**Revelation 2**

Revelation one we talked about Rev of Jesus given to John and message to the churches

We come now to the second section of the Book of Revelation, which deals with “the things which are” (Revelation 1:19). As he addresses the seven churches of which he was an overseer, John paints a portrait of church history in its entirety.

The seven messages that follow have a four-fold application. First, they are to be applied locally. The cities of the seven churches are given in the order of an ancient Roman postal circuit. Thus, they could be easily circulated among the churches addressed.

Second, they apply ecclesiastically. Anyone who cares about the church or is involved with the church needs to study these letters because every problem, difficulty, and challenge facing the church is addressed in these seven letters.

Third, they apply personally. These letters apply to us individually. How do I know? Because each letter ends with “Let he that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith.” Thus, this applies to anyone who has an ear. If you have two ears, it’s a double directive!

Fourth, the letters apply prophetically. For us today, most of the events are history because we’re approaching the end of the church age. But for John, at the beginning of the church age, the events of which he wrote had not yet transpired.

In addition to a four-fold application, there is also a four-element pattern seen in each letter. First, there is positive affirmation, where Jesus finds something to affirm in the churches. Second, there is corrective exhortation. Third, there is an eternal motivation. And finally, there is partial revelation—as each of the churches reveals something of the nature of Christ.

**1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.**

Who are the seven stars? This is symbolic of the leaders of the seven churches.

Where is Jesus walking? In the midst of the church. You will meet Christians who say, “Well, I’m not into church.” That’s too bad, because Jesus is. They will say, “Yeah, but the churches around here are really hurting,” So were these. And yet Jesus was in their midst.

**2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:**

Christ speaking to Ephesus. Ephesus was famous for its culture. It was an economic center.

What is Jesus interested in? Works. God expects fruit. Jesus say, I know thy works, and thy labour and thy patience. Ephesus endured.

**3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.**

Here, Jesus gives His affirmation. He says, “First of all, I affirm you for staying with the task. That is, you’ve worked hard. You haven’t fainted. Secondly, you’ve stood with the truth. You’ve rooted out the deceivers who have come into your midst.”

**4. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.**

Here Jesus gives corrective exhortation that concerns the fact that, although they labored faithfully and showed discernment theologically, they had left their first love. Notice He doesn’t say they *lost* their first love. He says they *left* it.…

This could be inferred a couple of ways. One, it could be that their love and zeal for ministry waned. My thought is what is this. What is the first love of a Christian? Better be your Father (God). Better be the Son. Is it possible that this church left their first love for the fake one? Remember we are at the Lords day. Doesn’t matter your credentials if you worship the antichrist. You left your first love for the fake.

**5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.**

Jesus would say, remember how it felt to have the cutting edge, when you were passionate, when your walk was vibrant. Remember how it used to be when you had it last. “Repent” simply means “change direction.” What were you doing when you were on fire for the Lord? “I was going to church.” Go again! “I was getting up early for morning devotions.” Do it again! “I sang praise to the Lord as I drove down the street.” Sing again!

Remember how it used to be when you were amazed by the Lord’s goodness—do again what you were doing then, and you will see the cutting edge return. The injunction of Jesus is simple: Remember, repent, and return. You may have lots of programs and lots of activities. You may even have doctrinal purity. But Jesus will not stay in a church where there is not true love because without love, nothing else matters.

**6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.**

“Nicos” meaning “conquest” and “laity” meaning “people of the church,” the Nicolaitans were evidently those who came on the scene, saying, “I will tell you who to marry, where to live, and what to do because I am your spiritual leader.” But what did Paul say? He said, “We do not seek to have dominion over you, but we are helpers of your joy”

**7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.**

What did the Ephesians lack? Love. What would they get if they changed their ways? The fruit of the tree of life, the fruit of the Spirit: love. Perfect motivation that would answer their greatest need.

**8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;**

Addressing the Church of Smyrna here. Smyrna means myrrh. Sweet smelling perfume. Also, Smyrna is the name of a fig. Very sweet fig

**9. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.**

**Blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not.** This speaks of those that professed to be Jews.

**Synagogue of Satan.** Speaking of those Jews that have ill intent.

The term Jew in Greek is (Ioudaios)

Text

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Ioudaios can mean two things. It can mean a resident of Judea, geographical location, or offspring of Judah.

