

Laodicea ~ Nothing Real - Revelation 3:14-22

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Date: 29 January 2025

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[0 : 0 0] So Revelation chapter 3. We looked at the Church of Philadelphia last week, and it was a church that really didn't have anything negative to say about it.

And this week we're going to look at a church that really doesn't have anything good to say about it. But there is. You know, just like, I can't remember to get the name straight.

It was Smyrna? No, Smyrna's persecuted. Sardis, the compromising church, the one married to the world. There was nothing good to say about it. Well, it was. There was something good. Because there were those there that had the potential to repent.

Laodicea is the same. There's potential there. There's repentance that's optional. So there is something good. There's always something good to say when we can say to someone, repent. That's a good thing. That's an option.

Laodicea, I'm titling it, nothing real. There's nothing real there. I was kind of going through Laodicea, nothing extreme. Laodicea, neither hot or cold or whatever. But I think as we go through this, we're going to see that the telltale thing about Laodicea is, man, there's just nothing real.

[1 : 0 7] It's just all facade. It's just all a perception. So where is Laodicea? There's the Mediterranean Sea. John is on the Isle of Patmos. He's writing about, well, writing to these seven churches.

And I tell you, each one, these mini epistles, man, we could spend a lot of time in them. I mean, I really feel like we just bounce across the surface. This is nine verses, I think.

And I've got about 10 pages of notes, which a standard message, like a Sunday morning is anywhere from 8 to 12, 9, 10, 11, 12. I can kind of gauge it. So 10 pages on a Wednesday night.

You know, we'll be here. No, we won't be here a while. Sometimes just how it spreads them out. But there's a lot here, and I think there could be even more. Obviously, there's more.

But so going clockwise, we went Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and now down to Laodicea. Laodicea is interesting where it's located.

[2 : 0 4] It's not located that far from Colossus. So Paul, when he writes to the church in Colossus, when he writes to the Colossians, he, in verse 1 of chapter 2, he says, I would that you know what great conflict I have for you.

He's saying, I have this conflict within myself that I want to be there with you and for them at Laodicea. And for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh. Like, I really want to come and see you guys. It just hasn't worked out.

And then in Laodicea. It's only a few miles away. Six miles or something. At the end of Colossians 4.16, he says, And when this epistle is read among you, Colossians, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that likewise, read the epistle from Laodicea.

I wonder what Paul's epistle to Laodicea was, you know? I mean, if John's, the one from Jesus through John, is like, Man, I'm going to vomit you out of my mouth. And this is John the Beloved.

I don't know what Paul's must have been like. I'm going to come with a paddle in hand. Timothy, Paul would write in 1 Timothy chapter 6, beginning in verse 17, he says, In other words, Timothy, Let them know that there's a reality, and there's that which is not reality.

[3 : 37] There's that which is real, and there's that which is passing away. There's that which you can grab onto, and it's gone the next day. And then there's that which you can use what you have now to invest in something real.

So, Laodicea, verse 14, And unto the angel of the church the Laodiceans write.

Laodicea was also noted as a commercial center. If you saw those ruins in that first slide, there's a lot of ruins in Laodicea. It's very wealthy. It was a commercial center. Some of its goods were exported all over the world.

It's frequently noted that the Laodiceans prided themselves on three things. Financial wealth, an extensive textile industry like wool, and a popular eye salve, which was exported around the world.

We're going to see that as Jesus is going to say to them, You think you're rich, and you're not. You think you're clothed, and you're not. You think you can see, and you can't. All these things he's going to speak to them.

[4 : 36] Now, one of the problems with Laodicea was they had a poor water supply. They literally had an aqueduct that, these pipes, and that was encased in concrete, but they're so, calcium carbonate, the water was so hard that they would clog up, and they have to go through and bore them out.

But they had a spring there. They were vulnerable, though, to attack or siege. If any army surrounded the city, they would not have sufficient water in the city, and the supplies could easily be cut off.

Therefore, the leaders of Laodicea were always accommodating to any potential enemy, always wanted to negotiate and compromise instead of fight. Now, we're going to get to where it's going to talk about, you know, Jesus is going to say that they're lukewarm.

That's what the church in Laodicea is known for, right? They're lukewarm. They're neither hot nor cold. And you may have heard that, well, that's because they didn't have a water supply. And so there was two sources.

They got it from a hot springs up in Hierapolis, and then they got it from a cold water source, which was in Colossus. That's not true. There is no archaeological evidence that shows an aqueduct in any way, shape, or form, and the extensive size that would need to be to cover that terrain.

