



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Revelation 3:14-22

“Nauseating Non-Commitment”

Revelation

TRANSCRIPT

Our text this morning is Revelation 3:14-22. This finishes the chapter and this is the seventh of the seven letters to the seven churches.

“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 eye salve 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. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ” May the Lord bless this reading of His Word. Let’s bow together in prayer.

Father, we thank You for this great opportunity that we have to come together on a Sunday morning, fellowship with one another, read the Scriptures as we’ve done, consider the meaning of the text in some depth in a moment. And do what we’re doing at this moment, and that is come boldly to the throne of grace. You’ve opened up heaven through Your Son. You’ve given us access to You. What a great privilege that is. How easy it is to take that for granted, but what an

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amazing privilege that we, finite creatures that we are, can come into the presence of the infinite almighty God. And what an amazing thing it is that You would give consideration to our concerns, which in the grand scheme of things must seem very, very small, and trivial, and insignificant. And yet, You give full attention to them. They are of great moment and concern to You, and we are, as well.

You have set Your affection upon fallen creatures. You have loved us. You have redeemed us through the blood of Your Son. We give You the praise and the thanksgiving for that. It's really an incomprehensible thought that You would do that and that we can, as I say, come before the throne of grace as we do at this moment. Bless us, Father. That's what we pray. We pray that You would open our eyes, that You would apply that salve to our eyes that You recommend to the Laodiceans. We pray that You would keep us from being lukewarm, that You would keep us from becoming indifferent to spiritual things, to becoming enamored of the world and carried away by temporal concerns and aspirations. So easy to do that, Father. We live in a world full of nice things, alluring things, which are not bad in and of themselves, but how easy it is to become enamored of them and lose interest in You. It's a terrible thing, Father. Keep us from that. And stimulate us through the seventh letter that we read this morning and what we will consider.

So we pray, Father, that the Spirit of God would minister to us. That's our great prayer. Not that a man would have good things to say, but that You will take the things that are said, You will take Your Word and You will apply it to our hearts. You'll open our hearts, bring conviction where it's needed, bring encouragement where it's needed. Bless us, Father. What a great promise is attached to this letter. We will sit on the throne of Christ. We'll reign with Him. That should be a kind of promise that gives perspective to all of life. May that be what we strive for, to look forward to, and live in light of that great promise. Bless us spiritually in this hour. We pray for the hour to come, the Sunday School classes, that You'd bless each teacher. Thank you for raising up godly men and women to teach, and pray that You'd bless them and use them, and minister through them, and build up Your people, young and old alike.

And we pray for our material needs, Lord. We think of those who are in great distress. We have some who are seriously ill and we pray that You'd give them encouragement and healing. We pray for **Mike Dixon**, that You would give him strength and bless his family as they support him. But bless the treatments that he's undergoing, that they'd be effective. We pray that for

Larry Ramsay, as well, that You'd restore his health. And there's so many others, Lord, whose names we could remember to bring before You, and yet You know them, and You know those whose names have not been listed. You know our needs. You know them before we experience them. And we pray that You bless those who are in need, and bless those who do not have direct needs at this moment, but will at some time.

Bless us all, that we be built up in the faith and equipped for the difficulties of life that will surely come. Bless our nation. We pray for our leaders that You give them wisdom. Thank You for the freedoms that we've enjoyed. We pray that You'd preserve them, not that we might enjoy life, though we should enjoy the good things that You give us, but so that we would be free to exercise our faith, and we would do so boldly. May You motivate us and move us to do that. Bless us now, Lord, as we sing our final hymn. Prepare our hearts as we worship and study together. We pray these things in Christ's name, Amen.

We're all familiar with the story *The Emperor's New Clothes*, the Hans Christian Anderson fable about a king who paraded through the streets showing off his beautiful new suit until a child spoke up and said, "The emperor is naked." Probably everyone has woken up from a nightmare like that. But there are some people for whom that is not a fable or a bad dream. It is reality. They walk through life thinking they're well-clothed when really they're naked. Not physically, but spiritually. That was the church at Laodicea. The church said, "I am rich, and have need of nothing," but Christ said, "You are poor, and blind, and naked," and threatened to spit them out of His mouth.

