

Revelation 3:14-22

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[0 : 00] And we read the Word of God found in Revelation chapter 3, starting in verse 14. Christ, moving through the hand of John here, writes this letter.

To the angel of the church in Laodicea, write, The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God says this, I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot.

I wish that you were cold or hot, so because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. Because you say I am rich and have become wealthy and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed.

And I shall to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love I reprove and discipline, therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him and he with me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my father on his throne.

[1 : 17] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Let's pray. Lord, we are so thankful for this day. And Lord, we rejoice in the opportunity we have of opening up your word.

Lord, when things don't make sense and when things seem to be in an area of confusion, Lord, we know that your word is accurate and it is true. And Lord, we thank you for the privilege we have of opening it up.

We pray, Lord, that we would see the truth that it contains. And Lord, that it would be more than a collection of information, but Lord, it would be that which moves our life to application and begins to transform us from the inside out.

May it take root in our hearts. And Lord, may it move out through our hands and feet. And may you be glorified and honored through it. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

We are at the church in Laodicea, the lukewarm church, the church which we have possibly heard so much and know so much about. But as we read this letter, we want to look at the seventh and last characteristic of a healthy church.

[2 : 19] I will go ahead and tell you that before we get into it, there is no word of commendation. There is no word of praise. There is nothing good which Jesus has to say about this church.

He is not going to praise it. He is not going to lift it up. He's not going to thank it. He is going to discipline it. He's going to rebuke it. He's going to reprove it. He's attempting to correct it.

So we cannot see the character trait from the passage. We have to see what he is pointing to in the passage. And it is the characteristic of a healthy church is a church of salvific fervor.

Now, I know that's not a word choice which we use very often. Now, salvific means as it applies to our salvation. Fervor would be something like excitement or getting worked up or getting carried away.

And I choose my wording carefully. Because a healthy church is always a church that is excited about its salvation. It is a church that is enraptured with the love of the Savior who has redeemed it.

[3 : 22] It is a church that has not gotten over the fact that it has been redeemed. It has not gotten over the fact that Christ has set it free. It has not gotten over the fact that though it is lost in the depravity of sin, that Christ pursued it and called it to himself.

It is a church that cannot help but be excited about being saved. And if there's one thing that I can't wrap my mind around, it is how a born-again believer can forget the excitement of salvation.

I mean, I just can't. And you'll have to excuse my honesty and you'll have to excuse my point in this. That if you are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and the Scripture tells you it is not because of you, it is not because of your works, though you may not feel like it, and I get that, though you may

not think it, you have to look at the Word of God and take it as it is and stand on the excitement of redemption.

We see here that all healthy churches are churches of salvific fervor, that when you walk into the door, you see the excitement of salvation.

I'll never forget that when we went to the Dallas area for the Southern Baptist Convention, we had the opportunity, I know I've shared this with you before, but I'll always point to it, and we got to go into Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship where Pastor Tony Evans preaches, and we were there, and we were gathered together, and you could feel some excitement in the room, and Pastor Tony was there, but I will never forget watching the lady off to the side of the stage who was facing this portion of the congregation, and all she was doing was sign language.

[4 : 55] She was doing the sign, the sign language for the songs of praise that they were singing. And what we were singing vocally and audibly, she was singing with her hands. And I remember watching this lady, and probably it looked like 12-inch heels, we were up in the balcony, right?

This lady dancing and being so excited about the salvation and the glory she was proclaiming with her hands. And I remember thinking, man, shouldn't we all be that way?

That would live with salvific fervor. That would live with an excited life. Not because things are going well, not because things make sense, not because it's good, but because we're redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

What was going on in the church of Laodicea? They had lost the excitement of their salvation. They had lost the joy of it. They had lost the thrill of it.

And they were just living as if it was a common thing. I want you to see this morning, the things we must avoid, or the things we must hold on to, to be a church of salvific fervor.