As example. I consider myself an American because I am. I live in the US. But, I am really German / Irish by ancestry. Point being, there were those that called themselves Jews but were not offspring of Judah.

Very important to keep that in mind.

**10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**

In the years A.D. 100 through A.D. 313, there were ten Roman emperors who I believe, correspond to the ten days spoken of here. They launched such massive attacks against the believers that between five and seven million Christians were killed during their rule. Notice that for this group, Jesus doesn’t have a corrective exhortation. Perhaps this is because by enduring persecution, they remained pure. But notice also that Jesus makes no promise to lighten their affliction. On the contrary, He says, “Go through the pain and crushing. Be faithful unto death.”

This calls to mind Mark 13:8-9 concerning the end times.

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

Mark 13:8-9

**11. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.**

What is the second death? At the end of the Millennium, we will stand before the Lord at the Great White Throne Judgment. Failure to believe on the Lord and his refusal to accept God’s payment for his sins will condemn them to outer darkness (Revelation 20:6). But for those who, like the church at Smyrna, stay true, the second death will have no effect.

**12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;**

**New church being addressed here. Pergamos**

The Greek prefix *per,* seen in words like “pervert,” means opposition. The suffix *gamos,* seen in words like “monogamy” or “bigamy,” means “marriage.” *Pergamos,* then, means “objectionable marriage”—a fitting description of the next phase of church history.…

The year was A.D. 312. The last of the ten Roman emperors who had persecuted the church was dead, ushering in a power play for the reins of the empire. To this end, one young hopeful prepared to engage in a huge battle.

According to legend, he saw a cross in the heavens and heard a voice saying, “In this sign conquer.” And as a result, young Constantine fell to his knees and became a born-again believer. According to history, however, what really happened was that, substantially outnumbered, Constantine noticed that Christians were not enlisting in anyone’s army. Realizing that if he converted to Christianity, he would have access to a potential infusion of new troops, he became a Christian. And the Christians responded by siding with him. But it would turn out to be an unmitigated disaster. As a result of Constantine’s Edict of Toleration, which forbade persecution of Christians, Christianity became the official religion of Rome. In fact, soon all Roman babies would be legally required to be baptized into the Christian faith. Yes, the Christians were in power, but, understanding the political expediency of concession, Constantine compromised with the pagan priests and traditions that permeated Rome.

“I feel your pain,” he said. “Let’s find common ground. Let’s meet halfway.” So a marriage took place that was perhaps most clearly illustrated by the coin issued shortly thereafter. Christian symbols were stamped on one side of the coin and pagan symbols on the other. From A.D. 313 to A.D. 600, church and state worked together as a political power—and as a result the church began a downward spiral from which she has yet to recover.

**13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.**

According to Greek mythology, Pergamos was the birthplace of Zeus.

“Satan’s seat” is in reference to the one hundred-fifty-foot-high structure dedicated to Zeus in the middle of the city of Pergamos.

**A picture containing mountain, sky, outdoor, nature

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The historian Tertullian tells us that, because Antipas, a physician in the city of Pergamos, wouldn’t renounce his faith, he was fried to death.

**14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.**

You remember the story of Balaam. Asked by Moabite King Balak to pronounce a curse on the people of Israel, God forbade the prophet Balaam to go. But Balaam went anyway, and after a short discussion with a donkey, he wound up on a mountain overlooking the encamped Israelites upon whom he was to issue a curse. After three failed attempts, realizing he couldn’t curse them, Balaam resorted to an alternate plan. “If your women seduce the Israelite men,” he said to Balak, “they can introduce idol worship to them through which Israel will thereby bring a curse upon herself” (see Numbers 22).

What, then, is the doctrine of Balaam? It is Pergamos: objectionable marriage with the world.

**15. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.**

Not only had the church in Pergamos embraced the marriage of church and state, but they embraced the Nicolaitans—the priests, pontiffs, and people who think they are infallible.

**16. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.**

How do you know who’s who or what’s what in a world so prone to the Pergamos tendency?