What a contrast to the previous church, the church of Philadelphia, which was poor, and small, of little power, but kept the Lord's Word and pleased Him. The problem with the church of Laodicea was it was complacent. It felt that it had arrived. It was materially comfortable and self-satisfied, just like the church at Sardis, which was really dead. But at Sardis, there were a few believers who were faithful, while the entire Laodicean church was completely complacent. This is the last and the severest of the seven letters. John Stott wrote, "Perhaps none of the seven letters is more appropriate to the church at the beginning of the 21st century than this. It describes vividly the respectable, nominal, rather sentimental, skin-deep religiosity that is so widespread among us today."

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Laodicea was 50 miles southeast of Philadelphia. Between it were its two sister cities, Hieropolis, six miles to the north, and Colossae 10 miles to the south. It was located at the convergence of three important roads, so it became a center of banking and industry, and one of the richest commercial centers in the world. And evidence of its wealth is seen in the fact that when it suffered a severe earthquake which damaged much of the city in AD 60, it was able to finance its own rebuilding without assistance from the imperial treasury. It was self-sufficient. Can you imagine New Orleans rebuilding itself after Katrina? That would have been an amazing thing. Well, similar to this.

This is a very impressive city. It was a rich city. Much of its wealth came from the production of a specific wool that was glossy, black in color, and soft in texture. It was very popular in making clothing. The city was also the location of a major medical school that was well-known for its manufacture of ear ointment and eye salve. It was, as I say, a very important city in many ways. It was important financially because of its location, because of its wealth. It would have been a strategic center for the gospel. And yet, we don't know who established this very significant church. We've noticed that with many of the churches we've studied of the seven churches. It may have been established through the preaching of Epaphrus, who lived in Colossae, not far from the city of Laodicea, and if so, that probably occurred during Paul's ministry in Ephesus.

Paul did write a letter to the Laodicean church. It's mentioned in Colossians 4:16. We don't have that letter, and so some think it may be the book of Ephesians that Paul is referring to when he tells them to read the letter that was coming from Laodicea. Some believe – most scholars today, in fact, believe that the book of **Ephesus** was not written specifically to the church at Ephesus, but was a circular letter that was written to all of those churches in this area, this area of Asia. Or, it may have been a letter that he wrote to them and we've simply lost it.

The letter to the Laodiceans that we do have is this one in Revelation 3:14-22, and it is a stinging rebuke. Christ begins the letter with an unusual title. He is the "Amen." It's a title that's taken from Isaiah 65:16, where God is literally called "the God of amen." That's how we could literally translate it, which means "the God of truth." So Christ addresses the Laodiceans as that person in Isaiah 65. He addresses the Laodiceans as Yahweh, as God. He is the Amen. The Hebrew word "amen" is derived from the root word meaning "strength," and "firmness" and the

idea is that Christ, who is very God of very God, He is faithful. There is firmness in Him. He is truthful. He is trustworthy. That's the idea expressed in the rest of the description, the faithful and true witness. Christ is reliable. He is reliable in contrast to the unreliable, unfaithful Laodiceans.

He continues. He is "the Beginning of the creation of God." Now that verse was seized upon by some of the early heretics to support their false ideas. The Aryans, for example, were probably the first major threat to the church from within, the first great heresy was Aryanism, and these Aryans denied the deity of Christ. And they would seize on a statement like this to support their idea that Christ was the first of all created things, the greatest of all the creation, but a creation nonetheless. He had a beginning. He's not equal with God. But Christ has just identified Himself as God. He's identified Himself as "the Amen," and here what He means is that He is the beginning in the sense that He is the origin of all things. He is the source of all creation.

It's clear from this that the Laodiceans were very familiar with the book of Colossians. They're close to the city of Colossae. They would have had close communication with them. And it's clear from the parallels we have between this and things that Paul says, particularly in chapter 1 of the book of Colossians, that they were very familiar with that book. In chapter 1 of the book of Colossians, Paul speaks of Christ as "the firstborn of all creation." And he says, "all things have been created through Him and for Him." But if all things have been created through Him and for Him, then He's not a creation. He's the creator of all things.

But He's the firstborn of all creation, and they would take that, these Aryans, as being a proof that, well, see, He's the first. He is a created thing Himself. And yet, that is not what Paul is referring to. When he says He's the "firstborn," He's speaking of Him in terms of His authority over all things. It means that He is the heir of all things. He is the one to whom everything belongs. And then Paul calls Christ the beginning. That is beginning in the sense that He is the source and the origin of the church.

