

# Unlocking the Message to the Seven Churches: Timeless Lessons for Today's Church

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[ 0 : 00 ] To the Word of God now, to the book of Revelation, and talking about seven churches, the seven churches of Revelation. Revelation, of course, it reveals these truths about the end times, but John leads into Revelation by talking about seven different churches and their spiritual conditions.

God gives the churches some warnings and encouragements. He gives credit and He gives correction as well. And there's various spiritual lessons we could gather. Different people have put different slants on this, referring to the different churches as perhaps reflecting different stages of church history.

We could conjecture further on that, but really the point of my message this morning is not to conjecture that so much, but more to take some of the spiritual lessons that we can learn, that we can take heed of and learn from.

Seven different churches, seven actual churches of Asia. And there's problems with some, there's praises with others. But there's truths that we can all find and hopefully make application of with our own faith.

We can examine ourselves as well as examine the church. Take a look at our own church. There's faults, there's failings, there's maybe reason for praise, but there's problems too.

[ 1 : 25 ] How can we think about where we are at and what we can learn from these things? How can we seek the Lord individually to revive us spiritually as a church? So we're going to lead off as we start with Revelation and from chapter 1, Revelation chapter 1.

And talking through some of the things that jump out about these various churches. So it reads there, Revelation 1 from verse 10. John is instructed to write to the churches.

And it reads, The seven churches covered here.

In Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Specific fellowships at that time. Now we could learn from that and make application.

Because God's word in Ecclesiastes chapter 1 tells us how what has been will be again. What has been done will be done again.

[ 2 : 42 ] There's nothing new under the sun. And so the truths about these churches we could think about in our own day and time too. Our Lord says to each one of these churches, I know thy works.

We can't hide the truth from our God. He's got x-ray vision. And our Lord says to each one, one by one, I know thy works. It's the same for us too, isn't it?

God knows us. He knows us through and through. He knows how we are, how we think, what's really happening for each and every one of us. And we can reflect on the different truths about these churches and think about how does it apply to me, to our church.

Think about some of these same principles we can pick up at work. In churches down through history and the churches in our own day. Write it in a book. And send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.

Unto Ephesus. And unto Smyrna. And unto Pergamos. And unto Thyatira. And unto Sardis. And unto Philadelphia.

[ 3 : 48 ] And unto Laodicea. Our Lord checks the pulse, if you like, of these various churches. And he gives each one a bit of a check-up.

And then he addresses the spiritual health of each one, one by one. And gives them a prescription for improvement. The churches we could think of represent various spiritual conditions. Some people, as I say, think that these churches relate to types of churches over time periods.

One thing we know for sure is that this timeless lesson is for us. It's for our learning. We can take no time. About what God commends. And what God rebukes in every church.

The pros and the cons. About their faith. About their walk. And we can learn to apply these truths in our own church. And our own lives. So let's have a look through. As John writes to these different churches.

Firstly, the first church, Ephesus. You could call it the loveless church. The church that lost its first love. And the message here for Ephesus.

[ 4 : 52 ] For the church at Ephesus. Ephesus is restore love. The application is to prioritize your passion for Christ. Over the routine.

Over religious duty. Some say that the name Ephesus means desirable or cherished. This church was known for its fading zeal. They were loyal but loveless.

So we pick it up there from Revelation 2 verse 1. It reads, Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, This thing saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

It's talking about the stars, meaning the messengers, the angels of the churches, the preachers of the churches. And then the seven golden candlesticks, these lampstands, these lamps, these lights, are the churches.

As was pictured in the vision before this reference here. Verse 2. I know thy works and thy labour and thy patience. And how thou canst not bear them which are evil.

[ 5 : 59 ] He's saying here about various strengths. They have hard work. I know thy works and thy labour. It talks about thy patience, thy perseverance. And there's a doctrinal purity too.

And thou hast tried them. Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not. And hast found them liars.

