

Revelation Ch. 3

Sardis

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

V: 1a *"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;..."*

- Dear Sardis.... representing the Protestant reformation from 1520 to / through the tribulation.

BACKGROUND:

- Sardis was the ancient capital of the kingdom of Lydia, a very wealthy city.
- Noted for its luxury clothing trade, and carpets. The garment industry was vital to their economy.
- It's last prince was Croesus, the richest man of his time, who was captured by Cyrus (Medo-Persian). The city was then ruled by the Persians, later conquered and ruled by Alexander the Great / Greeks, then Antiochus the Great, then the Romans.
- It was finally destroyed by an earthquake during the reign of Tiberius in 17 A.D.
- Sardis was the first city to mint gold and silver coinage.
- Sardis had various pagan temples to Cybele / Diana, and Apollo, typical of most large cities.
- Sardis was at the crossroads for central Asia, between Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamum. (look at maps)



- Sardis means "remnant".
- Sardis represents the "Protestant" church from 1517-1800, the reformation era to the missionary era.

NOTE: There is no commendation for Sardis.

V: 1b *"... These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;..."*

- He that has the 7 Spirits & 7 stars, He that is in control... or should be...

Galatians 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel."

Galatians 3:3 "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?"

- He is in their midst, picture Matthew 18:20, examining them / us in their / our walk.

Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

- He is the one that sent the Holy Spirit into this world and is possibly reminding them now of how badly they need the Holy Spirit in their lives and church.

John 16:17 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."

V: 1c *"I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead."*

- Said faith vs: living faith...
- I know your works: The reformation did re-establish the doctrine of justification by faith, which then produced good "works".

Romans 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 2:8-9 "8For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9not of works, lest any man should boast."

James 2:17-18 "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone, Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works."

James 2:23 "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God."

- Sardis has a reputation for being alive, but they are dead according to Jesus.
- Europe is currently in a post Christian era, the reformation is basically dead there.
- Sardis is alive in name only.
- Sardis is dead due to sin, relying upon their own righteousness.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Isaiah 64:6 "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

Matthew 23:27 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

- Outward appearances don't count! Many Protestant churches today are just going through the motions.
- While the reformation recovered the doctrine of salvation by faith, the prophecies contained in the Word of God didn't seem to have been taken literally until recent times.
- Growing apostasy...
- Many "Protestant" churches today and their ministers don't believe in the virgin birth of Jesus, His atoning death, the inspiration and infallibility of His Word, in Heaven or Hell. So many churches are just a social club - alive on the outside to the world, but dead on the inside to Christ.
- Sardis / reformation churches have become cold and formal, having bureaucratic organizations. They were free from the Catholic hierarchy but replaced it with their own, and they have a prideful disdain for the "fanatical" born again Christians.
- Sardis' works were not / are not of the Holy Spirit, a stark contrast to the church of Acts, they're going through the motions. They are more religion than relationship.
- The remedy is in His title, the 7 Spirits are the Holy Spirit of God, they must be Spirit filled and Spirit led.

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

V: 2a *"Be watchful,..."*

- This had particular meaning for the people of Sardis, they had twice been conquered because the guards to the city had fallen asleep and were not watching when they should have been.
- They were conquered by the Medes in 549 BC, then again by Antiochus the Great in 218 BC
- Be alert, vigilant, watchful, prepared.

V: 2a *"Be watchful,..."* (cont.)

1 Peter 5:8 *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"*

- In general Protestants aren't looking for Christ's return, they have built up systems, or conditions that must be met before he can come. The only problem is that God may not be on our schedule, and He's not waiting for our permission!!

(Pre-trib. Rapture vs: mid and post tribulation rapture.)

Matthew 24:42 *"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."*

Titus 2:13 *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."*

Matthew 25:1-13 Parable of 10 virgins, 5 were prepared with "oil" in their lamps, 5 were not, having no "oil" at all. The "oil" represents the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit working in your life you will not truly know Jesus. And without knowing Jesus you would miss the wedding feast.

- Same wording as **Matthew 7:22-23**

Matthew 7:22-23 ²²Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

- Anyone can be prepared for a pre-determined time, but we must always be prepared for an unexpected hour.

V:2b *"... and strengthen the things which remain,..."*

- Strengthening comes through the Word of God.