Well, the Laodiceans no doubt valued highly this letter that Paul wrote to the Colossians. They certainly would have copied it and read it, this letter that has such a high view of Christ. But with the passing of the years, their value of Christ had decreased and their interest in the world had increased. So the Lord reminds them of what they knew. He reminds them of the things that they would have gleaned and understood and pondered deeply from the book of Colossians. The One

who spoke to them was God Almighty. The One who spoke to them as the Creator of heaven and earth. He is the ruler of all things. He is the ruler and savior of the church. And He knows this church very well.

“I know your deeds,” He says. And their deeds were not very impressive. “You are neither cold nor hot.” So the Lord says, “I will spit you out of My mouth.” That’s been called a violent metaphor, and even shocking. Even shocking because what it literally means is “I will vomit you out of my mouth.” It shows the Lord’s loathing of a lack of zeal. At least cold people would not be deceived by the pretense of religion and by their pretentious ideas of spirituality. And they could be more easily led to see their need of Christ. Laodicea was comfortably complacent, indifferent, and uncommitted congregation that had made peace with the world and was living in compromise. Now that may be the meaning of that statement that He would rather them be hot or cold.

Or it may be that the Lord is describing the church as useless and taking His description of them from the natural resources of the region. He frequently does that in these letters, draws upon the city, the environment, the history of the region to make His point of either rebuke or encouragement. Laodicea didn’t have a natural water source. The cities around it did. Colossae had cold waters, and six miles to the north of Laodicea, Hieropolis had hot springs that were believed to be therapeutic. As the waters from Hieropolis made their way south and came over the plateau, they lost their heat, so that when they finally poured over the cliff opposite Laodicea, they were tepid. They were lukewarm and they were full of lime. Not the kind of lime that you put in your drink, but the mineral lime. And so it would have looked refreshing, as they looked out at this water pouring over the falls, but when a person drank it, he would find it lukewarm and having a sickening taste, and would quickly spit it out. It wasn’t drinkable.

That was the church at Laodicea. It was lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. It didn’t have the therapeutic benefit of hot springs. It didn’t have the energizing, refreshing benefit of cold water. The church didn’t give healing to the sin sick and didn’t give refreshment to the spiritually weary. It was uncommitted. It was nauseating to Christ. It had come in contact with great truth, high doctrine. It had learned and believed the great truths about Christ and His deity, about His lordship, His saving grace. And yet, having learned all of that, by the time we come to this period at the end of the first century, it was unaffected by all of that.

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Now, the church had a very different opinion of itself. It was pleased with itself. It was pleased with its circumstances. It was in a rich city. Probably many of the members of that church participated in its affluent society. So they said, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing." The church has the same self-sufficient spirit as the city. But while a self-sufficient city is good in material terms, we would admire a city that can take care of itself, in fact we admire people who materially can take care of themselves. They don't beg. They work. They're industrious. We admire that. We admire self-sufficient people and a self-sufficient city. In the material realm, that's good. But in the spiritual realm, that kind of attitude is bad. We are not independent. We are completely dependent on the Lord for everything. But these people who enjoyed material prosperity forgot their need of the Lord.

Now, they hadn't rejected Him. They hadn't said, "No. We don't believe in the deity of Christ. We don't believe in the things that Paul wrote in that book of Colossians. We did at one time, or our fathers did. We've matured and advanced beyond all of that." They didn't say that at all. They didn't reject Him. They simply neglected Him. Other things had taken priority in their life. Their condition was the fulfillment of Agur's great fear expressed in Proverbs 30:7-9, where he says, he prays, "Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches;" He feared riches because having received them, having accumulated them, he might become full, he says. And then become self-satisfied, content with life, and then he feared he would say, "Who is the Lord?" Who is the Lord? Who cares? Who needs Him? And deny Him.

Affluence and independence are the American dream. They're what we all want, and they're good of themselves. Nothing wrong with the American dream in and of itself. The problem is not wealth. There have been wealthy people in the church. We can see that all through history and how God has used them greatly and how they have been generous with all that they've received and used that in the spread of the gospel. That's necessary for the spread of the gospel. We need people like that. There's nothing wrong with wealth. The problem is not having riches and enjoying the good things of life, living in a nice home, driving a nice car, none of those things are bad in and of themselves. They are good things. Every good and perfect gift comes down from the father of lights. We should enjoy them and appreciate them, but the problem is the human heart and the human heart very often cannot handle things like that, cannot handle wealth.

And soon, very often, those who possess wealth are possessed by the wealth. Their heart is captured by it.

