

Theme	The Ready Bride of Christ
Topic	The Church in Philadelphia
Speaker	SP Daniel Foo
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Message Summary

Spiritual Objective: To Persevere Even In Times Of Little Strength

The city of Philadelphia was a financially prosperous one, with a large Jewish population. The Church in Philadelphia was one of the two faithful churches that Christ did not have any complaint against. Despite being persecuted by their fellow Jews, they continued to be missions-oriented, keeping the Word of God about patient endurance and remaining faithful in adversity. It is in this context that Christ gives them but one piece of advice: Hold fast that none may seize their crown.

The Depiction of Christ

To the Church of Philadelphia Christ reveals Himself as 3 things. He is Holy, True, and the One Who has the key of David.

Holiness is a description of God. It means to be set apart, and to be distinguished from the common. Not only are we to separate ourselves from the world, we are to separate ourselves to God, conforming to the image of His son.

Jesus is the incarnation of truth, and we must be able to distinguish truth from lies. Pure lies are easy to spot, but it is when truth is mixed with error that the danger of us being deceived increases. One such example of a distortion of the truth is the hyper grace theology. While it is true that Christ has paid for the sins of the world for all time, it is also true that this forgiveness is not automatic. It is here that Word of God equips us to separate truth from lies. 1 John 1:9 tells us that there is an active step that we need to take, and that step is the confession of our sins.

He reveals Himself as the One who has the key of David and reserves the position as Head of the church, an aspect He reveals only to the Church of Philadelphia. This is especially in opposition to the Jews who claim superiority as descendants of Abraham. He comforts His church that is being persecuted and even promises to make His love for the church of Philadelphia publicly known.

The Commendations of the Faithful Church

Christ knew that the Church in Philadelphia had little strength. Even under the constant pressure of the Jews in the land they kept the Word of God. Senior Pastor likens their journey to one of a marathon. The Christian journey is one where we will feel weary. Trials in our lives may exhaust us, but we must learn to lean in complete dependence on God. We are reminded in 2 Corinthians 12:9 that the grace of God is sufficient for us, for His power is made perfect in weakness.

Just like the Church in Philadelphia, we must remember the Word of God. As we remember the Word of God, it is also crucial that we do as the Word says, for Jesus says that such people are like wise men who build their houses on the rock. These houses will not fall in the face of the rain, wind and the floods (Matthew 7:24-25)

The Church in Philadelphia did not deny His name, a lesson given when Jesus was on earth. Matthew 10:33-34 demonstrates the importance of acknowledging Jesus, and the

dire consequences if we deny Him.

Lastly, God commended the church of Philadelphia for keeping His command to persevere. This is an instruction from James 1:12 which promises the crown of life to those who stand steadfast under trial. Romans 5:3-5 also encourages us that there are many good qualities produced as a result of suffering, and

The hope that is birthed will not put us to shame.

Holding on to the end

There is only one counsel for the already faithful church: To hold on. 2 John 8 tells us that holding on is necessary to receive the full reward or we may lose what we have already worked for. There are 2 things that we must hold on tightly to: the Word of God and our relationship with the Holy Spirit. All else, we should only hold loosely at best.

1 Corinthians 9 gives us two descriptions of the Christian walk. The first is a race in which we run with the prize in mind. The second is of the boxer who executes his boxes with precision. We would do well to heed the advice of Hebrews 12:1-2, which tells us to lay aside any weight and sin which will entangle us. In practical terms, this weight includes emotional baggage and unhealed hurts. Holding on to emotional baggage is contrary to the nature of love. Love keeps no records of wrongs and hence cannot keep remembering the wrongs committed against us (1 Corinthians 13:6).

The Promised Crown

God promises to keep the overcomers from the hour of trial, and we have reason to believe that this is referring to the 7 years of tribulation. Not only will God cause their enemies to honor them, He will also cause their enemies to know that we are precious to Him. He will make them a pillar in His temple and this pillar will stand forever. He will write His name on them, and seal them with His mark. This mark implies identity and protection. He will write on them the name of the city of Father-God and write on them the new name of Christ, one of special honor and position.

Conclusion

When Christ returns, those who will be with Him will not be merely called and chosen, but will also be the ones who have been faithful (Revelations 17:14). Will we be among these overcomers who will receive the full reward? Let us not idly answer these questions with words, but demonstrate our intention in how we live our lives.

Questions

Q1) What was the Church in Philadelphia commended for?
(Fill In Answer Here)

Q2) Of the 3 aspects of Christ, which one speaks most to you? Why?
(Fill In Answer Here)

Q3) Are there any hindrances in your walk with Christ? What practical steps can you take to deal with them?
(Fill In Answer Here)