Stick with the Word—with that which divides sin’s mind-set from that which is right eternally (Hebrews 4:12).

**17. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.**

Hidden manna is true spiritual food. It nourishes the soul.

The idea is that those who overcame the persecutions and trials of the world would be permitted to eat this spiritual food. They would be nourished forever.

The Hebrews were supported by manna in the desert. The spiritual manna will suffice us in the future.

The white stone given to the overcomer in a sense, means they are not guilty. They turned away from paganism, compromise and the Pergamos mentality. You’re righteous, you’re free.

**18. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass.**

In Thyatira, we see a church emerge in the year A.D. 600, which will exert major influence on Martin Luther and the Reformers through A.D. 1500. This church still exists presently. This is the only time in the entire Book of Revelation that Jesus identifies Himself as the Son of God rather than as the Son of Man. He chooses this reference because fire and brass speak of judgment.

Eyes always mirror the soul. God is a consuming fire but to us, the fire is the warmth of the Holy Spirit.

Feet like fine brass. Compare to the statue in Daniel 2, king of Babylon feet mixed with clay and iron. That won’t mix.

Trying to inter mingle supernatural with natural. God’s feet are solid. Made of brass, they will not break. (Rev 2 / Dan 2)

**19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.**

Although Jesus is about to give a heavy word of judgment to the church at Thyatira, He first finds areas in which to commend them.

**20. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.**

Some expositors believe this Jezebel is the one mentioned in the book of Kings. I don’t think so.

This is talking about Jezebel, the great harlot that we’ll be reading about in Rev 13 that encourages all people to take part of the one world system, when the first beast appears, and she is ready.

False teaching in her church will cause many to be misled. The great mystery Babylon, great harlot we are talking about isn’t about fornication. It is about mixing religions. It is about church leaders getting together and mixing religions. The mixing of religions and traditions into what God’s Word says.

**21. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.**

Again, talking about spiritual relationship with idolatry. False religion This New Testament woman, following in the footsteps of her predecessor of old, was encouraging idolatry in the church at Thyatira.

**22. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.**

Talking about idolatry. The spirit of Jezebel is prone to idolatry. If not rejected, this church will endure a lot of pain.

**23. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**

Not only Thyatira, but her offspring will also go through judgment and death as well.

**24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.**

The “depths of Satan” speaks of the esoteric mystery of the false, cultic Babylonian religion. “We alone know the mysteries, the deep things,” said the Babylonian priests. But those who didn’t buy their line were exempt from God’s judgment.

**25. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.**

That which is good, that which you have received from My Word, you hang onto it.

**26. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:**

Hang on to this. What works are we to keep? God’s works.

**27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.**

“Those in Thyatira,” says Jesus, “who have not bought into the seductive teachings of Jezebel will be given nations to rule.” “If you’re not a part of the Jezebel mentality, you will rule and reign with Me,” Jesus says. “But if you try to do it in the spirit of Jezebel—through inquisition and manipulation—you’ll be cast into a bed with other harlots in the great Tribulation.”

**28. And I will give him the morning star.**

The Old Testament image of Jesus is as the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2).

Here in the New Testament, He’s seen as the Morning Star.

**29. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

Do you have an ear to hear what Jesus is saying? Can you hear what He is saying to the churches? This should be a wake up call to many churches.

**Revelation 3**

In chapter 2, the apostle John wrote things according to the command of God, that is, the present state of the seven churches of Asia which he had a particular acquaintance and tender concern for. John was directed to write to every one of them according to their present state and circumstances, and to inscribe every letter to the angel of the church, to the minister or rather ministry of that church, called angels because they are messengers of God to mankind.

Chapter two he wrote concerning Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos and Thyatira.

Today we finish up as he writes to Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

**1. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.**

What do we know about Sardis. Sardis was an extremely wealthy city, built on a thousand foot bluff, that seemed invincible. Like many wealthy cities that get caught up in all kinds of cult worship, Sardis was no different. Sardis liked to worship Cybil, mother of the gods. Sardis was a place of commerce where many different people from religions gathered. Sardis seemed invincible.

Invincible until the year 549 B.C. when Cyrus, conqueror of the city of Babylon, also conquered Sardis.

