

Warnings To the Churches - The True Church

by J.C. Ryle

Transcript

The following Sermon was preached in England, in August, 1858.

"On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:18)

We live in a world in which all things are passing away. Kingdoms, empires, cities, institutions, families, all are liable to change and corruption. One universal law seems to prevail everywhere. In all created things there is a tendency to decay.

There is something sad and depressing in this. What profit has a man in the labor of his hands? Is there nothing that shall stand? Is there nothing that shall last? Is there nothing that shall endure? Is there nothing of which we can say--This shall continue forever? You have the answer to these questions in the words of our text. Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of something which shall continue, and not pass away. There is one created thing which is an exception to the universal rule to which I have referred. There is one thing which shall never perish and pass away. That thing is the building founded upon the rock--the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. He declares, in the words you have heard tonight: "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it."

There are five things in these words which demand your attention:

1. A Building: "My Church" 2. A Builder: Christ says, "I will build My Church" 3. A Foundation: "On this rock I will build My Church" 4. Perils Implied: "The gates of hell" 5. Security Asserted: "The gates of hell will not overcome it"

May God bless the words that shall be spoken. May we all search our own hearts tonight, and know whether or not we belong to this one Church. May we all go home to reflect and to pray!

1. First, you have a "Building" mentioned in the text. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks of "My Church."

Now what is this Church? Few inquiries can be made of more importance than this. For want of due attention to this subject, the errors that have crept into the Church, and into the world, are neither few nor small.

The Church of our text is no material building. It is no temple made with hands, of wood, or brick, or stone, or marble. It is a company of men and women. It is no particular visible Church on earth. It is not the Eastern Church or the Western Church. It is not the Church of England, or the Church of Scotland--much

less is it the Church of Rome. The Church of our text is one that makes far less show in the eyes of man, but is of far more importance in the eyes of God.

The Church of our text is made up of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It comprehends all who have repented of sin, and fled to Christ by faith, and been made new creatures in Him. It comprises all God\

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