And hast borne and hast patience and for my name's sake thou hast laboured and hast not fainted. So there's much to commend this church. But then there's a weakness here.

Verse 4. You see the weakness here. Revelation 2 verse 4. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. What's the lesson here?

There's a danger here. They had faithful service. They had much works. They had endured. But they'd lost that passionate love for their saviour. Ephesus shows us our need of keeping that flame of love alive for our Lord.

[ 7 : 02 ] That heart for God. He wants that for us. That heart for God. May we as believers be stirred to rekindle that kind of devotion. To reignite that first love that we had when we were first saved for our Lord.

We can renew that passion. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. Verse 5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works.

Or else I will come unto thee quickly and I'll remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent. We see this church's urge to get right.

To restore. To refresh. To renew that passion. And it reads on there, verse 6. Ephesus was commended here, verse 6.

That they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Now, Nikos means victory. Laos means people.

There's different thoughts about who or what these folk were, what this doctrine was, what these false teachers were.

[ 8 : 23 ] And what they were on about. But you could propose that it could refer to some authoritarian kind of leadership.

So there was a victory, a conquering over the people. This domineering of the people. And so there's this kind of authoritarian kind of leadership. That's how some read it.

It was false and it was false doctrine. It was false practice. And the church at Ephesus was commended. God says, I hate their deeds too. So here's a good thing. This church at Ephesus was right in hating the false doctrine and the methodology of the Nicolaitans.

The point we could make about Ephesus here is rediscovering our love for God. Commended for their works, for their labours, for their endurance.

But they'd left their first love. How can we take note of that, brother, sister? To not just go through the motions of religious service and acts. But to rekindle the flame.

[ 9 : 25 ] Amen? Rekindle the flame. Passion is more valuable than routine obedience. Don't let your faith just become mechanical. When you just go through the motions and yet your love for the Lord is lacking.

Let that love for Jesus burn brightly again. Amen? Amen? Can you believe that? Let's aspire to that. So that was number one, the church at Ephesus.

The next church is Smyrna. The persecuted church. And these ones were exhorted, be faithful unto death. Soldier on. There's some battles to fight.

There's some persecution for this church. We could learn from Smyrna to stand firm in trials, can't we? Think of the persecuted church.

And there's still the Smyrna kind of churches today. North Korea, for one. We could think of the Middle East. There's countries where it's hard to be a believer. There's Smyrna Christians alive today.

[ 10 : 22 ] And we see Smyrna commended for that eternal hope that they have. That will see you through suffering. And this church was known for faithfulness through trials. We read about them there in chapter 2, verse 8 through 9.

And John writes unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, Write these things, saith the Lord, the first and the last, which was dead and is alive. 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. This church had this faithfulness. They kept on, soldiering on through time of trials.

And yet some looked upon this church as if it was poor. He says, I know thy works and tribulation and poverty, bracket, but thou art rich, close bracket.

So some viewed this church as a poor church. Maybe it was not in a well-to-do way and had some impression of being a down-and-out kind of church, a church that had poverty.

[ 11 : 32 ] But yet this church had actually a great strength of true spiritual riches. Not material wealth, but they were rich in faith.

And that's what counts it. And that's true for us, isn't it? For every church, they might have all the bells and whistles, but they're actually poor spiritually. We want to be rich spiritually, spiritually rich. And so this church, they were a faithful church through hardship, time of suffering. What stands out about Smyrna as well is that the Lord noted no weakness about them.

There's nothing said untoward about the church at Smyrna. Verse 10, we read on, The Lord says to this church, fear not.

You're going to suffer some things, but fear not. Now, the word Smyrna, it relates to myrrh. Smyrna, myrrh. Myrrh, of course, is one of the spices used in the rituals of the Hebrews.

[ 12 : 52 ] And myrrh is this tree resin that had a bitter taste when crushed. Myrrh was used as a preservative too for burials. Myrrh was a perfumed incense.

