



James Update

Strengthening the Church in Latin America

Nov 2016

No Shut Doors

Recently reading Revelation 3, one verse caught my attention. Jesus says, "Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power..."

The church in Philadelphia, pressed by society and civil authorities bent on silencing its gospel-message, faced an enormous decision. Do we keep silent and avoid ridicule/ persecution, or do we speak out and risk ostracism? Roman protocol discouraged the introduction of new deities and ideas into towns and cities (with the exception of Athens). Both Plato and Caesar Augustus set the norm: "local traditions/ religion/ philosophy encourage stability, while change disrupts civic harmony". So to speak to friends and neighbors about their need for this 'new' Savior Jesus and His Salvation was to risk more than just personal reproach.

Face it, believers in themselves had no power to affect the might of Rome. And as persecution mounted, it could even appear to believers that the door was closing or shut for the gospel in Philadelphia. But Jesus, our higher authority, had commanded, "Go and preach the gospel to everyone". His mandate has not changed! Then to this charge He adds, "Others may try to shut the door, but I will keep it open. So don't shrink back – preach the gospel! Be bold".

In a world that continues to define what is socially acceptable and politically correct – our mandate remains firm. Jesus our Lord presses us to take His message of eternal salvation to the lost, to our friend without Christ, to our colleague who does not believe. Without Jesus, he/she is eternally lost. Do we accept possible rejection and ridicule to love them with God's love and lead them to the Savior?!?

God's plan is to redeem a broken world. That's why Jesus is keeping the door open! To trust His Sovereign rule in our lives is to not shrink back – it's to speak up! So boldly and lovingly proclaim the Word of life!

ESI Mexico

I just got back to La Paz from a couple weeks in Mexico. Pastor Edgar is doing an amazing work in the mountains of Oaxaca, and pastor Neri is responsible for 4 groups in Chiapas. It is SO encouraging hearing pastors say, "before we never studied the Bible. Now we are being fed and we are feeding the people in our churches".

Neri and Kep in Chiapas



Kpr Debbie James



ESI pastors Mexico

Our Purpose ...

to exalt Christ strengthening the church in Latin America to be true to the Bible, discipling believers to maturity & taking the gospel where it is least known.

Please Pray:

- **Equipping Servants pastoral training** —that the 750 active participants & 1550 grads since 2002 will know the sufficiency of Christ & His Word to impact the world & church for Christ.
- **14 Pastoral-Assistant Volunteers:** intensive 2 year training for pastors in Bolivia.
- **Equipping Servants Expansion: Pray** as we start new training centers in Uruguay, Colombia & Cajamarca, Peru. **Pray** for God's supply for the 2500 Pastor-Book-Sets needed over the next 5 years.
- **Family:** Andrew & Angie are in Uruguay. Pray for the next 2 years as they learn the culture and build relationship to start planting churches in this very spiritually challenging area of Montevideo. Katie is seeing gospel impact in her relationships in Cleveland. Sami & Heather serve the Lord in the ILC church in La Paz in Biblical Counseling ministry.

Andrew's ordination

Andrew was ordained for pastoral ministry at Parkside Church on Sunday, October 23. He and Angie were commissioned for missionary service to Uruguay with SIM that same day by the elders of Parkside Church.