[5 : 46] Now, they do have an aqueduct that goes to Laodicea, but it's from a nearby spring. When Jesus says that, we'll get to that. I think what he's referencing is the fact that, yes, from Laodicea over there, Hierapolis, known for their hot springs.

Over here, Colossus, known for its frigid waters. And he's saying either one of those, by the time you bring them to Laodicea, they're just lukewarm. There's some other things we'll look at when we get there.

But anyway, Laodicea, what does the name mean? I don't know. It seems to have some connotation of meaning like the place of people, the place of the people. This was a people's place.

This would be what you'd call a seeker-friendly church, for sure, at this place. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write. So first we're going to get, after we get the name of the church, we get a description of Christ.

Then we're going to get the commendation. There is none. Then we'll get the concerns. There's a lot. Then we'll get the exhortation. It's extensive. The promise to the overcomer. And then the closing.

[6 : 45] So here we have our description of Jesus. These things saith the amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. So we see three things about Jesus describing him.

He's the amen, the faithful and true witness, and the beginning of the creation of God. What does amen mean? It means so be it. That's what we say, so be it.

It's just kind of like something we've picked up, but it means something that's sure, something that's true, and something that's faithful. Amen is the finality. You say amen, that is it.

It's definitive. So so be it, meaning this is it. This is the final thing. It's sure, it's true, it's faithful. There is nothing beyond it. So when Jesus says here, he's the amen, that's it.

There's nothing beyond that amen. Amen and well, you know, like if you're at the end of a movie, you sit in the theaters, and then you wait for the credits, you wait five extra minutes to see that one tag scene they put on the end.

[7 : 43] You're like, there is none. Amen, and that's it when it says the end. And John, right, in chapter 19, verse 30, as Jesus is hanging on the cross, he says, it is finished.

Amen. And bowed his head and gave up the ghost. So he's the amen. Speaking to here, the Laodiceans, like guys, this is, my word is final. There is nothing beyond this.

And then he says, he's the faithful and true witness. Now this is referring back to, remember in Revelation chapter one, where Jesus, John says that he saw Jesus. He turned and saw the voice of him that spake with him.

Well, if you go further back in John chapter one, all the way kind of to the intro, the opening, John says, well, this letter's from me and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead and the prince of the kings of the earth and him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

So we're going all the way back to there where Jesus is the faithful and true witness. As John has already pointed out. So this word, amen, it works itself out in a life where the words and the witness, they align in a nature that's full of faith and truth.

[8 : 57] So Jesus is a faithful witness, full of faith and truth, but he's also the amen. So the amen will work itself out through this life where words and witness align. And then there's this nature that's full of faith and full of truth.

John 1, 14, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth, the faithful and true witness.

So Jesus is full of and he just, it just exudes from him. And there's no other source, right? Laodicea, who was looking for a source, source of water, source of wealth.

And Jesus says, I am that source. Ephesians chapter four, beginning in verse 22, Paul will tell us that we should put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, that we should be renewed in the spirit of our minds and that we should put on this new man, this faithful and true witness, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

So where Jesus is the faithful and true witness, he's essentially saying to the church in Laodicea, you can be too. There is that opportunity. There is that option. And third, he's the beginning of the creation of God.

[10 : 16] Under the church of the angel of Laodiceans write, these things saith the amen, the faithful and true witness, and the beginning of the creation of God. And there we saw that in Revelation chapter one as well, pulling from that description of Jesus.

As Jesus says, I am the Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end, saith the Lord, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. There is nothing self-sustaining, no matter how well endowed with material resources it may be.

It is not self-sustaining. And here the church in Laodicea, we're going to find out they are loaded with material resources. They don't need anybody. But Jesus says, I am the first and the last.

I am the beginning and the end. All things have an origin and all things are sustained. It's just the facts of life. Everything has origin and everything is sustained.

Right? We know that Jesus holds all of this together. That if he wanted to, the molecules in this podium, these chairs would fly apart. They all had origin and they're all being sustained. Now there's many things we take part in sustaining.

[11 : 20] You know, we got to vacuum it. And if it gets stained, we unstain what we want to sustain. And this is part of what we do. But if it wasn't for the Lord, where would we be?

To trust in uncertain riches? To trust in the things that had origin and that are sustained? Thinking that somehow I'm part of that process of keeping it? No. All things have origin.

And all things are sustained. And we're told that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. He is the firstborn of every creature. For by him were all things created.