[6 : 07] Number one, we see the Christ who rules the church. The Christ who rules the church. Each one of these letters are first given to us by way of an introduction. And it is Jesus Christ speaking to a specific church, at a specific place, at a specific time, right?

And we want to take these in proper context. It says here, to the angel, that is the pastor, that is the one who is shepherding the people, to the angel of the church in Laodicea, right? Now, you need to understand some things about Laodicea.

I know some of you say, well, we always go through all these things, these historical things, and all these geography things, and really, do they matter? Well, yes, they do, because Jesus is addressing a specific people, at a specific place, at a specific time, in a way that would matter to them, right?

So, here's what's so cool about the church at Laodicea. To correctly understand this letter, you need to know some things about the city of Laodicea, because the church always seems to be a representation, though it should not be that way, by the way.

You should not be able to walk into the church and see what the city is like, right? You should be able to walk into the church and see what the city should be like. That would have been a good place to join with me in there, but that's okay.

[7 : 13] Rather than being a thermometer, we are to be the thermostat. We are not to be that which reflects the condition of the city. We are to be that which determines the condition of the city. We are not to be just a mirror image of what's going on outside.

Rather, we are to be the stirring agent of changing what's going on on the outside. But unfortunately, with the church at Laodicea, they were a reflection of the city. Laodicea was the wealthiest of the cities in the region of Phrygia.

That's P-H-R-Y-G-I-A. The Phrygian region. They were a wealthy city. As a matter of fact, they were so wealthy. Remember, I told you a number of these cities were ransacked by earthquakes.

It must not have been a good region to live in around these seven churches here. But when Laodicea was hit by an earthquake in A.D. 60, and it was completely decimated, it was completely ruined, unlike the other cities that were affected by it, some of those which we have already looked at, Laodicea looked at Rome and said, we don't need your help.

The Roman Empire reached out and said, we want to help finance it. We want to declare a state of emergency, correct? Donald Trump came and visited Nashville to look at the condition. We want to offer some help. Rome stepped in and said, Laodicea, you're decimated.

[8 : 18] You're completely ruined. We want to help. We want to help with the financial rebuild. We want to help get back. And Laodicea looked at Rome and said, we don't need you. We got this. We have enough money. As a matter of fact, they told them they didn't need it.

Laodicea was known for their money, so much so that people would go there to cash their checks, okay? It was like the banking empire of the region. You should pay attention to that because they were known for three things.

They had a great center of trade and commerce. And the three main industries in Laodicea was banking, the manufacturing of cloth, especially black cloth, and they had a medical school there which was one that excelled in eye salve and ear ointments.

Those things should all of a sudden pique your interest because Jesus addressed them in three areas, right? Their money, their clothing, and their eye salve. What was going on in Laodicea was they were a banking place. They had money, and the church loved that.

They were also a clothing place. Their clothing looked good. I mean, nothing looks better than a shiny black suit, right? That thing is crisp and clean. And they also had this medical school over here which was training people and sending them out.

[9 : 25] For all of these things, Laodicea had one thing that it lacked. I hope you're listening because all this makes sense. They lacked a clean source of water to drink.

But, thankfully for Laodicea, Laodicea was located pretty close to two different places, one being Colossae, the other one being Hierapolis. And they were really close to those two cities, not too far from them, about six or seven miles.

Now, if you know anything about Colossae, Colossae had this great source of spring water which was so cold. You know, when you're thirsty, there's nothing better than a cold drink of fresh spring water.

Colossae had that. They had cold spring water flowing like none other. Now, Hierapolis, on the other side of Laodicea, was not known for its cold water. As a matter of fact, it was full of hot springs.

They had medicinal hot springs in Hierapolis. And people would go there for the refreshment of the hot springs, kind of like a hot tea or a hot cup of coffee, right? And they were just real medicinal, both of those.

[10 : 26] Cool spring water on one side, hot spring water on the other side, and right in the middle is Laodicea. Laodicea got their drinking water from both of these cities, but they had to run it through aqueducts.