And that's what happened in Laodicea. Their statement, "I am rich, and have become wealthy," is first of all an expression of complacency, followed by a statement of pride. I have done this myself. That's the sense of it. These were materially prosperous people, but they weren't really boasting in their material possessions here. That's not the sense of this. They were boasting in their spiritual condition. They had a comfortable life and they believed that their prosperity was a sign of spiritual well-being. And they were proud of that. They were content with that. But they were wrong. The Lord corrects them. "You think you have need of nothing," He says. "You don't know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

The correction is clearly an allusion to the source of their material wealth, the banking industry, the medical school, and the clothing factories that enrich this city. "You think you've got it all together," He's saying to them. "You think that you're looking fine when you're really naked. You have no clothes, no money, and you can't even see it. You're blind." That's the reality. How easy it is to think that if our lives are peaceful and prosperous that God's blessing us. Well, He may be, and as I say, the good things of life ultimately come from God, and they are in and of themselves a blessing.

But if we then think, and therefore if a person is living a life in which he experiences or she experiences trouble, sickness, and setbacks, that God is not with those people, well, then that is an error. Often, very often, it is just the opposite. Look at Paul's life. Trace his life throughout 2 Corinthians and see all of the affliction, troubles, and difficulties he had. That was his life. And he's told us in the book of Acts in chapter 14 that it's through many tribulations that we enter the kingdom of God. No. No. Very often, it's those who are afflicted that are being blessed by God. The Philadelphian church was like that. It was small. It was probably a poor church. It had little power. It couldn't boast like the Laodiceans did. But it is to that poor, small church that the Lord says, "I will keep you."

Now, the Lord wasn't rejecting here the Laodiceans. The words in verse 16, "I will spit you out of My mouth," sound like a final rejection. They were not. They were true. They expressed the Lord's attitude toward their attitude. But the language was intended to rouse them out of their



spiritual indifference. This was a church the Lord cared for every bit as much as He cared for and loved the church of Philadelphia. And there was still hope for Laodicea. He gives it counsel in verses 18 and 19. "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 eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent."

So the remedy for their poverty, nakedness, and sickness is in Christ. "Buy from Me," He says. And let's put particular stress on those words, "from Me." That's what the Laodiceans needed to learn. They considered themselves to be like their city, self-sufficient. They needed to humble themselves and find their sufficiency completely, wholly in Christ. We have no riches apart from Him. As Jesus said in John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches; –" and it is in Him that we thrive because "– apart from Me –" He says "– you can do nothing." Nothing. He is our sufficiency alone. We have none apart from Him. The only remedy for real poverty, which is spiritual poverty. A person can be destitute materially and rich if he is walking with Christ. The only remedy to real poverty, nakedness, and sickness is in Christ. "Buy from Me gold," and then you'll really be rich.

That's a word for us, as well. But how do we do that? Can we buy salvation and can we buy the blessings of salvation? Can we buy all of the good things of the new birth? Of course not. We know that from the rest of Scripture. That's not what He's saying. We can't buy what Christ has already purchased at the cross. That purchase has been made. This is a way of describing the spiritual blessings as valuable. We buy what we value. And the Lord offers us things of the very greatest value. That's why He uses the word "buy." It's a way of saying, "Get it. Get what's valuable." And it's very similar to what Isaiah said. Perhaps the Lord is drawing from the picture and the words of Isaiah in Isaiah 55:1, "Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost." Buy without money. What's that mean? How do you do that? Well, it's a way of saying the most valuable things are free for the asking, for all who come to the right place, that is those who come to the right person, to the right promises, to the right persons, to the Lord Himself, it's all of grace.

Laodiceans had seemed at one point to have had spiritual riches and understanding. They had believed in Christ. At one point, they certainly had, and I think we're to understand them in

that sense, but they had since neglected those blessings for worldly pleasures. That had supplanted the love of Christ that they had. Now they had a love of the world. So the Lord was urging them to reclaim the blessings, to get gold, which here is real wealth. It's spiritual wealth. Which is better than the gold in their banks. They needed clothing better than the garments made of the black wool they were famous for producing. They needed the white garments that He offers them, representing purity of life.

Now frequently in the book of Revelation, we'll see this in the chapters to come, white robes represent justification. And if these people were not genuine believers, if their profession of faith was false, then that is what they needed. And it may be that that is what the Lord is saying here. It would be similar to what Peter says in 2 Peter 1:10, where he tells those to whom he writes to make their calling and election sure. Perhaps that's the idea. But assuming that this is a real church of true believers who have drifted, who have become indifferent, which a believer certainly can do, then this is a reference to a life of purity.

