

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

The Seven Churches of Revelation: Philadelphia

Revelation 3:7-13

Ps Eddie Ho

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- In John's message to the church in Philadelphia, Jesus who holds the key of David to open or shut the door to the Kingdom of God encourages the Christians there to press on and hold fast to their Christian faith despite trials.
- Jesus assured them that He knew of their faithfulness in keeping to the Word of God and have not denied Christ in the face of persecution by those who worship the emperor of the Roman empire, and the opposition from the Jews who have not kept true to their faith in God. They were also persecuted because of their works – living a life different from the culture of the day of social and class distinctions, blood sports, orgies etc.
- Jesus also promised that Christians who stand firm in their faith in Jesus Christ and stand up against the wrong doings of the majority will become a pillar in the temple of God. Those who overcome the attractions of popularism and worldly power will develop the marks of a true believer. They will not be cast out when Almighty God installs His kingdom when Jesus Christ returns. They will inherit the crown of righteousness as they enjoy the final victory together with Jesus. (Revelation 3:11-12)
- The city of Philadelphia is also known as city of brotherly love. As witnesses for Jesus, the church of today is also entrusted with the key to the kingdom of God which is the Gospel message. We are called to share the Good News and lead them through the door into the Kingdom of Heaven. The strategy for the church is to show forth brotherly love as we embark on the ministry of befriending others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The early Christians were a minority and they were the "odd balls" amongst the Jews and those in the Roman empire. Their Christians devotion stood out from the rest and they were persecuted for their faith. They were encouraged to remain faithful by our Lord Jesus, who knew their works (v8). What situations do we currently face that requires us to rise up and persevere in our desire to win others for Christ?

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2. Similar to the church at Smyrna, the church at Philadelphia did not receive any rebuke from Jesus. The letters to both churches also mention the synagogue of Satan. The Christians in both churches were persecuted by those who twisted the truth. How should we balance between standing up against opposition to uphold truth and showing love in leading others to the gospel of Jesus? [Verses to help us go deeper: Revelation 3:9; 2 Timothy 3:12; Matthew 5:44; 2 Timothy 2:24-25]

3. In Revelation 3:7-8, Jesus presents an open door before the church of Philadelphia. The open door is an opportunity presented to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others. Despite their little strength, they were found faithful in sharing the Gospel. How can we rediscover the joys of sharing the Gospel to those around us? What effective ways can we adopt in personal evangelism? [Verses to help us go deeper: Revelation 3:7-8; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:3]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank God that He continues to keep the door open for us to share the Good News and see many enter the kingdom of God.
- Ask God to lead us to those who are ready to hear the Good News of Jesus and grant us boldness to share this message with them.
- Ask the Lord to grant us perseverance to press on with our efforts in obedience to His commandments to show love to others in order to lead them to the gospel.

MEMORY VERSE

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. [James 1:12, NASB]

PRACTICAL HANDLE

Discuss ideas to spur each other to share the Good News with those around us at a personal level and with the Toa Payoh community as a church. CGs can identify a few initiatives to reach out during the Christmas season, like serving at Light of Christmas (LOC).