That are in heaven. That are in earth. Visible. Invisible. Whether they be thrones. Or dominions. Or principalities. No matter the powers. Or authorities. Whatever they are.

They all were created by him. And for him. You see, in our lives, there's things that we look at, and we see them as powerful. As an authority. We think, that is like, I have nothing I can combat against that.

[12 : 15] They're so strong and powerful. And the scripture tells us, yeah, well, that was originated in God. And he is before all things. And by him, all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church.

Who is the beginning. The firstborn from the dead. That in all things, he might have the preeminence. The wording there, where it says, that he is the firstborn of every creature, is the Greek word, the root from where our word prototype comes from.

That he is the prototype. He is the first to issue forth. From which all others issued forth. He is like the original edition. Everything else after him, it's just another edition.

But he is the original source. He is the amen. He is the first, and he is the ultimate source, of all life, and of our new life. And that's who Jesus says, I'm presenting to this church in Laodicea.

Laodicea, this is who I am. Know this about me. Because he knows them. In verse 15, he says, I know you. I know your works. That you are neither cold nor hot.

[13 : 19] I would that you were cold or hot. Before we get into cold or hot, Jesus knows what no one else does. Right? Jesus is able to see and perceive what no one else can. See, others may never see or know our works, but Jesus says to every single one of these churches, I know your works.

I know them. And he sees them for what they really are. Now, do we want to be a church that thinks our works are grand and great and wonderful? Do we want to be that person?

Where Jesus will say, many will say to me in that day, Matthew 7, 22, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name, we've cast out devils. And in your name, we've done many wonderful works.

And Jesus says, yeah, I know your works. And then when I profess unto them, but I don't know you. Depart from me, you that work iniquity. Iniquity? But I've done wonderful works.

Yeah, but iniquity is based on our relationship. You see, you're still in your sins if you don't have a relationship with me because only through relationship can I then remove that iniquity. I know your works.

[14 : 23] Jesus knows and sees the reality of what our works are. For us, what do we want? We want to know the work of God. And by doing that, we can know the God of the work, right?

It's not enough just to be part of a work. We can come here and God's moving and it's exciting. Be part of a work. And you can get a buzz off of that. You can get jazzed up and go home and be like, yeah, it's good.

I cleaned a toilet at church. That's got to be something in heaven. Right? But do you know the God of the work? If you don't, he's going to say, well, I mean, your works, great, but what about the relationship?

There are two different types of work. There's the work of faith and the work that comes from self-effort. Those are the only two works that we have an option to partake of in this world. In John chapter 6, beginning verse 28, the disciples wanted to know what shall we do that we can work the work of God?

How do we take part in your work, Jesus? And Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, relationship, that you believe on him whom he has sent. You receive the one that he has sent.

[15 : 31] Hot or cold, what does that mean? He says, I know your works, that you are neither hot nor cold. Does that mean that Jesus would rather have us be, you know, on fire Christians?

You know, get hot, stay hot. That's as far as I'm going now. Be on fire for the Lord. Right? You all know that song? No? Okay. Well, Don can teach it to us later. Or they'd rather have us just be cold, dead.

You know, better to be an unbeliever, lost in your sins, than a carnal Christian. Is that what he's saying? Not at all. Not at all. Hot and cold are definitive states of which one could say amen about.

You're hot. You're cold. They are definitive. You are one or the other. The church in Laodicea was careful to maintain neutrality in all of their works and witness. Well, don't be too extreme.

Whoa, pull it back there. Don't get too extreme. If you wanted that church, you would never feel uncomfortable. You'd never be offended. But you'd also never feel alive. You might feel like, hey, that was, that was, I felt like a community.

[16 : 33] You know, they have good coffee there. You know, it's a good, it's a good vibe and a good atmosphere. But did you go home feeling alive? Did you leave knowing that the spirit of God had worked in your life? You know, sometimes I feel like, man, Lord, teaching your word always seems to be dramatic.

But it's not. It's impactful. The word of God should be impactful. It should be impactful in our devotional lives. It shouldn't just be like, I read Psalm 23 again. You know, we're going through God's word because we want it to impact us.

And so, in teaching God's word, if this is not impactful, what effect does it have? Right? So hot and cold, they're just definitive statements over what Jesus is looking at the church of Laodicea and says, I want to say amen over your life, but there's nothing there.

Jesus is expecting polarization. You should be hot. You should be cold. There should be a polarization that's happening. Hebrews 4.12, for the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of sunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

There should be a division. When I come to God's word, it's going to divide. I might go home feeling cut up, uncomfortable. Matthew 10.39, he that finds his life, she'll lose it.