So guess what? By the time it came from Colossae, it was no longer cool. It was lukewarm. By the time it came from Hierapolis, it was no longer hot. It was lukewarm. And it was a historical reality that a number of people would go into Laodicea, drink their water, and throw up.

Because it wasn't either cold nor hot. Think Jesus doesn't know what he's talking about when he calls the church out. Look at the Christ who rules this church.

Jesus says, I am the amen. It doesn't mean he's like, amen, amen, amen. I love amens, by the way. And some people used to say, you amen the preacher too much, he won't be quiet. I think that's why everybody's quiet all the time. You know, don't get him going.

Don't get him worked up. That's not what it means. Jesus says, I am the amen. What is so good about this name, you need to understand this, by the way, that he is the amen. The amen is an Old Testament name for God, right?

[11 : 27] It's one of the representations of God. But it is full. It is a name which is impregnated. It has full meaning. And what it literally means is, I am the end of every promise God has ever made.

You say, that's a lot from one word, but that's what it means. Every promise God has given you, every promise he said he would do for you, everything he has said from Genesis all the way to the book of Revelations, that's me. I am the amen.

I'm the last word. I am the fulfillment of every promise. I've told you this truth. What? That every promise God gives the church in the New Testament, or every promise given in the New Testament flows through what? The local church.

Well, guess who the head of the local church is? That is Jesus Christ. So every promise finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ, which tells me this. Friend, listen to me. Stay with me.

If you're trying to name and claim a promise of scripture apart from Jesus Christ, that ain't your promise. God doesn't have that word for you because that promise is given through Jesus Christ and found in Jesus Christ.

[12 : 25] You need to claim the Savior, not claim the promise because when you claim the Savior, all of a sudden you get the promise and that's what's so good there. When you acknowledge the Savior, the promise comes with you. He said, I am the amen.

I am the Christ who rules the church. I am, he says here, the faithful and true witness, which means what I'm about to tell you is absolutely true. I do not lie, I do not stutter, I do not stammer, and I do not mess up.

He's not like us, right? There are times where we have things confused, we may misunderstand things, we may say things improperly or incorrectly. Jesus is not that way. He said, I am both faithful, I will say what God wants me to say, and I am true.

I will tell you the absolute truth. I will tell you what you want to hear. Man quite often does not like truth. We'd rather have something kind of like truth, but maybe a little bit easier to handle.

Jesus says, I'm not that way. I'm faithful and true. And he says, I am the beginning of creation. Now we need to stay here for just a minute because we're looking at the Christ who rules the church. He said, I'm also the beginning of creation. Some people have used this word to show that Jesus was a created being, that Jesus was not, by the way, though some people also constitute the LDS church, and some others who look at this, they say, see, Jesus was created.

[13:41] He was the first of creation. The problem with that is that they're trying to interpret the Bible in English only because that word beginning is an English translation of a Greek word. And that Greek word does not mean something that was started.

That's not what it means at all, right? The beginning of creation. That word beginning there is another word that is so full. By the way, your Bibles weren't written in English. They weren't written in King James English. They weren't written in New American Standard English.

They weren't written in NIV English. Your Old Testaments were written in Hebrew. Your New Testaments were written in Greek. And some parts of it are in Aramaic. That's everyday language. So if you hold on to a Bible, I preach, and I know I'm kind of going on kind of little pedestals here, but it's okay.

I preach from the New American Standard. I cannot tell you that the New American Standard is infallible. I can tell you the word of God is infallible, but it is also filtered through the interpretation of man who is interpreting Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

So be careful what scripture you stand up and go, this is the infallible word. The word of God is infallible. It will not be failed. It will not fail. It is always true. But what you hold in your hand, unless you're reading an original Hebrew, original Greek, Aramaic scripture, then you are reading an interpretation of men who have put their minds together and desperately sought to do it.

[14:50] I have reasons why I go with the New American Standard. If you ever want to hear them, we can get together. Give me about three hours, and I'll walk you through it. I don't mean to be offensive there, but that's just what it is, right? So you always want to go back to the original language.

