



To know God, to love and to serve

“God’s Challenge to The Church”

Sermon Six: “Hold On To Your Crown”

Revelation 3: 7- 13 (NIV)

Tuesday, August 17, 2010

I. Introduction

- The church at Philadelphia was alive and faithful.
- It displayed exactly what Christ wanted a church to be.
- If we look at the text, we see there is no complaint or warning against this church that was alive and faithful.
- In each letter to these seven churches, the recipient of the letter was the minister.
- Christ expected the ministers (leaders) to keep the church faithful and alive.
- Jesus Christ described Himself in three ways at the beginning of the letter.
 1. He described Himself as Holy.
 2. He described Himself as the One who is true.
 3. He described Himself as the key of David.

II. The Commendation (v. 8)

- The Lord Jesus Christ commended this church for three things:
 1. The church used the open door of evangelism and missions to reach people for Christ and was strategically located.
 - Its location bordered three towns (Lydia, Mysia and Phrygia), creating mission and evangelistic opportunities.

- The church's city was so strategically located that the whole world could have been penetrated with the gospel by spreading out from the church in Philadelphia.
 - They were reaching out to the lost and Christ knew of their works.
 - He set before them an open door, and they took advantage of the opportunity to evangelize. By doing so, Christ promised that He was not going to let anyone close the door.
- 2.** The church kept Christ's Word, meaning they were faithful to the Word of God.
- They studied the Word of God.
 - They lived the Word of God.
 - They proclaimed the Word of God to believers and unbelievers alike.
- 3.** The church confessed Christ and did not deny the name of Christ.
- This meant more than just witnessing for Christ.
 - It meant that Jesus Christ was made the focus and center of not just their lives but of all the services, meetings, ministries, programs and activities of the church.
 - To confess Christ also meant that people stood fast against opposition and persecution, never caving in under pressure.

III. The Complaint

- Unlike the other churches we've studied, Philadelphia had no complaints noted in the text.
- The church was alive and faithful.

IV. The Warning (v.11)

- The church of Philadelphia was warned to hold on to what they had (faithful and alive).
- They could lose their crown if they denied Christ and committed apostasy.
- This same warning applies to the church of today.
- We must remain faithful and alive so that we don't lose our crown.

V. The Challenge

- Christ challenged the church of Philadelphia to “hold on” to their crown.
- Christ declares time and time again that He is returning to the earth. The text denotes the term “quickly”, meaning Christ is soon to come.
- Because Christ is soon to come, the faithful church must do something. It must hold fast.
- The faithful church must hold on to its evangelistic zeal for winning souls to Christ.
- Holding firm to the Word of Christ was a challenge to the church of Philadelphia, and is a challenge to the faithful 21st century church as well.
- The faithful church should also confess living for Christ and never deny Him.
- The Lord is challenging those of us who are faithful to endure hardship and persecution, knowing He has a crown of righteousness laid up for us.
- Do not allow anyone or anything to cause you to lose the reward God has for you.
- We must encourage ourselves to not become weary in well-doing, for in due season we will reap if we faint not (hold on).

VI. The Promise (vs. 9 – 10; 12 - 13)

- There is great hope given to the church that is alive and faithful.
- Believers shall be vindicated before all their persecutors. (v. 9)
- Believers shall experience a great deliverance from the hour of trial that is coming upon the earth in the end time. (v. 10)
- Verses 12 - 13 give five wonderful promises to the believer (overcomer) who remains alive and faithful to Christ:
 1. They will be made a pillar in the temple of God.
 - a. They will become a permanent part of God’s house and of the eternal worship and service of heaven.
 - b. They will be a vital part – a pillar that symbolizes strength, support, durability, immortality, and a monument.

2. They will receive security, free from this sinful and corruptible world – free to live with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. They will receive God's name.
 - a. This is a symbol of possession and of belonging to God in an absolute and perfect sense.
 - b. The name of God will be written upon them, and they will be marked forever as His.
 - c. Neither man nor Satan will ever again be able to touch or mark them.
4. They will receive the name of the city of God, the New Jerusalem, becoming citizens of the capital of the new heavens and earth.
5. They will receive the Lord's new name.
 - a. What will this new name be?
 - b. No one knows but God Himself; and He has not yet revealed it.