Produced this sweet aroma. But to obtain the fragrance, it first had to be crushed. It required beating and pressing to bring forth that fragrance.

And think of it too, brother, sister, for yourself. Those times of pressing, those times of crushing, those times of suffering can yield an aroma, a sweet fragrance.

When we're beaten and pressed, the Lord exhorts them, verse 10, Be faithful unto death. And what's more, there's a promise. There's a crown awaiting.

A crown of life waiting for you. A message we can learn from the church at Smyrna is to stand firm in persecution. I know when we were door knocking yesterday, we came across another believer.

[ 13 : 55 ] And she was sharing how she was working in an aged care setting. And she was having opportunity to talk to one of the residents there, who really was obviously getting closer to passing.

And she was able to testify to them and see them encouraged and to share her faith. And then her workmates got wind of this and they were mocking her and poking fun and pointing the finger and scorning her.

Now that can happen today. We can be persecuted. Even in our everyday jobs, we can be persecuted. We can suffer that kind of ridicule from others, friends, family, workmates who might mock.

Be faithful. Be faithful. Be like these Smyrna believers. There's a crown of life. Crown of life. The message we can learn here is to stand firm. And as believers, we can know that encouragement, that there's a crown.

There's a reward. There's a blessing. Maybe some immediate persecution time, some trials. This church is afflicted. It's counted as poor, yet they're rich in the spiritual.

[15:04] What about you and me? We might be counted poor in this world, but rich in faith. These ones, they had opposition, but there were some in the place who claimed to be Jews, but were actually a synagogue of Satan.

There were some that were imposters that made religious talk, but weren't real. And God tells this church, you're going to suffer some things here. There's some persecution for 10 days. Be faithful. That's the message. To the point of death, if it be. And though we may face hard times, brother, sister, in this life, times of persecution, these are the times to give testimony, to give witness.

But the takeaway we could find from this church at Smyrna is endure suffering with hope. Enjoy that suffering. Don't let the suffering or the mocking or the teasing, the torment, the opposition of others. Don't let that stop you from being a witness. And be faithful. And be faithful. Go through the persecution. Know that a crown of life waits for you too. Any earthly pain cannot overshadow the eternal reward.

[16:15] Of course, not that our working or witnessing earns any salvation. But as saved people, there's a promise of reward.

It's like the cream on the cake, isn't it? That we're saved by grace through faith. Yet as we work, there's rewards promised on top of that. So victory is ahead.

A crown for you. So keep faithful. Brother, sister, hold fast. Next up, church number three we come to is the church at Pergamos. And Pergamos was known as the compromising church.

The truth for us about Pergamos is hold fast to the truth and reject compromise. Stay true to God's word. Despite worldly temptations or false teachings, Now this church was known, sadly, for its worldly compromise.

We pick that up there in verse 12, chapter 2, 12 through 13. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges, I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is.

[17:28] And thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, Even in those days where in Antipas was my faithful martyr, Who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

So they'd known some of their number faithfully going to the grave for their faith, Suffering unto death. And yet, now there was some compromise.

They had a strength in that they were faithful. They were living in this spiritually hostile environment where Satan's seat was. There was obviously this very evident satanic element there.

Yet they were faithful to his name. Verse 13, They holdest fast my name. They persevere. But, we read on further, verse 14, There was a weakness here.

A few things against thee, he says. Because thou hast there then that hold the doctrine of Balaam. He taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, To hate things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

[18:33] So hast thou also then that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, Which thing I hate. So they'd made some accommodation here of these ones, That we earlier saw that God hates, And he hates the doctrine of them, We see here too, That they were accommodating, They were tolerating these false teachings.

So Balaam's doctrine and the Nicolaitans. So it shows for them, this church, Pergamos, That they were compromising. There was a compromise here, That led to a spiritual corruption too.