Sardis was conquered again three hundred years later, a fact to which Jesus will allude. As we go this this chapter, you will find that all of the references about Christ in chapter 1 are repeated again in chapters 2 and 3.

We saw in verse 4 of chapter 1 that the “seven Spirits of God” refers to the seven-fold nature of the Holy Spirit as seen in Isaiah 11:2.

Why would this description be repeated in conjunction with Sardis? Because, while most traditional mainline Protestants like Lutherans, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Methodists, and Congregationalists champion everything from homosexuality to environmental issues—they are wary of the ministry of the Spirit.

The word translated “name” is onoma in Greek, from which we get our word “denomination.”

You can go out tonight and behold the beauty of the North Star. In reality, however, you don’t know if it’s there.

Thirty-three light years away, it could have blown up thirty-two years ago, and we wouldn’t know it until next year. So, too, there are those who proudly say, “Look at this group, or that denomination.” And the Lord says, “You’re depending on reputation, on history, on what it used to be. You’re resting in tradition, not relationship.”

Although Jesus had much to correct in Thyatira, He commended them in verse 19 for their works and charity, service, faith, and patience. But here at Sardis, He simply says, “You’re dead.”

**2. Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.**

Why should Sardis be watchful? Because their city fell when they weren’t watching. While they were doing some good things evidently, they were letting down their guard. So, too, spiritually, they were saying, “We’re on solid ground. No one’s going to knock us down.” But Sardis was hankering around with other religions. Jesus would say to them; “You guys in Sardis should know better than that, your own history should tell you the results of being haughty and arrogant, of resting in a false sense of security.”

**3. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.**

**Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent**

So many main line churches need to hear this and heed this.

What was received initially? The Bible—from Wycliffe, Calvin, Knox, Luther. “Remember how it was received initially,” Jesus is pleading. “And repent for how far you’ve come from that foundation.” Sardis, like false religions, were dreaming up all kinds of gods. They were doing something that looks religious.They were so involved in stuff other than God’s Word that they failed to understand theology or signs of the times. No one knows when the thief will come. Jesus says the same; you know not what hour I will come upon thee.

**4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.**

**Few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments.** The idea is that this place was so depraved, and religion so declined that few people had kept themselves from contamination. You do not want to be in a church like Sardis where anything goes. Christ says they were not worthy of heaven.

What are white robes? This would be the equivalent of righteous acts. Acts committed while serving God, following God, helping your fellow man, helping bring people to Christ rather than mislead them.

**5. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.**

**He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment…** This promise is made not only to those in Sardis but to all in every age and every land.

**I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,**

The book which contains the names of those who are to live with Him forever. The names of His people are represented as enrolled in a book which He keeps a register of those who are to live forever.

This is the book that all are judged from. Church letters won’t do you any good. Those that didn’t accept Christ will die in their sins as no amount of good works can provide eternal life. Their names will be blotted out. “Blot out” means to smear or obliterate. Believers on the other hand, will be judged for their righteous acts.

**6. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

We will find this expression at the close of each of the epistles addressed to the seven churches.

This expression is designed to attention to that which is said is important. There is so much out Father wants us to not only hear but understand. If you have an ear to hear and understand, you’re very blessed. Not everyone does. If you don’t understand something, ask our Father to give you wisdom and understanding.

**7. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;**

**These things saith he that is holy, he that is true**

This is talking about Jesus. He is the Holy One that is true.

**He that hath the key of David**

Again, this is referencing Jesus as having the authority and power or control, such as one who has a key of a house. I think this can apply to Christians as well. When you have the truth, the key of knowledge and truth, the key of David in knowing the true Christ, it opens doors that no man can shut. Once you see into that truth, nothing can be shut away from you.

**He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth**

Jesus has unrestrained access to the house and has the power to admit or deny entrance to anyone.

Applied here to Jesus Christ as Savior, He has the keys to allow anyone in, or restrict anyone to His Kingdom. He has absolute control. The letter to Philadelphia is one of only two letters of the seven in which Jesus has nothing critical to say. Why? Perhaps it is because the Philadelphians were involved in evangelism.

They were loving the lost—and love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). We don’t know for sure but I do know there are three Greek words for love.

*Eros* is erotic or sensual love.