He says, I am the beginning of creation. What he is saying there is the beginning in the original wording means this. I am the one who started it all. I am the founder or the origin of creation. Now all of a sudden, look at the Christ who rules the church. Jesus says, oh, creation? Yeah, that was me. I did that. That's kind of a, maybe a Billy Joe paraphrase, but that's what that means. Because the word of God tells us that through him and by him and for him, all things were created. Nothing has been created. It did not come forth from him. He is the origin or the source of all creation.

Now think about this just for a minute. The Christ who rules the church is the one that every promise of God finds its fulfillment in that person. He is the one that is always going to be faithful and true, and he is the one who started it all.

[15:50] So doesn't he have the right to tell it whatever it is he wants to tell it? This is the Christ who rules the church. Number two, we also see the condition that will ruin a church. We've been looking at seven characteristics of a healthy church, but wouldn't it be befitting of us to understand something that may ruin the church?

The condition that will ruin the church. Jesus introduces himself here. He says, I am the amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God, says this, verse 15, I know your deeds.

Now the last time we saw that, it was a way of commendation. I know what you're doing, and you're doing good work. This is not a word of commendation, by the way. This is a word of judgment and a word of correction. I know your deeds.

Now, I don't know what this does to you to think that the one who started it all, began it all, who knows it all, who says it all, who is completely honest and true with it all, the one who is always

going to tell you what is true, and then he looks at you and says, I know your deeds. Kind of makes you step back and go, oh, here we go. This is what he says. We're looking at the condition that will ruin the church. I know your deeds that you are neither cold nor hot. [16:55] I wish that you were cold or hot, so because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of my mouth. Here it is, the condition that will ruin the church, being lukewarm.

It is not sin. Sin does not ruin a church. Sin is what brings and creates a church. We're a bunch of sinners, right? We all sin. We all mess up. Sin doesn't ruin the church. Christ has a way of dealing with sinners. He redeems them. He has a way of forgiving our sin. His loving kindnesses are new every morning. His mercies are new. Lamentations 3. We see this, that he is the one.

Sin does not scare the Savior, by the way. That's why he hung on the cross. Sin does not destroy churches. You say, well, wait a minute. I know some things that were happening, and people were sinning, and they were doing this.

Well, now let's look at why they were doing these particular sins. The condition that will ruin the church is being neither cold nor hot. Some say, well, I wish that you were cold, and you were all the way opposed to me. So because you are opposed to me, when you are opposed to me, then I can work with you.

[17:59] When you oppose me, then I can reach out to you, or you can be on fire for me. But some don't see the interpretation that way. Others see it not as either being completely rejecting him or kind of fully in love with him.

They see the cold as being that which would refresh the world, and being hot as that which would renew the world. You're not refreshing or renewing. You're just being. What Christ is saying is you don't have any cool spring waters for the world, and you don't have any hot medicinal baths for the world.

You just are in the world, doing nothing for it. Wait a minute. You're just kind of hanging out. And the temperature in the world looks like the temperature of the water in Laodicea.

The temperature in the church looks just like it does running through your aqueducts. It's kind of just there. Baths. You're not renewing it. You're not invigorating it. You're not doing anything. You're not affecting the temperature at all.

You are just reflecting the temperature. And the condition that ruins the church, the condition which makes Jesus want to vomit, that's the wording there, the vomit the church, to spew out the church, is a church that's lukewarm, that just kind of is, that just kind of is content.

[19:10] Oh, you say, well, I've learned to be content in all things. Right. All things. Not to be content in Christ. I found my contentment in Christ, but I'm not going to get to the place of complacency with Christ.

I'm not going to get to the place of contentment where I am with Christ. Because Paul, who said, I've learned to be content in all things, he's also said, I press on towards the goal of the upward calling. I'm not yet content with who I am in Christ.

I want to become more of Christ. What Jesus is saying here is that which is sure to ruin the church is when the church sits back and thinks they're okay, and when the church is comfortable with where they're at.