So this church had allowed teachings, That encouraged believers, To engage in immorality, In immoral practices, And idolatry. And it harks back to, Referring back to, A like to Balaam.

What Balaam did with the Israelites, That's in Numbers 22 through 24, Where Balaam compromised with sin, And he suffered God's judgment, He led people, God's people into compromise.

And Pergamos was doing the same. There's some kind of compromise about spiritual things, And about pagan practices, And Pergamos stands as a warning to us, To be careful about the seduction of idolatry, The danger of worldliness, To be very mindful and guarded.

[19:58] And the antidote, again, Verse 16, Repent, Repent, Or else I will come unto thee quickly, And will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

He that hath an ear, Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh, I will 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 thee.

God calls the church here to repentance, To be separate from worldly influences, To reject that compromise, To guard against it.

In the world today, There's so much that is to be desired. In the church world, We've heard lately of the Pope coming out, And saying something along the lines of, That salvation is not only through Christ, There's any kind of religion, There's kind of wishy-washy rubbish.

They're turning away from the very clear teachings of the Bible, And it's very sad when someone so prominent would say such a thing. We've got to guard against spiritual compromise.

[ 21 : 10 ] There's no way we can dilute the truth, Or let the world's values dilute our devotion. The truth must remain pure, And strong, In the sea of falsehood.

So as we see, God's church is meant to stand out, Not blend in. And when there's a compromise, Such as in this case of Balaam, Of the Nicolaitans, They were trying to bring in pagan things, False teachings, We've got to be bold in the truth, To withstand that, And rather be one of the overcomers here.

Again, The promise here of the ones who will be overcomers, Of blessings ahead. Compromise is not an option for the people of God. We must keep strong. The next church, Number four, Is Thyatira.

It was the corrupted church. And the truth we can learn about this, Is don't tolerate corruption. Our Lord wants us to keep pure in our faith, And our practice.

And Thyatira was known for its moral corruption. So we'll pick it up from verse 18. They had this strength of charity, Of service, Of patience.

[ 22 : 19 ] It says, Unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write, These things saith the Son of God, Who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire, And his feet are like fine brass.

I know thy works. That phrase again. I know thy works. Thy works and service and faith, And thy patience and thy works, And the last to be more than the first.

So they were commended here for these strengths, Of their love, Their faith, Their service. And verse 20 it reads on, Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee.

So I have those things to commend. Now he goes on to say, These things I have against thee. There's this problem with this toleration, Of again some falseness from false teaching, The false prophetess Jezebel, Leading to immorality.

He says, 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.

[ 23 : 20 ] And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, And she repented not. So the problem was that this false prophetess Jezebel, She was leading this church to immorality.

And the church was giving ground to this corruption, This compromise. Verse 22 it reads on, Behold, I will cast her into a bed, And then that commit adultery with her, Into great tribulation, Except they repent of their deeds.

And I will kill her children with death, And all the children 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. So Thyatira here, God's pointing out the danger, Of allowing moral corruption.

Of times there's been reports of, Preachers falling into sin, And moral corruption is a very serious matter, Isn't it? We want to be pure and holy, We want to be self-disciplined, And living right, And to not tolerate sin, To not accommodate that, Or tolerate that.

We can't just turn a blind eye, When there's something that's sinful, Or wrong, And having this woman, Teacher, This preacher, I mean that's wrong for a start, We can't turn a blind eye, To false ideas and teachings, And so we read on verse 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, Or put upon you none other burden, But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

[ 24 : 51 ] And he that overcometh, And keepeth my words unto the end, To him will I give power over the nations. Thyatira was allowing this moral corruption, And it's the same in our day too, That we want to be pure, God helping us to live righteous, And to have that self-discipline, To recognise sin, And falseness, And to not tolerate it, In our own lives, Or in our church family, To speak against false teaching, And this was the great need of Thyatira, To not turn a blind eye to this corruption, But rather to address it, And it's the same for us today, That God's church must hold fast to righteousness, It's like as you could compare it to, Cutting out the cancer, As it were, Before it spreads, And so confronting falsehood, As sin, Confront it head on, And not let corruption take root, So, As it was in Thyatira, It can happen in any church, It can happen in this church,