[17 : 52] He that loses his life for my sake, she'll find it. That's a very polarizing statement. It's a very definitive statement. And I love this verse. One of my 75 favorite verses in the Bible.

Jeremiah 23.29, is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces. Well, I went to church. Yeah, do you have a good time? Oh, it was great. You know, I felt like I was lit on fire and smashed into pieces.

God did a work. Praise God, right? You're alive. There's something there. The church should not be trying to make you comfortable, but alive.

That's why we come, right? We want to be alive. Jesus is the amen. He's sure. He's final. He's faithful.

And he's a true witness. And he is the origin of life and vitality. Laodiceans, what are they? And we're going to see this as we go through this, just like the other churches where we see who Jesus is and then we see a picture of what he's, what the other, what the church is not.

[18 : 58] Laodiceans, where Jesus is amen, he's sure, he's final, well, they're lukewarm in verse 16. They're unsure. Where Jesus is faithful and true, they're unfaithful to the truth.

Where Jesus is the origin of life and vitality, Jesus will say to them, you are sick, you are blind, and you think you're self-sufficient. You're absolutely dependent.

So, Jesus says, because of this state of lukewarmness, because of this state of having nothing definitive, always maintaining neutrality, never wanting to take a stand, never letting God's word cause that division, that polarization in your life.

So then because, verse 16, you are lukewarm, neither cold, nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. I will vomit you out of my mouth. Yeah, that's a weird picture.

I don't know of any other scripture that says we're in Jesus' mouth. If you think about the beginning here of Revelation in chapter 1, where John saw, he said, I turned to see the voice that spake with me, and then in, and where to say he spoke, and out of his mouth went a sword.

[20 : 15] Verse 16, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. Here's Jesus as John sees him. Out of his mouth is coming a sword. Out of his mouth is coming this division. Out of Jesus' mouth comes this polarization, the amen.

What is he spewing out? Man, that was just lukewarm. Tepid, fluctuating in temperature, but never extreme one or the other. Jesus sees what the church really is, and he knows it for what it is, not what it perceives itself to be.

He also sees what it could have been. He knows what it could be, the potential they have. He says, you're not hot or cold. That means you could have been. You could have been this. You could have had an opportunity, but now you're lukewarm.

To spew, well, it means to vomit. And again, this lukewarm, is it because of the waters? There's, maybe. I mean, I don't know.

Drinking lukewarm water has never made me sick. Maybe I drank a lot of it. There's also, as a practice, in this time period, the Romans, they had vomitoriums. The idea was, you'd eat and eat and eat, and you'd get full, but you didn't want to stop, you wouldn't leave the party.

[21 : 21] So I guess someone came up with the idea that if you take a peacock feather and, you know, you can just go back in and go some more. So it was a common practice for them to spew things out.

But I think what Jesus is saying here, to spew, is rejecting something. It's extreme. With extreme disgust, he's rejecting it, you know, when you vomit something up. It's forceful, the picture here.

It's not just like, well, I'm going to set you aside. This is a forceful rejection. It's a choice, he's saying. I will do this. This is something I'm going to do. This is not something that just happened.

And it's something then once he's done this, that which he's spewing out, it's no longer a part, and he's saying there's no value. There's no value in this for me to retain this. And so Jesus says, because you're lukewarm, you're neither cold nor hot, you don't potentially have a place with me.

You have no part in me. Because you say, I am rich, in verse 17, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

[22 : 29] Jesus sees their state. But what do they say? Because thou sayest. Remember, we saw that in Revelation chapter 3. We're in chapter 3, but verse 1, regarding the church of Sardis. He said to the angel of the church in Sardis, write, these things saith he that has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

And know thy works, that thou is a name, thou lives, and are dead. It's easy to say that. Oh, I've got a name. I go to Calvary Chapel Charlotte. You know, I'm a Bible-carrying, card-carrying Christian.

I've got a name. Well, here they're saying, our words are not our reality. Many times we think they are. What we speak, we think is the reality. You know people who say more than they are, and you know they're not, and it's sometimes just awkward.

Oh, yeah. Praise God. Our words cannot make reality. They can only reflect it. And that's what truth is.

Truth is when our words and reality align. The reason a church would be spewed was because of their incompatibility with the truth.

[23 : 35] What came out of Jesus' mouth in chapter one? Sword. The word of God. Truth. Well, this church cannot be compatible with that. So they're being spewed out. There's no compatibility with the truth.