That's what the white garment represents. It is an expression that speaks of a standard of purity that meets the standard of their justification. It is a righteousness in their practice that fits the righteousness of their position. They weren't living that way. They were spiritually naked, and in the ancient world, nakedness was the ultimate humiliation, and I suppose it would be pretty humiliating today, as well. I don't know that you have to limit that to the ancient world. But that was their spiritual condition. They were spiritually naked and they needed a purity of life, and an honor about their life.

And they needed clear eyes. Now that really goes to the heart of the problem with these people. They didn't see things clearly at all. Their eyes had become clouded by the world and the glitter of the world, and they needed perspective that they had lost because they failed to value what was really important. So to the residents of a city famous for its production of medicinal eye salve, the Lord says get "eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see." They were blind. Now that's the diagnosis of the great physician. It's always good to listen to a good physician, do what he says. And this is the solution that the great physician gives to them, and only He could heal the Laodiceans with the salve of spiritual enlightenment. That's what He's speaking of here. Only He could give them the gold of spiritual riches, the white robes of a life of purity. Only He can do that. All of that is found only in Christ.

So they needed to return to Him. They needed to rekindle their affection for Him. They needed to repent. That's what He tells them to do in verse 19. He says, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent." That's a quote from Proverbs 3:11-12, where God says that He disciplines those He loves. The Lord's correction here may not seem very loving. In fact, as I said earlier, this is the severest, the harshest of the seven letters. But it is what the church at Laodicea needed. Sometimes we need someone to speak sternly to us. It's not an easy thing to do. Correction is not easy to give, but it is far better and far more loving to tell a person that he has no clothes on than to allow him to continue parading around without them. And he'll thank you for that. This is what the church needed. It needed to be alerted to its condition so that the Lord could give the remedy, which was to replace complacency with zeal, and that happens through repentance.

Now that zeal is to be permanent. It is a command in the present tense, and the sense of that is a durative present. It is to be a constant thing. They are to be constantly committed to Christ, to be, as we would put it today, or at least they used to put it when I was younger, on fire for the Lord. That's what He's telling them to be. It's a good thing to be zealous for the Lord. He who has done everything for us deserves that promise.

Then in verse 20, Christ gives a magnificent invitation to this lethargic, indifferent, middle-of-the-road, worldly church. "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." Now the very group that the Lord was threatening to spit out of His mouth, He here invites to supper. He wants to dine with those who nauseate Him. Now that's grace. This verse is often cited in evangelism to picture Jesus as knocking on the door of everyone's heart asking them to open up and invite Him in as their Savior. Now that approach to this verse does express a truth, and that is that in salvation it is the Lord who comes to us. We don't go to Him. He takes the initiative. He always opens the heart.

But this is not an evangelism verse. This is an invitation to professing believers and a very generous one. "Behold," the Lord says. "Here I am," is the sense of that. The Laodiceans had ignored Him. They had neglected Him. But He still comes to them. He presents Himself at the door with an invitation, not a demand, and invitation. He is the One who rules all things, who sustains all things. He is the One whom the angels bow down before and worship day and night.

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He doesn't need us. And yet, He comes to the door of the Laodiceans and asks if He can come in and dine with them. That's an amazing accommodation. He could break down the door and He could demand their reverence. Instead, He gives an invitation because love cannot be forced. He wants them to willingly, gladly invite Him in for fellowship.

That's what is pictured here, fellowship between God and His children. The Lord desires that more than anything else, more than service. He speaks of their deeds, their works. He does that in these letters. He mentions that. He mentions that to the Ephesians. He knows their works. They had some good works, by the way. But that was not what was of greatest importance to them. You'll remember in that first letter of the seven to the Ephesians, He said, "I know your deeds and they're good deeds, but I have this against you. You have left your first love." More important to Him than their good deeds was their love for Him. That's what the Lord desires from us. He wants our love. Salvation is something that we could describe in various ways. We're saved out of hell. We're saved to heaven. It's about a place. It's about unending time or eternity without time, however you want to understand it.