As in any church, Where something is accommodated, That's a sinful practice, That's something that's plainly immoral, As God's people, We've got to exercise grace with one another, And urge people to holiness and righteousness, To confront corruption, 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, And I'll give Him the morning star, He that hath an ear, Let me hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, The promise there, Of a blessing to come, A blessing to come, And now we'll move on to the fifth one, Sardis, Sardis, You could call Sardis the dead church, This church was dead, It was called dead, The message for us about Sardis, Is to wake up, And strengthen what remains, There's a call here for, Spiritual life, A reviving of spiritual life, A need for revival, And so we could see really, This need for revival,

Is still the need of the church today, Isn't it? For every church, That our spiritual life would be revived, That we'd avoid spiritual complacency, Just coasting, Or just slacking, This church was known for its spiritual death, And the name Sardis, Means escaping ones, Or those who come out, And it reads from verse one, What their strength was, That they had this reputation, Of being alive, So it reads there, And unto the angel of the church in Sardis, Write these things, Sait 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, Be watchful, And strengthen the things which remain, That are ready to die, For I have not found thy works, Perfect before God, So it leads off with, They've got this reputation, Of being alive, They have this outward appearance, That it looked okay, From the outside, The exterior, The superficial, But that was it, That was the extent, Of the praise for Sardis, And it reads on, Thou hast a name, That thou livest, And art dead, So there was really an inward dare, Now some churches can be like that, They might have, A lot of show, Of life, And they might have, A lot of, Energy, And excitement, And sensuality, They look alive, But spiritually they're lacking, Spiritually they're dead, Spiritually there's something missing, And so Sardis is this warning, Against being, Alike to that, To being, Maybe focusing on the externals, The material, Maybe relying on tradition, Or reputation, But lacking the spirit, Lacking the life, Of the spirit, Having this reputation, Of being alive, But yet lacking, The true spiritual vitality, And it's true for all of us, That we want to have true, Spiritual life, To be awakened spiritually, To have a vibrant, Living faith, Appearance isn't enough, It's got to be real, It's got to be, In our hearts, Doesn't it?

Not just a spiritual appearance, With need of revival, And it reads on there, From verse 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, They 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, So again, There's some commended here, They're going to be commended, They've not defiled their garments, But the message to the church as a whole is, It's time to come to spiritual life, It's time to not sit back on our laurels, About this appearance of life, To think that we've arrived, But having that heart to seek God, To breathe new life, To breathe new life into us as a church, Verse 5 it reads on, Here that overcometh the saint shall be,

[ 29 : 56 ] Clothed in a 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, Here that hath a near, Let him hear, What the spirit saith unto the churches, So there's a plea here, To seek his face, To aspire to be those, That are overcoming ones, To ask God to bring revival, A refreshing, Revivers again, Number 6, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Philadelphia is called the faithful church, And it was known for its faithfulness, And the word Philadelphia, It means brotherly love, The message for this church, Is to keep the door of opportunity open, It talks about a door opening, So we'll pick it up there, From verse 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 king of David, He that openeth, And no man shutteth, And shutteth,

And no man openeth, So there's a sense here, Where there's open doors, There's opportunity, Verse 8, I know thy works, Behold, I have set before thee an open door, And no man can shut it, For there hast a little strength, And has kept my word, And has not denied my name, The church of Philadelphia, God caused them, Commends them, For their faithfulness, To persevere, He caused them to trust him, For opportunities to serve, And witness, We could think of like, The missionary sending churches, That they see these open doors, And they take action, They're commanded here, For keeping God's word, And not denying his name, You could think of churches that are biblical, That there's a biblical foundation, That the Bible matters, And what's done is biblical, It's

biblically founded and centred, That our practice and our doctrine, Is strongly biblical, And this is a church,

