

Sermon #8: Stirred Not Shaken

3-10-2024

BREAKING THE ICE

- How did God speak to you this week through the letter to the church in Philadelphia?

UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH

The city of Philadelphia was in an area that suffered grievously from earthquakes. The town did not have many inhabitants because most people lived in the countryside as farmers out of fear of earthquakes.

Read Revelation 3:7-13

1. Based on v 7-8, what do we learn about the church in Philadelphia?
2. In verse 7, we read Christ as "holy and true". Use the following verses to describe God's holiness (Isaiah 6:1-5, Isaiah 57:15, I Samuel 2:2, Exodus 3:1-6)
3. What two obstacles are listed in 3:8-9?
4. What 3 promises do you see in 3:9, 10, 12?
5. In verse 9, there is a reference to the "synagogue of Satan." Who is it describing, and how might it have been relevant to the church in Philadelphia at that time?
6. Explore the promise of being kept from the "hour of trial" in verses 10-11. What might this trial refer to, and how does the promise impact the way the church is encouraged to endure?
7. Reflect on the connection between faithfulness and endurance in verses 10-11. How does the call to "hold fast" encourage you in your life's circumstances?
8. Read the description of Philadelphia above. If the people lived in the countryside out of fear of earthquakes in the city, how would the description in v 12 "God's pillar" reassure them of His strength to keep them safe in times of instability?
9. Discuss the significance of the promise of a new name for those who overcome in verse 12. What could this new name represent, and how does it reflect God's transformative work in believers?
10. What do the churches of Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) and Philadelphia have in common?

SEEING JESUS CHRIST

The church in Philadelphia was praised for having kept Jesus' Word and not denying His name despite the opposition of the Jews. They suffered, but Jesus promised a reward that their enemies would "fall at their feet and acknowledge that I {Jesus} have loved you." Suffering and opposition are something Jesus knew well during His time on earth.

He experienced great opposition from Jewish leadership and Satan Himself. The same words to the Church of Philadelphia can be said about Jesus, "I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my Word, and have not denied my name."

Though He stayed true to the work God had given him, He willingly laid down his life for our salvation. We are kept from the punishment we deserve as sinners because of his sacrifice on the cross.

Read Philippians 2:5-11.

1. *How does understanding the sacrifice and suffering Jesus endured lead you to deeper worship?*

MAKING IT MATTER

1. Look at the following verses: Acts 14:27, 1 Cor. 16:9, 2 Cor. 2:12, Col. 4v3. In the New Testament an "open door" speaks of opportunity for ministry. In what do these verses speak of an "open door" as a ministry?
2. Our unbelief sees the obstacles, but faith sees opportunities with an "open door." What doors has God opened for you in ministry? Do you tend to see the obstacles or see the opportunities?
3. One of the promises the Savior gives to the church in Philadelphia is that he would take care of their enemies (Rev. 3:9). Think of who you may be considering as an enemy. How does this promise encourage you? Matthew 5:43-48
4. Who does Galatians 2:9 refer to as pillars? Who has been a pillar for you? How? Who would consider you a pillar?
5. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says" is repeated to every church. There is an intentional invitation to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. How can we actively listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our own lives? What do we receive when we take time to listen to the Holy Spirit? (Isaiah 30:21, Psalm 85:8, John 14:26, John 16:13, Hebrew 2:1, Hebrews 3:15)

PRAYING FOR GOD'S POWER

"This is the confidence we have before him: If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we have asked of him." 1 John 5:14-15

When we pray according to God's will it engages the power and guidance of God to bring about our transformation. If we apply these things in our own strength, then it is just legalistic obedience. But, when we humbly ask God to change us and empower us according to His will and by His Spirit, it becomes transformational AND it glorifies God.

1. Ask people to share one key, specific application from today's lesson that they want God to bring about in their life. Then take time to pray for each other in these areas.