*Phileo* is brotherly love.

*Agape* is God’s love.

The city of Philadelphia was founded in 189 B.C. by a man named Eumanes II.

A statue of a person

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

When he died, he was succeeded by his younger brother, Attalus II, who named buildings after his older brother, minted coins bearing his brother’s image, and talked about his brother constantly. Consequently, the people of the town began to call this place Philo-delphia, or the city of brotherly love.

**8. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it for thou hast a little strength and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name.**

I like that Jesus says He knows thy works. They have works. That’s good. But they have little strength.

What is this about. This would imply that there were so many obstacles to their doing good, and so many temptations to do evil, there still remained with them some degree of energy. They were not dead yet. The door was still open for them to do good. They have not denied His name. They know the true Christ.

They have not denied His deity. They recognize “I am who I claim to be.” Not just an interesting teacher, not just a model of how to live successfully, of how to have prosperity, or of how to be happy. I am the Christ.”

I think what was happening here is that when Christians were brought before pagan magistrates in times of persecution, they were required to renounce the name of Christ, and to disown him in a public manner. It is possible that, amidst the persecutions that raged in the early times, the members of the church at Philadelphia had been summoned to such a trial, and they had stood the trial firmly not denying Christ. But it would further seem that efforts were made to induce them to renounce the name of Christ by so called ‘fake’ Jews. Those that claim to be Jew but are of the synagogue of Satan.If so, then the attempt was probably to convince them that Jesus was not the Christ. This attempt would be made in all places where there were Jews.

I think this will happen again in the end of times when the false messiah appears and you have those that claim he is the true Christ. But those that know Christ and His Word will not be deceived. When you have the key of David you don’t have to worry because you have the seal of God in your forehead. Rev 9:4 Satan can’t bother you when you have that knowledge

**9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.**

**Behold, I will make**

Jesus has the power over man and can do as He chooses.

**Them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews**

There are Jews and there are those so called Jews. As mentioned earlier, a ‘true Jew’ is one that is descended from Jacob’s lineage. You may live in Israel and be considered a Jew but not by blood line.

During the time of Jesus, many of the ‘so called Jews’ mocked Jesus. The Pharisees and Sadducees. They called themselves Jews but were not from the bloodline of Jacob. False Jews. False profession altogether.

Just as today you have a lot of so called, self-professing Christians but are anything but…

**Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet**

This could either refer to spiritual homage, that is, the worship of God; or it may mean respect as shown to superiors. More likely, they would be constrained to show honor and respect for those that are the children of God, both Jews and non-Jews who love and worship Christ.

**And to know that I have loved thee**

This explains what He had just said. That the church, although persecuted and reviled, should be respected and loved; and God does love His church and His people.

**10. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.**

**Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation.**

This speaks of manifesting the patience which is expected of us.

The Church of Philadelphia persevered through them. We will experience trials and tribulations, but we preserve through them likewise. Jesus promises now, that in return he will keep them from the ‘hour of temptation’ that shall come upon the world.

**From the hour of temptation**

The hour of temptation. This hour of temptation we’ll find in Revelation 17 is when antichrist is cast out of heaven to this earth to mislead anyone who hasn’t the truth. How do you escape the hour of temptation? By knowing the truth. We will not find Satan tempting. Jesus will keep us so that we shall not sink under the trials which will prove a severe temptation to many. Though others fall, we shall not; though we may be afflicted with others, yet we shall have the grace of God to sustain us.

**Which shall come upon all the world**

Just that. The whole world will be tempted

**To try them that dwell upon the earth**

That is, to test their character. This persecution will prove a trial for Christians to test their fidelity. Fidelity to Christ. It will be temptation for unbelievers to fall prey to the anti-christ.

**11. Behold, I come quickly hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.**

**Behold, I come quickly Hold that fast which thou hast**

In other words, whatever of truth and piety you now possess, cling fast to that. Don’t let it go.

**That no man take thy crown**

The crown of life appointed for all who are true believers. Keep the faith and don’t be unfaithful in duty.

We need to be on our constant guard. We live in a world of temptation where the enemies of truth are many.

We must live faithful that we are not be robbed of the crown that we are to wear forever.