1 Peter 2:2 "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

Romans 10:17 "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Matthew 4:4 "... it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

Psalms 119:11 Psalm 1:1-3 John 6:48

- God is our strength.

Psalms 28:7 "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped: Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him."

Psalms 18:2 "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

V: 2c *"... that are ready to die:..."*

- Things are looking bleak, almost dead as in time is short.

James 1:15 "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death."

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

V: 2d *"... for I have not found thy works perfect before God."*

- Each of the 4 previous churches had been commended for certain good works in the eyes of the Lord. Here in Sardis there is no commendation.
- Even Jezebel infested Thyatira did something right, but not so with Sardis. Neither their works nor their doctrine was what God wanted.
- Abraham was commanded by God...

Genesis 17:1 "... I Am the almighty God; walk before me, and be though perfect."

- There are 5 basic ways to look at our walk with Jesus:
 1. Walking after God, is as a servant, serving God.
 2. Walking with God, like Enoch and Noah, having fellowship with God. James 2:23
 3. Walking in Him signifies complete "one-ness" and union with Him, Christ in me, the hope of glory through Jesus Christ.
 4. Walking before God means walking in His presence, aware that God is watching and observing us.
 5. Walking away from God, or apart from Him. The wrong direction.
- God has set the criteria: "*Be though perfect.*", and none of us qualify!
- Doctrine of original sin, depravity of man, sin nature.

James 2:10, Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23, 1 John 1:8, Jeremiah 17:9

- The solution to our lack of "perfection" is the same as it was for Abraham:

James 2:23 "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." Genesis 15:6

- God has shown us the way to be perfect through His Word.

Psalms 19:7-11 ⁷The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. ⁸The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward."

Romans 12:2 "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may know what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

- The only way to be perfect and acceptable is through the blood of Jesus Christ, through the blood of the lamb, in a personal relationship with Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:3, Romans 5:1, Romans 5:8, Hebrews 9:22, 26, 1 Peter 1:18-19

- They had a reputation for being alive / saved, but Jesus knew they were dead / not saved. They had a "said faith" vs: a "living faith".
- The reformation was a partial recovery, not a complete return to the apostolic church or the Church of Acts.

- They still had many pagan attributes and customs; infant baptism, pagan symbols, and pagan holidays such as Christmas, Easter, and Lent to name a few. (See 2 Babylon's)

V: 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."*

V: 3a *"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent."*

Psalm 119:11 "Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee."

- Remember what you've been told, hold fast to what you have, because it's slipping away.
- The great truths recovered during the reformation are being lost - we need to cling to them for dear life!
 1. The authority of the Word of God.
 2. Justification by faith.
 3. The total depravity of man.
- Many churches are glossing over these issues, covering them up, or simply ignoring them altogether.
- **He's also saying repent!**

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Luke 13:3 "I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Acts 3:19 "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of the refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

V: 3b *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."*

- We are all accountable to God for what we have heard, and what we've been given.

Matthew 25:14-30 Buried talents.

Matthew 24:42 "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

- If you don't watch, I'll surprise you.
- The test wasn't the "profit", the test was about faithfulness.
- The Lord is saying "Don't go to sleep, wake up and watch out!"
We are warned ahead of time.

1 Thessalonians 5:2, 4 "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." - "but ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that day should overtake you as a thief."

1 Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

- One of the worst things to imagine would be to get caught in the act of sinning when the Lord does come, or of not being prepared when He arrives.

1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

Ephesians 5:8 "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

- Satan would just as soon have us sleeping as dead when our Lord comes.

2 Peter 3:3-4 "Knowing this first that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

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

- There is always a faithful remnant in every church, and they will be blessed.
- *"Few names"* / remnant means a small group.

Zechariah 8:12 "For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things."

Jeremiah 23:3 "And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase."

* Speaking of Diaspora & to gentile church...

Luke 12:32 "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

- Our righteousness, our fine, clean raiment is from Jesus!

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,..."

Revelation 19:8 "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

V: 4-5 white raiment / garments of salvation:

- White clothing speaks of being clothed in light as were Adam and Eve prior to sin entering their lives.
- Having glorified bodies, through the righteousness of Christ.
- This is spoken of several other times in Revelation as something that believers shall possess:

Revelation 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed..."

Revelation 4:4 "... I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold."