The church at Laodicea said these things. It said, I am rich. I'm abounding in resources. I am increased with goods. I'm amply supplied.

I don't need anything else. If you have need of nothing, I have no necessities. I'm good. I'm good. This is what they said. But Jesus says, you know not.

They had no perception of reality. Their lack of spiritual identity, their lukewarmness, they were neither hot nor cold. They had no spiritual identity. Led them to view their situation with a false sense of reality.

That they viewed their situation as if it was something, but it's not. And what's that? That's the flesh. The flesh always views life with a false sense of reality. Remember when we referenced this section of scripture a lot, but I don't know.

[24 : 38] Jesus was feeding the 5,000, right? And they clean up all the baskets, all the bread, and they put them in baskets. And then they're going across the Sea of Galilee, and he turns to the disciples, and he says, hey, beware the leaven of the Pharisees.

And they're like, God, it's because we brought no bread. You know, after collecting 12 basketfuls. And Jesus says, why reason you because you have no bread? Perceive you not, neither understand.

So they had no perception. They had no discernment. They had no perception of the reality of who Jesus was and what he could do in this moment. Why? Have you your hearts yet hardened?

Having eyes see you not, having ears hear you not, and do you not remember? No, because spiritual perception is a condition of the heart, not the mind. They could have all those baskets full of bread, and they had no spiritual perception because their heart was hard.

False perception led them to think their resources were adequate, that they were adequately supplied, and they had need of nothing. But what does Jesus say? He says, thou art.

[25 : 39] This is the reality. Spiritual reality is the only reality, and it is a reality that is only seen through the eyes of Jesus. He's the only one who gives us spiritual reality. He says, you are wretched, miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

It's not what you think you are. It's not what you say you are. Spiritual reality is only seen through the eyes of Jesus. How do I see through the eyes of Jesus? Anybody have any ideas? Whoa.

Yeah, how do we see through his eyes? Man, he gives it to us. He says, this is how I look at sin. This is how I look at a marriage relationship. This is how I look at the way you should treat your brother.

This is how I look at your work relationship. You want to see through my eyes? You want spiritual perception and reality? We can do that. The reality for the church of Laodicea. We see that they are wretched.

Jesus says, wretched. It means full of trouble and toil. They're miserable. They're to be pitied. In other words, their situation is completely unenviable. You would not want to be in it.

[26 : 41] They are poor. They're lacking. They're beggarly. They think they have so much and they need to ask others that they should be asking. They're blind. They have no perception or understanding.

They can't see. And they're naked. They're uncovered. They're exposed. And they're shameful. This is what Jesus says the reality is. You are full of trouble and toil. He says, as he looks at this church, he sees and he speaks the reality that they are toiling with no gain.

They are in an unenviable condition. They have no ability to grasp reality. And they're without resources to cover their shame. And this is a church that says that I am rich, I'm increased in goods, and I have need of nothing.

And Jesus comes and visits that church and goes, man, you are toiling so hard, but there is no gain. Nobody's envying your condition. You have no ability to grasp reality.

You can't see what's actually happening, and there are no resources to cover your shame. The resources of this world, they are not real. Why? Because that which is real lasts.

[27 : 50] The world passes away, says John, in 1 John 2, 17, and the desires thereof, but he that does the will of God abides forever. The resources are not real because they will not and cannot last.

This body, in its current state, it lacks permanence. It lacks reality. That's why we have the hope of the resurrection, that we will be metamorphosized, transformed.

We will get a new body that will have permanence. So Jesus looks at this church, and he says, I'm out of here. Turns and walks out the door.

He says, I'm done with you, right? I probably would, you know, walk in the church like, hey, we got it made. I'm like, this place is nuts. There are churches out there that they've got the, I'm saying Mary Grant, what are those things?

Roller coasters onto their stage. They'll do movie, month, all kinds of things. And you'd look at that, and they're like, we're rich. We're doing great.

[28 : 51] So you got a lot of works, but do you know the God of the work? But Jesus doesn't leave them. He doesn't cast them off, and he doesn't say, well, you know, I'm going to, I'm going to leave here and go to Calvary Chapel, Charlotte. No.

He says in verse 18, I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire that you may be rich. In God's economy, a lack of resources never prevents a purchase.

Isaiah 55, 1, he says, Ho, everyone that thirsts, come you to the waters. He that has no money, come you buy and eat. Yea, come buy wine and milk without money, without price.