We're saved to good works. Paul makes that clear in Ephesians 2:10. By grace we're "saved through faith; not of ourselves." But we find in verse 10 that even the good works we have have been predestined. We're saved to a life of good works. Deeds are important, but then there's also the aspect of simply knowing Him, loving Him. And in John 17:3, the Lord defines eternal life there as knowing God. And that's preeminent. That's really the essence of it. The others are the fruit of it. But what is the heart and essence of eternal life is knowing the Father and the Son and the Spirit and having fellowship. That's the essence of it, and that's what He desires above all things, more even than our good deeds and our service, as important as that is and indispensable as that is. Nevertheless, the heart of the issue, the real issue, is loving Him. He wants our love.

And they left it, just like the Ephesians. Well, He wants that love because He wants us. That's the essence of having us is having our love. He loves us. He wants our fellowship, and we have that fellowship with Him through the study of His Word, through prayer, through fellowship with the saints, through obedience to the various institutions that He's established, and really doing that daily, living that consistently. That's how we have fellowship, and that's how we enjoy the gold that He offers, the riches of the abundant life. That's how our garments become increasingly white and our eyes increasingly clear. It's by being obedient. It's by studying His Word. It's by

walking with Him. It's by being in prayer. That's how we are changed and made increasingly holy and wise. It is through fellowship with Christ. Nothing is more practical in this life than cultivating our relationship with Christ. It's more practical than balancing your checkbook. That's important, but it's more practical even than that. Fellowship with Him, cultivating our relationship with Him makes us strong.

How are people going to be prepared for the trials that will surely come, the times of testing that we must all face at some point? How are they going to be prepared for that if they are not made strong in Christ? They won't be. They will not have a solid foundation for life in this world. They will then be carried away by strange doctrine or swept away by the tribulations of life that will certainly come. But because the Lord loves us, He constantly seeks to come into us and fellowship with us. It's a reciprocal relationship. "I will dine with him, and he with me." Imagine that. Imagine the great blessing of that statement. God wants to spend time with you. The infinite God wants to spend time with finite creatures like us.

Well, the grace continues in verse 21. Those who become zealous, repent, and open up to Him, those who overcome, who persevere, He says to them, "I will grant to him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." Of all the promises that He gives in the seven letters, the Lord gives the most glorious promise to the laziest of the seven churches, the promise to rule and reign with Him, to actually sit on the King's throne. Now, this promise is for all of us. It's for all His people. And from chapter 4 on, the book of Revelation moves towards the Lord's triumphant kingdom, Christ's millennial reign on the earth. And that is our hope. It's beyond that, really. That's only – I would have to say – a small part of our hope, because that millennial kingdom then is transmuted into something infinitely greater, into an eternal kingdom of the new heavens and the new earth. But that is for us. That's our future. That's for the believer, the one who overcomes.

So the chapter ends, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Did the Laodiceans hear? We don't know. Do you hear? Do you have the ears for what the Lord has said? Does this move you in any way, the things that the Lord has said to this church? Because it's for us, as well. So the question is have you trusted in Christ as your Savior? He's the only Savior. He died for sinners. He died to save all who believe in Him. If you have, if you

believed in Him, then practice your profession. May it match your profession. Open your life to Him who knocks at the door, and fellowship with Him.

One of the great pictures that we have of Christ in the gospels is of Him sharing a meal with people, having personal fellowship with them. One of the Pharisees' great criticisms of our Lord was that He ate with sinners, and that criticism was true. He did, and He does still. He loves us in spite of ourselves, sinners that we still are. And how easy it is to be a Laodicean, to enjoy the comfortable life materially and go through the motions of religion, act as though we're spiritual, be in the right place at the right time, and yet really neglect Christ. Well, let me ask again. Have you believed in Him? If not, then believe in Him. Trust in Him. God who became man died in the place of sinners. Trust in Him.

And you who have – and I hope it's everyone here – live for Him. Life for Him and not the world. May the Lord deliver us from this world around us. Not take us out of it, but enable us to live and minister within it with our minds fixed on Him. Now may He give us the salve for our eyes that we may see and be committed to Him, and see the great blessings of knowing Him and fellowshiping with Him. He saved us for that. So may we live that way, live in a way that pleases Him. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, we do pray for that. We pray that You would instill within us a commitment to our great triune God. Help us if our eyes have been clouded by the world to see that. Give us clarity of sight, correct perspective, and a desire to live a life that's faithful to You and pleasing to You. We can only do that by Your grace. These are strong exhortations and admonitions that the Lord gives, but ultimately we can only respond to them by Your grace. We pray for that grace. We pray these things in Christ's name, Amen.