**12. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God and I will write upon him my new name.**

**Him that overcometh I Will make a pillar in the temple of my God**

The promised reward of faithfulness is that they would be honored as if they were a pillar or column in the temple of God. Pillars are partly for ornament and partly for support. The thought that we would contribute to its beauty and the justness as if we were pillars that were necessary to support a temple. Not uncommon in the New Testament to represent the church as a temple and the Christians part of it.

**And he shall go no more out**

He shall be permanent as a part of that spiritual temple. The main truth here is that when we reach heaven, our happiness will be secure forever. No more sorrow. No more pain. We shall never be in danger of falling into temptation or have anyone have the power to lessen our love for God. When we reach the heavenly world our conflicts will be over, our doubts will end. As we reach heaven, we will be greeted with the assurance of God Himself that the world of bliss is our eternal home.

**And I will write upon him the name of my God**

Considered as a pillar or column in the temple. The name of God would be recorded on it to show that we belong to God.

**Which is New Jerusalem**

Jerusalem was the place where the temple was reared, and where the worship of God was celebrated.

In the Old Testament, it became synonymous with the church-the dwelling-place of God on earth. When Christ returns, the third temple will be built there and will be the capital of the Messianic Kingdom.

**Which cometh down out of heaven from my God**

Speaking of the church which will come down from heaven and is represented as the New Jerusalem, the city from which God reigns. The New Jerusalem does not have an earthly origin, its origin is in heaven, as if constructed there and sent down to haven already formed.

**And I will write upon him my new name**

The promise is that we will be honored with a permanent abode in the holy city of God’s habitation. The idea that we have a name written on us identifies us with belonging to Christ.

**13. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

Read the Word of God with understanding and you will not only hear but understand. If you don’t understand something you read, ask the Holy Spirit for understanding.

**14. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen the faithful and true witness the beginning of the creation of God.**

Church of Laodicea. Laodicea was six miles south of Philadelphia. The city of Laodicea was the banking center of the region. As so, it had ample money to spend on entertainment—as evidenced by the thirty thousand-seat amphitheater whose ruins still stand. Laodicea was known throughout history as being very tricky politically because the city was built in a way that it could not defend itself militarily—a very unusual trait for an ancient city. The only way Laodicea could survive was by making compromises with her enemies. Finally, even as Aristotle noted… Laodicea was known for the eye salve manufactured there, highly valued in the ancient world.

All this plays into what Jesus would say to this group.

**Church of the Laodiceans**

Jesus says not to the church at Laodicea, but to the church of the Laodiceans. The Greek word *laos,* from which we get our word “laity,” means “people.” *Diece* means “decision” or “rule.” Therefore, the church of the Laodiceans was directed by the people rather than guided by the Lord.

The Laodicean mentality remains today. See how many influential churches there are out there whose services regularly include interviews with celebrities who are not living godly lives, who have not taken a stand for Jesus Christ, who have little more than positive stories to share—churches where people rule; wherein “Smile, be happy,” has replaced the message of repentance.

**saith the Amen**

Why does Jesus refer to Himself as “the Amen”? “Amen” meaning “so be it,” Jesus identifies Himself to this group so prone to compromise, saying, “There is certainty. It’s Me.”

**true witness**

The Greek word translated “witness” is *martus,* from which we get our word “martyr.”

What is a witness? One who lives so much like Jesus Christ and is so in love with Jesus Christ that he ends up being crucified even as Jesus Christ was crucified.

The Bible puts it this way: Yea, all those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).

**The Laodicean would say;** “Don’t talk about suffering, We just want to be positive and happy.” You’ll never hear a message about suffering, persecution, or martyrdom in a Laodicean church. They don’t want to think about those things. The truth, however, is that if we’re living godly, we’re going to be persecuted.

**This is another verse that c**ultists often use this verse to say that Jesus is created and therefore not coequal with the Father. But the Greek word translated “beginning” is *arche,* which actually means “the origin.” God the Father created all things through the Son (Colossians 1:16) by the power of the Spirit (Genesis 1:2).

In the last days, the question is, and will continue to be, “Who is the Creator?” Evolution being part of the end-time deception, it is no surprise that in the church of the Laodiceans there will be questions concerning creation.