He says, Laodicea, you are destitute. But in God's economy, a lack of resources never prevents a purchase. Come and buy. Come and receive. I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire that you may be rich.

God is the source of true resources and white raiment that you may be clothed. So here we have those things Laodicea was known for. Oh, they were wealthy. Oh, they had this rich textile industry.

[29 : 55] He says, no, no, no. You have nothing, but I have something. You're naked. I can clothe you. And that the shame of your nakedness did not appear and anoint your eyes with eye salve that you may see.

Gold. What is he saying here about the gold? Well, he says to buy it. Buy gold that's been tested and proved and true. What's he saying about the white raiment? Buy white raiment that's a real covering, not just one that's perceived.

And the eye salve says it's an external source of discernment. It's not something you already have. They thought they possessed everything. He said, no, you need to get something. You need to have something that someone else is going to supply you.

In 1 Corinthians 3, verse 11, Paul writes, for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any man build upon that foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest.

For the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. And that gold, we want it to withstand that. We want it to be something that lasts.

[31 : 02] As Peter says, that the trial of our faith being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found under the praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1, 7. That our faith is much more precious than gold. The gold that we buy from God is tested and is proved true. And there is real value there.

Proverbs 16, 16. How much better is it to get wisdom than gold? To get understanding rather than to be chosen than silver. Why? Well, someone can take my gold. The gold market can plummet and has no value.

But man, wisdom and understanding, you can't take that from me and that will always have value. The white raiment, we know that multiple times in Revelation, we've been told that there's white raiment and he that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.

Remember Jesus, the parable of the wedding feast, when the master of the feast comes in and he sees one of the guests there and he says, where's your robe? He's like, well, I didn't have a robe.

[32 : 05] And it's kind of extreme, but he said to the servants, well, he doesn't have a robe, so bind him hand and foot, take him away and throw him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth for many are called, but few are chosen.

Many perceive themselves be much more than they are, but God knows who we really are. The eye salve, something that must be applied. James tells us in James chapter one, verses 23 through 25, for if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he's like unto a man who beholding his natural face in a glass, he beholds himself and goes away and straightway forgets what manner of man he was.

It's like looking in the mirror and be like, man, I need to shave. I should fix my hair. I should wash my face. And then you go to work. There's something that needs to be, there's something off there.

Jesus is saying there's something that needs to be applied. So is everyone who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues therein, the one who goes and straightway takes care of himself, but the one who goes and being forgetful here, well, he's like that man who forgets what he looked like.

But the one who says, hey, I'm going to take care of this. I'm going to do something about this. Well, that man's a doer of the work and he should be blessed in his deeds. Discernment is not a matter of seeing or perceiving, but understanding what I see, right?

[33 : 34] I can see something, but do I understand it? Remember that one guy that was blind and Jesus healed him? And he said, I see men walking about as trees. And if you're blind from birth and you don't know what people look like and you know what people feel like, you know what a tree feels like, and you see someone just like upright walking, well, maybe it's a tree.

Right? And then Jesus heals his understanding. Discernment is a matter of understanding, not seeing. And so we've seen here through these verses, what does God's word do?

As God's word is the one that's coming, it's Jesus speaking to the church, God's word coming to the church. Well, it dispels delusions, this delusion that they're under. God's word comes in and just like it said in Hebrews, it's quick and powerful and it divides.

It completely cut apart their delusions. It reveals the true state of things. God's word gives it to us pretty straight. It says, this is how it is. If it wasn't for God's word giving it to us straight, what hope would we have?

Hey, you're a sinner. You need a savior. Well, I don't, could you, could you make that? Oh, I don't want to offend you. I'm sorry. You have issues and you know, we can work through them.

[34 : 45] What hope is that? I don't want to continue to work through my issues. I want to know the issues that I continually have, I've already been taken care of. It's like, okay, I can handle that. The word of God, it provides a source of true riches.

Only through God's word do we get that source. Our response to faith in God's word will abundantly supply the remedy to every condition of sin and every condition of the flesh.

God's counsel is rich, it covers shame, and it gives discernment. For Jesus says now, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.

This is hard for Laodicea. They don't rebuke anybody. They don't say anything hard. He's just said some hard things. Hey, you're wretched, you're blind, you're poor, you're naked, you're destitute. There's a solution here, but it's not going to be easy.

You're going to have to accept the reality of the situation. The word love there is not agape, it's phileo. He says, as many as I love, as many as I like, approve of, man, I like you, I approve of you.