Revelation 6:11 Re: Souls of them that were slain for the word of God, "And white robes were given unto every one of them;"

Revelation 7:9 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred's, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"

Revelation 7:14 "... These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Revelation 19:8 re: the bride. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Revelation 19:14 "And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

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

V: 5a *"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment;..."*

- "He that overcometh" means those that still have their names written in the book of life, those not cast into the lake of fire - those who are victorious through the blood of Jesus.
- He that overcomes does so because of Jesus, not in our own strength or abilities.

1 John 5:5 "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

- Clothed in white raiment, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

Job 29:14 "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was a robe and a diadem."

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,..."

Revelation 19:7-8 "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

- As opposed to our own righteousness.....

Isaiah 64:6 "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;"

V: 5b *"...and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,..."*

- Speaks of the ancient practice of cities keeping a log or census of it's citizens, and of erasing or blotting out their names when they died.
- Christ died for our sins, all sins, regardless of whether we accept Him and our names were written in the book of life. Those who don't accept Him are blotted out and not found therein.

Exodus 32:32-33 "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin - and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."

Philippians 4:3 "... my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life."

- And where exactly is this book?

Luke 10:20 "... rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

V: 5b *"...and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,..."*

Psalms 69:16-28 Describing unbelievers and scoffers, and their treatment of Jesus our Savior, the Son of God - leading up to verse 28.

"Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."

Revelation 20:15 "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

- Does this contradict John 10:28-29 or Romans 8:35-39? Both of which speak to eternal security?

ANSWER: No. Anyone genuinely saved is eternally saved. Also speaks to infants and children who die prior to the age of accountability.

- The book of life contains the names of all the people for whom Christ died. Some however reject Christ and are blotted out, but all have the opportunity to accept Him.
- Regarding the book of life: God keeps records.

Those who are in it:

Daniel 12:1 "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same

time: And at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book."

Malachi 3:16 "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."

Revelation 21:27 "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: But they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

- And those who are not....

[Speaking of Satan in verses 8-9](#)

Revelation 13:1-9 "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" - "If any man have an ear, let him hear."

Revelation 20:15 "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

V: 5c *"...but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels."*

Matthew 10:32 "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my father which is in heaven."

Luke 12:8 "Also I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God:"

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

- Those that follow Jesus will hear his voice

John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

Romans 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

- All 7 churches got all seven letters.

John 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

PHILADELPHIA

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

V: 7a *"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write;..."*

- Philadelphia represents the missionary church; the revived church emphasizing the return to the Word of God.
- Prophetically representing the time period from 1750 to the rapture.
- Philadelphia is currently a thriving Turkish town, "Alashehir"
- Originally established to spread the Greek language.
- Typical Greek culture including pagan gods, practices, and temples.
- Main crops were grapes & wine, worshipped "Dionysus", god of wine and revelry.
- Later the city was known for its resistance to the Muslim influence during the Middle Ages it remained as a "Christian" city until the 14th century, long after the rest of the region had been given over to it. There is still a "remnant" Christian church today.
- Lots of earthquakes in the area of Philadelphia ran most of the population off.
- Various pagan leaders from the East slaughtered those that remained as they came through conquering the area.
- Philadelphia is located 28 miles South West of Sardis, it was a Greek colonial outpost, under the jurisdiction of Sardis.
- Part of the reformation, yet distinct.
- As an outpost city it was used to protect the greater cities of Ephesus, Sardis, and Pergamum.
- Its name came from Attalus II who loved his brother Eumenes who was king of Pergamum and called it "the city of brotherly love."
- Like the church in Smyrna, Philadelphia does not receive any rebuke, both churches were living and serving as Christ had directed.

- Philadelphia maintained a faithful witness in the midst of general apostasy and un-belief.
- In the 18th / 19th centuries great revivals swept over the "reformation lands", revivals erupting in America and Northern Europe.
- Salutation: This is the 7th and last occurrence of "Philadelphia", brotherly love, as opposed to agape love etc., in the New Testament.
- Philadelphia is God's faithful church in the last days.

V: 7b *"... these things saith He that is holy, He that is true,..."*

- From Jesus, identified as:
 1. Holy
 2. True
 3. Has the key of David
 4. He that opens and no man can close.
 5. He that closes and no man open.
- None of these titles speak of judgment as some of the previous titles do.

Holy:

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus saith the High and Lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the High and Holy place,..."

