

-Among the apostles no one wanted to play second violin.

Jesus taught them a great lesson. **Jn.13:14-16.** ¹⁴ *If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.* ¹⁵ *For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.* ¹⁶ *Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.*

When we maintain our focus on the Cross, WE WANT TO SERVE.

Service produces success because IT IS IN SERVICE WHEN WE ARE MOST LIKE CHRIST.

3. A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH MUST BE LOVING

1 John 3:17-18 *But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?* ¹⁸ *Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

John Eldredge in his book “Wild at Heart” wrote: I want to LOVE with much more dedication and not keep waiting for others to love me first.

1 Jn.4:7, 8. ⁷ *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.* ⁸ *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

Gén.45:5-8. ⁵ *But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.* ⁶ *For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which*

there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸ So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Joseph did not see his brothers as enemies.
What an admirable attitude he had under the direction of God!
You did not send me here, for God sent me before you **to preserve life.**

We need the help of God to have hearts full of love.
Joseph was pleasing to God above all else because of his ATTITUDE, FULL OF FORGIVENESS FOR HIS BROTHERS.
Jn.13:35. ³⁵ *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

WHEN WE HAVE AND ATTITUDE FULL OF LOVE, WE WILL BE QUICK TO SHOW LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.

We ask God: to BE FILLED WITH HIS GREAT LOVE.
We walk by faith, trusting that God help us to demonstrate love in our actions.

-Saint Agustin wrote: How do you see yourself? You have hands to help others, feet to carry you to help the poor and needy, eyes to see the desperate and needy, ears to hear the cries and sadness of men. THIS IS WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE.

4. A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH MUST PRAY

Ephesians 6:18 ¹⁸ *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 ¹⁷ *pray without ceasing,*

Colossians 4:2 ² *Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;*

They say of Spurgeon: In his life, the habit of prayer was free with no strings attached. He lived in constant communion with his heavenly Father.

He was always in contact with God, to the point that for him **prayer was as natural as breathing.**

David Livingstone lived in the KINGDOM OF PRAYER and he knew of its powerful and fruitful influence.
GOD'S FAITHFUL SERVANTS, HE WILL FIND THEM ON THEIR KNEES – THEY FOUND HIM ON HIS KNEES NEXT TO HIS BED IN AND ATTITUDE OF PRAYER. HE HAD DIED ON HIS KNEES. What an excellent way to die!

Stanly Jones said: "Prayer is surrender—surrender to the will of God and cooperation with His will. Prayer is not bending God's will to mine, it is adjusting my will to the will of God.

Edward Payson said: "Prayer is the FIRST THING, THE SECOND THING, AND THE THIRD THING needed for ministry. PRAY, therefore, dear brothers, PRAY, PRAY, PRAY."

Prayer calms my heart. Prayer ignites my faith.

-On one occasion John Wesley said: "God cannot do anything except in answer to prayer; and ALL HE DOES COMES THROUGH PRAYER."

-Spurgeon said: "What is needed is SPIRITUAL POWER and to receive this power it is necessary to pay the price of CONSTANT PRAYER."

5. A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH MUST LIVE IN HOLINESS

God calls His people to be HOLY. **Leviticus 19:2**
² *"Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.*

-John Brown expressed: "Consistent holiness is to think as God thinks, and desire what God desires."

-Chuck Colson: "Holiness is the business of every believer, every day. Holiness is evidenced by the decisions we make and the things we do, hour after hour, day after day."

Madre Teresa: "To live in holiness is to do the work of God with a smile on your face."

Matthew 5:8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Charles Swindoll: “The people who live in integrity do not need to hide anything nor fear anything. THEIR LIVES ARE OPEN BOOKS THEY ARE COMPLETE.”

“Keep yourself pure”, Paul told the young man Timothy.

As Proverbs says, GUARD YOUR HEART, BECAUSE FROM IF FLOWS THE MANA OF LIFE.”

Proverbs 4:23 *Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring.*

LET US BE THIS CLASS OF CHRISTIANS!

CONCLUSION: The world is more interested in our WALK more than our TALK. WE CONFESS THAT CHRIST IS OUR ROCK WITH OUR MOUTHS, BUT OUR WALK NEEDS TO MATCH OUR WORDS.

Never let it be said of us: “They talked a good game but their lives didn’t match their talk.”

Mercy Church: ... “It is Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the Lord of hosts. Zechariah 4:6

REMEMBER: A SUCESSFULL CHURCH MUST BE:

1. **FAITHFUL**
2. **SERVE**
3. **LOVE**
4. **PRAY**
5. **LIVE IN HOLINESS**

¡MAY OUR ALL-POWERFUL GOD BLESS YOU, AND UNTIL CHRIST RETURNS GRANT YOU AN OPEN DOOR THAT NO ONE CAN CLOSE!