That has kept the word of God, It's not denied his name, A wonderful fact about the church of Philadelphia, Again is that, There's no mention of weakness, About this church, As much as it does say, They have a little strength, Maybe they could have been a bit stronger, But they're commended, They're commended nevertheless, As a faithful church, An obedient church, How can we learn, From the church of Philadelphia, We can learn, How can we love our Lord more, How can we have that brotherly love, The love between us, And that faithful love to him, That service unto him, The message about Philadelphia, Is one of encouragement, For believers to continue on, In faithfulness, Keep on trusting God, And when there's open doors, Answer them, There's a mention of a door open, So it's been said, That the mission of the church, Is missions, We want to be a church, That's sending out, Into our local mission field, And wider, And wider, Let's see the mission field, That's all around us, There's an open door, He's set it before us,

Take those opportunities, To serve, And with Philadelphia, God promises too, To keep them, From the hour of temptation, So we see that there, Verse 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 they think, To know that I have loved thee, Because thou hast kept, The word of my patience, I also will keep thee, From the hour of temptation, So again, There's this assurance, Of God's protection, That this time of testing, Which will come upon all the world, To try them, That dwell upon the earth, Verse 11, Behold, I come quickly, Hold that fast, Which thou hast, That no man take thy crown, 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, So it's saying, The promise of God, Faithful, Keep on labouring, Don't let up, Your zeal, God doesn't want you, To lose your crown, It's talking about rewards,

So it's talking about, Rewards for our work, Again, Something in store, For faithful servants, So do your part, To pray, To give, To minister, To share, To put your hand up, And serve, To be active, As a believer, God helping you to be, That you'll have a crown, One day, You don't want to miss that, By flagging, We want to finish strong, Amen, And some may get discouraged, Or downhearted, They lose momentum, And there's a warning here, There's a caution here, Hold fast what you have, That no man take thy crown, There's a promise here, Of a reward, I will write upon him, The name of my God, And the name of the city, Of my God, Which is near Jerusalem, Which cometh down, Out of heaven, From my God, And I'll write upon him, My new name, So there's a commendation here, There's things, That God's going to do, That are, Just for these ones, Verse 13, He that hath an ear, Let him hear, What the Spirit saith, Unto the churches, You could say Philadelphia, They had small strength,

[ 35 : 01 ] Yet great faith, He says you've got a little strength, Who feels like that sometimes, I've got, My strength is little, I'm weak, My strength is little, But my faith can be great, Amen, That can be true for us, Can't it, You think, What would God want to do with me, With little old me, With all of my limitations, But if God's in it, We might feel little, But if our faith is strong, God can use us, What can we learn from Philadelphia, God opened, But in God's sight, God saw it as mighty, And he says there's a reward coming, The call here is to stay faithful, To serve, To seize every God given opportunity, These things saith thee, Amen, The faithful and true witness, The beginning of the creation of God, Again, I know thy works, That they aren't neither cold nor hot, I would that thou wert cold or hot, To not be, In the middle, Like lukewarm, Like compromising, And it's a very sad reflection,

On the Laodicean church, The Lord notes no strength, About this church, How sad to be a church, That there's nothing praiseworthy, Said about them, They're known only for weakness, Lukewarmness, In other words, They were spiritually indifferent, And this church was in this state, Of spiritual apathy, They didn't care, They had no fire, To buy of me gold, Tried in the fire, That thou mayest be rich, And white raiment, That thou mayest be clothed, That the shame of thy nakedness, Do not appear, So it's talking about, This gold, This, This faith, That's going to be tested, That's going to go through the fire, That's going to be pure and strong, And it talks about this white raiment, This clothing, Reflecting righteousness, He says, That thou may be clothed, But this church, They had no fire, They'd lost it, And we could reflect about Laodicea, A wee bit like Laodicea sometimes, Is our church like that, Where we don't see that need, To be passionate in our relationship, With God,