- Jesus who is Holy and True, holy at his birth, and holy at His death and resurrection.

Luke 1:35 "And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: Therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Acts 2:27 "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of god in Him."

Hebrews 7:26 "For such an high priest became us, who is Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."

Truth:

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

John 14:6 John 17:3 John 8:31-32

1 John 5:20 "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

Psalm 33:4 "For the word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth."

- For the first time the attributes of Christ identifying Him in the salutation are not from the list of the attributes describing Jesus from Ch. 1. This implies a new message based on some other appropriate attribute of Jesus.
- Jesus emphasizes His own unique attributes of absolute holiness and truth. The Philadelphians accepted this without question.
- Truth and Holiness must go together, similarly, sound doctrine always generates Godly practice.

1 John 3:2 "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Conversely:

1 Corinthians 15:33 "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."

V: 7c *"... He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;"*

Matthew 28:18 "... all power is given unto me in heaven and in Earth."

- He possesses all the keys and has the prerogative of opening and closing doors.
- This particular title is from the Old Testament, not from Revelation chapter 1.

Isaiah 22:22 "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon His shoulder; so He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut, and none shall open."

Verses 22-25 talk about Eliakim who was the steward over King Hezekiah's house, a descendant from King David who held the keys to the doors that led to the king's treasure. Sound similar....

- Jesus has the keys to Heaven and Hell, He controls the gates, judging - controlling who shall enter into each.

John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Revelation 1:18 "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of Hell and of death."

- Jesus controls the gates to Heaven and Hell, judging who enters where just like before during Noah's time.

Genesis 7:1, 16. "¹and the Lord said unto Noah, **come** thou and all thy house into the ark;" - "¹⁶And they that went in went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in."

- There was only one door in the Tabernacle, only one way to God.
- Jesus bids us to come in unto Him, and He will at some point close the door to salvation.
- Jesus also controls the doors to true ministry, missionary opportunities, witnessing opportunities, opportunities to serve Him, by serving others.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing."

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

1 Corinthians 16:8-9

2 Corinthians 2:12

Colossians 4:3

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

- In this verse Jesus begins a list of 7 commendations that continue on through verse 10. There is no rebuke to the church of Philadelphia!

V: 8a *"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:..."*

COMMENDATION #1 - *"I know thy works..."*

- Jesus is looking for fruit and He's finding it.

Ephesians 2:8-10 ⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹not of works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

James 2:17-18 ¹⁷Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. ¹⁸Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works:"

Matthew 12:33 "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit."

- I know your works, and I've set an open door before you that no one else can close. Jesus has been standing there with them.
- "I know thy works" - is the only description given of their works.
- This is the only letter where no description is given, but it is evident that whatever they were, they pleased our Lord.
- Their salvation is assured, Jesus has opened the door for them, and no one else can close it. No one can separate us from the love of Christ.

John 10:27-30 ²⁷My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: ²⁸And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰I and my Father are one."

Romans 8:35-39

Hebrews 13:5b

Jesus is that open door.

John 10:9 "I am the Door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

COMMENDATION #2

"I have set before thee an open door" - and they walked through it.

- This door could be the joy of the Lord, and or to a knowledge of the scriptures.

- He's opened this door to us and wants us to step through the door to the word of God because there are other doors beyond that one, to fellowship, witnessing to others, to service, and to communion with God.

Psalm 1:2-3 ¹"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ²But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. ³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 Romans 15:4 Psalm 119:11

Romans 6:23 "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."

- Sin separates us from God, the Word of God brings us back, redeems us. Double meaning, get it!
- Sin separates us from God, His Word separates us from sin.
- "This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book."

V: 8b *"...for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."*

COMMENDATION #3

"... for thou hast little strength" - power - the Philadelphians were a humble group of believers.

- Jesus is our strength, and was theirs. They relied on Him!

John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

Psalm 18:2 "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

- In our weakness, we see God's strength more clearly.

2 Corinthians 12:9 "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

1 Corinthians 1:27 "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

1 Corinthians 4:10 "We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised."

- Typically who are those that come to the Lord? *The humble or those who have been humbled.*

Mark 9:35 **1 Peter 5:5**

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

COMMENDATION #4

"... and hast kept my word ..." - in a time when there was a general denial of the Word of God, this church believed in the inspiration of the word, it's reliability, and it's authority, and acted on that belief.