- [35 : 48] As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. And to rebuke is to refute or convict. God's word, it refutes my ideas, my convictions. Whenever your ideologies meet God's word, and there's an impasse, what needs to change?

What needs to go? My views and ideologies. It's always sad to see people who hold to those views and ideologies and try to work around God's word. Those are the ones who look for those who have teachers who will itch their ears.

I chasten. To chasten means to teach, to train, or instruct. As many as I like and approve, I refute, I convict, I teach, I train, I instruct. Be zealous, therefore, and repent.

God's love is displayed through care, not comfort. Hebrews chapter 12, beginning in verse 5, and have you forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children?

My son despised not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loves, he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.

- [36 : 56] If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons. For what son is he whom the father does not chasten? But if you be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, it's not unique to you and me, all of God's children, then are you, but if you be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are you illegitimate and you're not sons.

Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless, afterwards, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. No chastening for the present.

We get fixated on the present. We live for the present. We live for comfort. God's love is displayed through care and not comfort. And the long-term comfort that comes from correction is far better than the momentary comfort that comes from compromise.

The church that would compromise in the moment because I don't want to feel that momentary discomfort, much better in the long run to take the correction and the comfort that will come from that. And Jesus says, and this is almost the part where I think it's kind of like a commendation because of potential.

Be zealous, therefore. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Be earnest. Be real. Burn. Be hot or cold.

- [38 : 14] Have something real. Have something substantial about you. To repent, well, we know what that means to change your mind, but it means choose a better path. Choose a better reality. Something that's real, earnest, and alive.

If God takes such pains and efforts and zeal with me, then ought I not to with God as well? Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and will sup with him and he with me.

And here we have this picture now again of Jesus like spewing out his mouth. You know, it's kind of like sitting at a meal. He's drinking a cup and now he's standing at a door and knocking. His desire is to come in and to sup with us.

Jesus is saying in relation to the church, I changed that word. I put the word if instead of of, of Laodicea, Jesus in relation to the church of Laodicea, what is he doing?

He has a position. He's standing. He has a place at the door and he has a purpose. He's knocking. He's standing at the door and knocking. The church's preferred response would be to hear God's word and to open to God's word, to open to the word made flesh.

- [39 : 22] If any man will hear my voice and open that door, I will come in. There's only one door to the heart and it's the same door to the church. It's a door that has to be opened by faith.

Hebrews 11, 6, but without faith, it is impossible to please him. For he that comes to God must believe that he is and that he's a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. You're not going to come to God if you don't believe he is.

You're not going to open that door and let Jesus in. Jesus is standing without, but what does he say to the church? I prefer to be seated. I will come in and sup with you.

Jesus is at the door, but where does he prefer to be? He prefers to be at our side, eating with us. Jesus is knocking to gain entrance, but he prefers access and fellowship.

This is Jesus in relation to the church and it's also personal because if any man, one man acting in faith can open the door to God doing great things in the church.

[40 : 24] Just one person acting in faith. You know, I love the fact that there's so many of us here that that's why we're here. We want Jesus. We want to walk in faith. We want to be led by the spirit, but you have to step.

Sometimes that's like, I don't really like talking to people. Oh, go talk to someone. You know, oh, worshiping the Lord. Oh my word, I almost raised my hands. Careful. You know, like, go and get prayer.

I don't know. I don't know. Jesus is standing and knocking. Jesus is saying, would you just open the door I want to be with you. I want to be near you. I want to be by your side. I want to have fellowship.

But the only way to do that is through the access of faith. God's word has brought riches, covering, sight, correction, fellowship, but it can be kept out by a door.

A door that I keep closed. It's not a, it's not a fortress. It's not got a hundred locks on it. Jesus isn't trying to bang it down. He's just saying, I'm here. Open the door and let me in.

[41 : 28] To him that overcomes, will I grant to sit with me in my throne even as I also overcame and am sat down with my father in his thrones. In his throne.

Sorry. Jesus says in John 16, 33, these things have I spoken unto you that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.

He that overcomes, Jesus overcame. How do we partake of that? Well, we have to keep going back to these verses because they're the ones that fit. For whosoever is born of God, whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

Our faith in the one that overcame the world. It tells me to be of good cheer. Revelation 12, 11, we'll get there many weeks from now. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb, overcame the enemy by the blood of the lamb, by the word of their testimony, and they love not their lives unto the death.

Overcoming is not about effort, it's about effectiveness. How effective, not am I, but how effective is the one I'm putting my faith in who has overcome? Jesus effectively overcame the world.