Now, we're talking, it's this congregation thing, right? It's not just an individual. Even though churches are full of individuals, this is also, we'll get to the individual in just a minute. It is when the corporate body says, we're good enough.

We got this. We don't need anything else. It's when the corporate body begins to do to its Savior what the city did to Rome after the earthquake. We don't need you.

[20:12] We've got the money. We've got the dress. And if our eyes get messed up, we've got the medicine. Jesus, we got it. We live in Laodicea.

Things are going pretty good here. Life is pretty comfortable. We know we don't have the best drink and water, but we get it here. We're okay. This was probably a megachurch of its day.

I'm not saying megachurch in our day, but it was probably a good-sized church. It probably had a pretty good enrollment. Evidently, it had a pretty good prosperity because he says here, he says, you say I am rich.

Now, there was a church in the letter to the seven churches who said they were poor, but Jesus said you're rich. This church says we're rich, and Jesus said you're poor. Right? He said you say

you're rich and have become wealthy and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

What are we saying here? The condition that ruins the church is a place of self-satisfaction. Listen, we have everything we need. I like where we're at. We need to just sit back.

[21 : 16] We don't need any more of Jesus. We don't need any more of this excitement. We don't need any more of that. We are good. I got enough Jesus to keep me going. I'll come back next week, get a little bit more Jesus to get me going, and if I get a little down, maybe I'll call somebody, get a little Jesus to get me going over here.

We reach a place of contentment with where we're at spiritually, and Jesus says, but you don't know. You don't know. That though on the outside everything may look good, on the inside things seem to be falling apart.

It is the condition that will ruin the church. It is the condition of complacency. It is the condition of lukewarmness. It is the condition of, well, I don't want to do too much.

I don't want to do too little. Let's just kind of stay halfway in between there, right? Give me enough Jesus to feel good, but don't give me enough to really interrupt my life. I want to do good things, but I want to do them in my time.

Careful. When I have time, I'll do it, as long as it doesn't interrupt my schedule. We see this condition that will ruin the church.

[22 : 23] Number three, not only do we see the Christ who rules the church, the condition that ruins the church. Number three, we see the commitment that is required of the church. The commitment that is required of the church.

One thing that I tried to be is to be honest. I tried to be completely honest about the call of faith throughout Scripture, the call upon the believer. You are completely saved.

You are saved beyond a shadow of a doubt, apart from anything you can do, not of works lest any man should boast. That Jesus Christ came to save you in spite of you, and he will redeem you. You are saved by faith in Christ alone.

It is nothing you do. There's no work that you must do. There's no effort that you must put forth. I want you to hear me out on this. Christ does not command you to clean up yourself and come to him. Christ commands you to come in your filthiness to come to him.

We'll see this in just a minute. But you are completely redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, not of yourself. You can't boast in that. You haven't been good enough. But, but, but, his righteousness is imputed to you by faith, but his righteousness is imparted to you in your life, which means you are made righteous, and then you will look righteous.

[23 : 31] And looking righteous in a wicked world is hard. It's hard. It's difficult. I'm not saying, oh, I've just got to look righteous. Well, the look is always motivated by the heart.

Because what you are on the inside will always begin to manifest itself on the outside, right? What you are on the inside will always manifest itself on the outside. Righteousness imputed leads to righteousness imparted.

That is, my life begins to look different. I love different. I live different. I talk different. I walk different. All these things. So what we're looking at here is the commitment that is required of the church.

Jesus says, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, right? And I will give you rest for my yoke. There's a yoke put upon there. There's a commitment, right? There's a requirement. Look at what he says in verse 18.

He says, you are poor, wretched, miserable. You're wretched, miserable, poor, and blind, and naked. So this is what you've got to do. He says, verse 18, I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich.

[24 : 30] And white garments so that you may clothe yourself. And that the shame of your neck and this will not be revealed. And the eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. You see the three things they were trusting in are the three things he told them he didn't have.