**15. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.**

In other words, you don’t make a stand. A person who doesn’t take a stand is fit for nothing.

**16. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.**

A bit of history. In Laodicea’s sister city of Hieropolis were hot springs—from which the present-day Turkish government is trying to extract geo-thermal power. To take advantage of this, an aqueduct was constructed that carried the hot water from Hieropolis through Laodicea and on to Colossae. In theory, it was a good idea. But in reality, by the time the water reached Laodicea, it was lukewarm. Thus, as lukewarm water flowed through their city, the Laodiceans would know hot water was useful, cold water was refreshing, but lukewarm water was not good for much.The Lord says the same thing about His people. “If you’re hot, I can use you. If you’re cold, I can deal with you. But if you’re lukewarm, you’ll neither be hot enough to use nor cold enough to correct.” The Laodicean church is not the church you would want to be involved with. It is fit for nothing.

**17. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.**

To this Laodicean church, which wasn’t talking about the reality of sin, the need for repentance, or the Cross of Christ; which didn’t speak of witnessing, standing, and living for eternity, Jesus said, “You think you’re rich—but you’re impoverished. You think you’re doing well, but you’re miserable.”In the ways of the world you are making it good but in the eyes of God-are empty.

**18. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.**

In Bible days, smelters would take the gold brought in from the mines and heat it by fire until it liquefied.

After stirring it until the impurities were burned out, they would know the process was complete when the smelter could look into the pot of liquid gold and see the reflection of his own face. Because Jesus is the Master Smelter, He uses heat as well. So, to these people who were impure, carnal, vacillating, and lukewarm, He says, “Get into the fire. Get into the battle. Engage yourself like you once did in ministry.”

The Laodiceans were not only to get back into ministry, they were also to get back to grace.

Throughout Scripture, white raiment speaks of the robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10) given to those who are in Christ. The Laodiceans were known for a unique kind of wool taken from black sheep, yet the Lord says to them, “You might be fashion plates with your black garments, but you need garments of *white*—righteous garments, the covering of My grace.”

**anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.**

The same Jesus who says, “Anoint your eyes with eye salve,” is the One who put mud in the blind man’s eyes in John 9. The way of the Great Physician is to allow irritation to produce illumination. “You’re seeing everything in a carnal way,” He says, “and you need to humble yourself before Me and deal with the mud.” “Ouch,” we say. “That mud hurts.” But in reality, there must be an awareness of the problems in our hearts and the trouble in our souls before we can see. King David cried in Psalms 139: “Search me, O God,“and see if there be any wicked way in me.” Hey all, listen, if you’re feeling Laodicean, if you feel lukewarm, you need to ask the Great Physician to search you, for that will be the eye salve that will allow you to see clearly. How long has it been, gang, since you’ve been on your face before the Lord saying, “Search me concerning the words on my lips, the bitterness in my heart, and the thoughts on my mind”? Truly, confession precedes vision as surely as irritation precedes illumination.

**19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

It’s a pretty good chance that if you love Him, and you are still trying, He will correct you and show you the path. Always learn to maintain focus. Learn to keep your focus, get your focus back on Him. You do what is pleasing to God so you receive His blessings.

**20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.**

Jesus is always standing on the outside waiting to be invited into our lives. He won’t open the door, you need too. It is up to us to open the door.

All the pictures you see, there is only a door knob on the inside. We must open up the door to our heart and allow Him in, to sup with us. What does that mean to sup with Him? He wants us to sup on Spiritual food. Manna of then end times if you will. He wants us for us to listen and understand His Word. Spiritual Manna.

**21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.**

“Open your heart to Me,” Jesus would say, “and I’ll open heaven to you.”

**22. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

It’s one thing to have Jesus as a Model or a Mascot. That’s what they were doing at Laodicea. They were “good Christians.” But Jesus is not to be a Model or a Mascot. He is to be our Master. That’s what He was asking of that congregation. And that’s what He’s asking of you and me. A church is not be a place that is popular—full of people who have good mottoes and good intentions. A Christ like church is one where we realize that, although we’re sinners who have failed miserably, God has provided Jesus Christ, and He will come into our hearts to rule and reign within if we simply open the door.