It reads on verse 19, So God says, He still loves the Laodiceans, He says, I love you, That's why I'm rebuking you, That's why I'm disciplining you, He says, Be zealous therefore, And repent, So this call here to, A closeness to the Saviour, The Lord rebukes them, He says, I want you to be able to see, Anoint your eyes, You need to be able to see, There's a blindness here, There's a cloudiness to your vision, And He rebukes them, He calls them to repentance, To zeal, Now, Believers here this morning, As believers, We can all fall into complacency, We can have a lukewarm faith, Where we get, A loss of faith, A weakness of our faith, God wants us to have a wholeheartedness, Of faith, To be all in, For our Lord, And we don't want to miss that, We don't want to miss that blessing,

He says, 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 hear with me, He's calling for our attention here, He says, To him that overcometh, Will I grant to sit with me, In my throne, Even as I also overcame, And I'm sat down with my father, In his throne, Hear that hath an ear, Let him hear, What the spirit saith, Unto the churches, So there's a promise here again, For overcomers, And really, Here's an overcomer, This is the victory, That overcometh the world, Even our faith, Every believer's there, So, For the meantime, The promise for you, Is not to set off for laxness, Or lukewarmness, Now is a time for refreshing, For seeking the Lord, While he may be found, For a reviving, A renewing of zeal, This is not a time to cool off, But to get fired up, Amen, To have that heart, Lord, I don't want to settle for lukewarm, I want to be warmed up, I want to be fired up, A halfway commitment, Just won't do, And our Lord's repeated call, Again, Is hear what the spirit is saying, Hear his call, His challenge, We can see, Seven churches, Seven different types, Of Christians, Warnings, And promises, Again, To recap, Ephesus, The loveless church, They left their first love, Could that be true of you, Of me?

[ 39 : 34 ] He won't, That you'll make you stronger, It'll make you soldier on, You'll dig your head, Uphold that, The church at Thyatira, Was called a corrupted church, We're called to confront corruption, Not to settle for, Accommodation of sin, But where the sin, We want to withstand it, And, Seek restoration of those, That have fallen short, Where there's need for discipline, We want to rebuke, But restore them in love, But essentially, To confront corruption, What about Sardis, Was called a dead church, God forbid, That we'll be a church, That's going through the motions, That's just mechanical, That's just, Oh, It's the routine, And, It's dead, We have need of revival, Every church needs that, The reviving of God, Revive us again, Should be our song, Every time we meet, I think, Revive us again, We need revival, And then the church of Philadelphia, It prompts us,

This is the faithful church, God helping us, We'll be, In these end times, We'll be that, In that number, The Philadelphia church, Amen, That we'll be faithful, We'll keep his word, We'll, Be true to his name, We'll hold biblical truth, Firmly and faithfully, We'll be faithful, And, We'll be a church, Of brotherly love, This one, A Laodicean church, That lukewarm church, Rebuked, For, It's sloppiness, It's carelessness, It's compromise, It's, A common need, Let's refresh our love, Our zeal, Our faithfulness, Let's renew, Our trust, And strengthen, What remains, Even if, It be said of us, You've just got a little strength, God can use even that, That you have, Brother, Sister, You might say, Well I'm a little strength Christian, Look we all are, Aren't we?

In the scheme of things, Our strength, Is nothing compared, To his almighty, Empowering, And friends, That's what we need, Spiritual growth, And faith, Learn from the bad examples, And learn from the good ones, Pick the best, And avoid the rest, Let us pray, Lord we thank you, For every soul here gathered, And Lord help us, To be stirred up, As you would, Take action, In terms of, The call, To zeal, To love, To repent, To faith, To faithfulness, Lord help us to be such a people, In Jesus name, Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.