
Sermon Text Discussion Notes 6/17/2018

Revelation 3:7-13 - "Encouragement for an Ordinary Church" by Drew Hunter

Overview

This letter is written to the church in Philadelphia, a small church that is lacking in prestige and power. It is a church that needs encouragement. Jesus gives this church a message intended to strengthen his people, and he does this by appealing to their imagination through the use of the following three images:

- 1) The Master Key (v.7)
- 2) The Open Door (v.8-11)
- 3) The Immovable Pillar (v.12-13)

Jesus concludes his message of encouragement to Philadelphia (and to us) by describing the beauty of a pillar acting as a support in the temple in the New Creation. Lord help our church to be faithful to such a call!

Quotations

"I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut." Jesus (Rev 3:8)

In his book, *Memoirs of an Ordinary Pastor*, Don Carson wrote about his dad, Tom. Tom was a pastor in French-speaking Canada. He served in a small church. He was not known. His work didn't seem exciting to the world. But, he was a faithful plodder. He kept serving, kept praying, kept loving, kept preaching.

Understanding & Application

- 1) In v.8-11, Jesus tells the church that he has set before them an open door which no one is able to shut. What is the most likely understanding of this image? Is our church/small group an open door?
- 2) Most heroic and faithful Christians are not well known in this world. What matters most to God? Do your priorities mirror what matters most to Him?
- 3) In 2 Corinthians 5:20, Paul reminds us that we are ambassadors for Christ. We are his representatives in this world. In what ways are you being an ambassador for Christ in your family relationships, friendships, at work, in your home, and/or as a parent? Where are you struggling most to best represent Christ?
- 4) There is concern in our culture today about being on the "right side" of history. Describe how the church of Philadelphia was viewed in their culture at that time. How does that compare & contrast to how ZF or even the broader Church is viewed today?
- 5) What encouragement did you personally take away from this text in Revelation 3?
- 6) Who do you know that needs to be encouraged by this message?