[42 : 35] So my faith in him will as well. The word where he says to grant, he says, I will grant you to sit within my throne and with my father and his throne.

That word grant means to freely give for another's advantage. So I'm going to grant you something. I'm going to grant you my water bottle. It's to freely give to you for your advantage.

In Hebrews chapter 12, we know that verse, famous verse, or wherefore seen where our compassed about was so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In Revelation 4, we will get there next week. Verse 4, we read that there are those on thrones in heaven. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats saw four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment.

[43 : 42] And they had on their heads crowns of gold. What a beautiful picture. We've just gone through these seven churches. When we hit this part and we read that, I'm sorry if you're honest with yourself and honest with the text and you read that, there's only one conclusion who that is.

Man, that's the church. There we are, clothed as he promised. Those who overcame and they get to sit and have fellowship with Jesus. Gold, gold tried in a fire. Now it made crowns put on our heads.

A throne means position. Authority, it's established, it's not moving anywhere. It means royalty and it means the authority to judge. But I love this because Jesus was knocking at the door, right?

The door to my house. I mean, what do I have? Jesus coming in? You know, you have company coming and you gotta get everything clean. Imagine if you knew Jesus was gonna come and visit your house. I don't know if Zacchaeus was married, but when he said, hey Zacchaeus, come down, I'm going to your house today.

He was probably like, oh my wife. Jesus is here. Not only does Jesus honor our homes with his presence, but he then invites us into his home.

[44 : 50] And his home's a palace and there's a throne and we're in robes and crowns. I don't have that to offer, Jesus. Jesus says, all right, I'm not looking. I know you're blind and poor and wretched and naked and miserable.

Nobody's envying your position. Just let me in. I can do an awful lot. Verse 22. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches as every one of these letters to the churches is ended.

So what would this one be? What kind of ear do they need? They need a spiritual ear that has been given discernment by God's word. As their ear has been opened to God's word, they now have discernment.

They have a spiritual ear. They can truly assess their situation. The Spirit, what is the Spirit speaking to this church? Speaking reality. Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glory is glory in reality, that he understands and knows me.

And I forgot to put the reference. That's Jeremiah 9, 23 and 24. That's what we glory in. We glory in the fact that we know and understand the Lord.

[46 : 00] Those are the things, what are they? You know, riches, our earthly wisdom, our strength, they all fade. But Jesus never does. I don't think Jesus is knocking on the door to this church to get in.

I think every time we come here, it's because we know Jesus is here. We want to be here with him. But I do know that there's areas in my heart and in my life that I've got closed doors. And many times I don't realize it until you get that knock.

Jesus? You don't want to go in there. We don't go there. He's like, no, I want to go in there. Why? He wants a clean house? No, no. He says, I just want to come in and fellowship with you.

This is an area I'd like to have fellowship with you. Lord, after eight o'clock, I sit down and I watch something with the family. That's not time for fellowship, Lord. You know, we're just hanging out. It's like, no, I want to have fellowship with you there.

You know, we talked about that at the men's conference. Follow me as I follow Christ. You know, have hobbies as you follow Christ. Spend time with your family as you follow Christ. You can do all that as you follow Christ.

[47 : 04] That's the material part. When Jesus knocks, man, if faith just opened the door. He'll do the rest, right? Thank you, Father, for the Church of Laodicea. Thank you for all of their troubles and trials.

Lord, how they reflect. My troubled and trialed life, Lord. But Lord, I can also look at my life, a life that is, yeah, I'm poor and blind and unenviable and naked, shameful.

That's all in my life. But I can also look at my life and say, you know what? There's a little bit of gold there. It's a little bit. But I can look at my life and I can say, yeah, but that shame's been covered by a white robe washed in the blood of the Lamb.

I can look at you, Jesus. I can look at you with new eyes. I can look into your word because, Lord, you have anointed my eyes. I thank you for that. Lord, where are you knocking tonight?

Where are you knocking in this church, Lord? What areas do you want to get into that we don't want you to get into? We're afraid of. What areas of our heart, Lord? And Lord, the only way to answer that is with faith.

[48 : 10] That's the only thing that opens. Maybe faith isn't the door. Maybe faith is the only thing that can grab the doorknob and open the door to give Jesus access. Lord, I want you to have access. And so, Lord, I want to say yes to wherever you're knocking.

And Lord, I think we all together want to say that for this church, Lord, we want to let you in every area. Lord, would you please direct every area as we look to you and Lord, as we say, Amen.

Amen. God bless you.