Right? The three things that they thought they had all together, the banking, the clothing, and the eye salve. He said, you don't have that, so you need to come to me. What he's telling them is, quit finding your satisfaction and fulfillment in what you have in this world.

And come to me and find your satisfaction and fulfillment in me. That which you have gained in this world count as loss. That was Paul, I believe. And come to me. He says, you want money?

Come get it from me. You want clothing? Come get it from me. Don't wear the shiny black garments of Laodicea. Wear the shining white robes of the saints that is imputed to you through Jesus Christ. That is the robes of righteousness we'll read about later. The righteous deeds of the saints. I love how David Jeremiah assesses that when he goes through the book of Revelations. He says, the white robes are the righteous deeds of the saints. And David Jeremiah says, unfortunately, there's going to be a lot of saints walking around in heaven naked.

[25 : 29] Because if your garments are the righteous deeds of the saints, he said, there are a lot of saints who have accepted in Jesus Christ and haven't done any righteous deeds. So, therefore, they're going to be unclothed in glory. And wow, how embarrassing that may be.

Think about that. All of eternity to walk around. Hey, how's it going? I mean, I'm not trying to give you any mental pictures or anything like that. Everybody will know what you did or did not do. I don't know about you, but I'm not that confident of a man. I want a long, flowing, righteous deed clothing, right? I'm okay even if it's one of those tunics, those skirt dress looking things. It's okay with me. But I want to be fully clothed, walking around in glory with my Savior. He says, that which you have found satisfaction in this life and in this world, the requirement is that you come find it in me.

The gold, the clothing, the eye of self. All those things you're trying to offer, you cannot offer because they're only found in me. He said, come and buy it from me. You say, well, how do you buy something from Jesus Christ?

[26 : 30] Isaiah says, come and buy water from me. But then he says, buy it without money. How do you buy it without money? Surrender. Surrender. Give my life.

I'll give my life to you, Jesus Christ, in exchange of what you want to give to me. I'll give you of myself so that you can give me what you want to. I will give you of my person, Lord.

I will buy it without money. I'll buy it by surrender and I'll buy it by submission and I'll buy it by obedience. And I'll say, here I am, oh Lord. And then in you, I will find it. This is the requirement. This is what is characteristic of the church. This is what he calls the church to do. Verse 19. Those whom I love, I reprove. This is a church he has nothing good to say about, but he says he loves them, right?

Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline. Don't we wish those weren't in there? You know, it's in there multiple times throughout scripture. It actually says in the book of Hebrews that those whom he love, he chastises, right? And then if you're not chastised, if you're not corrected, it's because you're not loved.

[27 : 29] You're like, well, I didn't really think about that. So God wants to reprove you. He wants to commend you. He wants to correct you. He said, those whom I love, I reprove and discipline. So what? Therefore, be zealous and repent.

He said, have a little excitement in your repentance. How many of us are repentant with, well, I wish I didn't have to, but I think Christ is making me, so I guess I'm going to repent of that. By the way, that's not true repentance.

That's not saying, well, you know, I really like what I'm doing over here. This thing is fun. You know, it enjoys me. I was talking to a brother not too long ago. He said, you know, we lie to one another. Stay with me.

He said, we lie to one another. He said, a lot of times when we're sharing our faith, we tell so many lies. We always tell people that before I knew Jesus Christ, I didn't have any fun. And, you know, things I were doing in my flesh, they weren't fun. He said, that's a lie. He said, Satan makes sin fun. It's okay to be honest about that, right? They appeal to your flesh. Now, later on, when you see the wages of that, you understand that it was misery and you were entrapped by it. But in the moment, it's kind of appealing.

[28 : 26] In the moment, it kind of feels good. And so what we're doing is false repentance is when we're in that moment, you're like, you know, I'm having fun, but I don't think Jesus wants me to do it. So I guess I'll leave it alone. That's not repentance. Repentance is this thing is horrible, though it may feel good, though it may seem good, though it may look good by the world standard.

And compared to the glory and the holiness of Jesus Christ, I would rather have him than have that. I'd rather have him than have that pleasure. I'd rather have him than have that satisfaction. I'd rather have him than have this incitement.

I'd rather have him than this joy. I'd rather have him. I want to be zealous. I want to run to the Savior and flee from the sin. He says, be zealous and repent. Why? Because of salvific fervor.

I am born again. I'm saved. I'm redeemed. Oh, glory. Look at this commitment that is required of the church. Oh, I wish we repented. As zealously as we sinned.

Often we run to sin. Often we run to sin. And we mess up. And we crawl back to repentance. Oh, if we run to the Savior as much as we run to the sin.

[29 : 30] Then I believe the church will begin to be healthy. Now, let's look at the good news.

Number four. Here's the Christ who rules the church. Here is the condition that will ruin the church.

Here is the commitment that is required of the church. Now, you want to see the good news.

Probably the best news of all the letters to seven churches. By the way, these are full picture. So I think you can go through these seven. And you can see each one of these promises to the seven.

And each of those promises are yours in Christ. Right? So it's not like you just have to choose which one of these you get. So he culminates with this one. He culminates with this one. Look at the chair that is reserved for the church.

Look at the chair that is reserved for the church. Oh, what a chair it is. Look at this. And by the way, it's a two-fold chair. But you'll see it. Verse 20 says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him and he with me. So many times this has been used in evangelistic crusades. This has been used in witnessing 101. This has been used in sharing the gospel with other people, with individuals, and calling people to make a commitment to Jesus Christ.

[30 : 35] And while that is not a wrong application, I want you to understand that this true application is found that Jesus is talking to the corporate body of the saints called the church. He is not telling just individuals to open.

And he is telling the church that if any individual in the church will open, then I'll come in. Now, this is where we move from the corporate body to the individual, which means one person can open the door and let Jesus in, and it will affect the whole church.

All it takes is one. All it takes is one excited individual. All it takes is one that gets on fire for what the Lord is doing. All it takes is one. And what a picture it is.

Jesus says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. Jesus is to be the door of the church, but in this picture, Jesus is outside the door of the church. That's his church, by the way. That's his.

But they cut him out. They barricaded him out. Said, Jesus, we don't want you in here. We want to know about you. We want to hear about you. We want to talk about you. But we don't really want you because I don't know if you've realized this or not.

[31 : 33] When Jesus shows up, it has a way to rock your world. Have you ever seen anywhere in Scripture where Jesus is on the scene and it didn't change everything completely? I mean, really, just open it up. You got 10,000 people hungry.

You got a little boy with a sack lunch. Changes everything, right? You got some fishermen on the sea, and it's going crazy, and they hadn't caught anything all night. Jesus gets in the boat, changes everything. They're crossing the same sea, and they're going across the Sea of Galilee, and a storm shows up, and it changes everything because Jesus is asleep.

He wakes up and says, I'll be quiet, and it gets quiet. You got some fishermen going across the sea, been rowing at the sea for three hours. These are people who fished on this sea, and they're struggling on this sea. Jesus shows up walking on the sea, and it changes everything because all of a sudden, now Peter can walk on water.

That's a pretty radical change, right? You got all these things. Every time Jesus was there, it changed everything. That's why sometimes I think the church wants to know about Jesus, wants to hear about Jesus, even maybe wants to throw a little praise to Jesus, but we're not so sure we want him to show up because if he really shows up, things change, and our life looks different.

And if we're going to be completely honest with one another, we kind of like the way we got our life structured. We kind of have everything in order, and we like it to be this way and that way and have it all planned out and all these preparations and these things, but Jesus says, I'm at the door, and I'm knocking.

[32 : 54] I'm at the door, and I'm knocking. I'm at the door, and I'm knocking. We're looking at the chair that is reserved for the church. Look at what he says. If anyone opens up to me, I will come in to him, and I will eat with him. I will dine with him, and he with me.

Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you.
[41 : 00] Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you.