Psalms 138:2 "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name."

John 8:31-32 "... If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 14:21 **John 14:23** **John 14:26** **2 Peter 1:20-21**

- The Philadelphian church / believers recognize and emphasize the authority of the Word of God. They not only believe in Jesus, they obey Jesus.

COMMENDATION #5

"... and hast not denied my name."

- This group of believers remained true to Christ and to the Word of God when both have / are being denied not just by un-believers, but also from the pulpits and in seminary's who deny both the Word of God, and Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 4:14 "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified."

1 John 2:23 "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."

Matthew 10:32-33 ³²Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven. ³³But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

1 John 4:15 "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

- This group proclaimed the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were faithful to His name!

Ezekiel 39:7 Ezekiel 39:25

- Basically, they've done a good job.
- They recognize the preciousness of Jesus' name, they boldly confess Jesus. Jesus is their most prized possession.
- Jesus was / is at home in Philadelphia where He is worshipped and delighted in, where His return is eagerly anticipated.
- 3rd commandment.

Exodus 20:7 "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

Psalms 139:20-22 ²⁰For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. ²¹Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? ²²I hate them with a perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies."

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

V: 9a *"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not,..."*

- Wherever the truth is proclaimed, Satan raises up a counterfeit to draw people away - then and today. False "Christians" abound.

- The church in Smyrna was also opposed by "false Jews", the same was true in Philadelphia.

1 John 4:1 "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Mark 7:6-8 Romans 9:6-7 Romans 2:28-29

- The false apostles of Ephesus were "ministers of Satan", also the "false Jews" were a "synagogue of Satan"

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 ¹³For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. ¹⁴And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. ¹⁵Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

- True Jews are those who knew their messiah and had a personal relationship with him, as do any true believers.

John 8:31-47 "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." - "You are of your father the devil, and you do his works."

- The synagogue of Satan is any place of worship that does not worship the one true God: Jesus Christ. The root of these places and practices are Satanic.

V: 9b *"...but do lie;...."* (About being Jews / righteous)

- Satan is the father of all lies.

John 8:44 "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

V: 9c *"...behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."*

COMMENDATION #6 Jesus loves them, and He wants it known.

Philippians 2:9-11 ⁹Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth; ¹¹And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Isaiah 49:21-23

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

COMMENDATION #7:

"... thou hast kept the word of My patience..."

- This church kept the word of God, and did it *patiently*, waiting on the Lord.
- This church is assured that they, the faithful, will not go through the great tribulation. They will be removed first, as all true believers in the Word of God will be.

Isaiah 26:20-21 ²⁰Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. ²¹For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the Earth for their iniquity:..."

- They are not saved through Jacob's trouble; they are saved "from" it.

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

- All the world means those that are left on Earth including Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea, and the rest of the un-believing world.

Luke 21:36 "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

2 Peter 2:9 "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

- Demonstrated with Noah and Lot.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 "And to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

1 Thessalonians 5:9 "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,..."

- Revelation Ch. 1 – then Revelation Chapter's 2-3, then Revelation Ch.'s 4-5, then Revelation Ch. 6 – the great tribulation.
- Being kept from the great tribulation is the promise stated here, not that they wouldn't go through trials which were expected.

Philippians 1:29 "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

- But their suffering won't compare to the "great tribulation" that starts in Revelation chapter 6. (6 & tribulation together, what a coincidence!! Not!)
- Eschatology / prophecy is something that we've been blessed to see played out before our eyes in the re-birth of Israel, the developing one world economy, the ecumenical movement to the one world religion, and the development of the "peace process" in the Holy Land, to name a few.
- The church in Philadelphia accepted all of this based on faith in the Word of God, they didn't have the luxury of seeing it play out.
- As opposed to other churches that couldn't see these events playing out in a literal fashion which led to spiritualizing, symbolizing, allegorizing all the above. Amillennialists take some of these positions.

John 20:29 "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Hebrews 6:12 "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

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

V: 11a *"Behold, I come quickly: ..."* Maranatha!!

- Jesus reiterates the expediency or eminence of His return.
- Not so much quickly as in suddenly, un-expectedly.

Genesis Chapter 7 - flood / judgment - God's chosen were warned and prepared through obedience.

Genesis Chapter 19 - Sodom & Gomorrah / judgment, God preserved His chosen, no one else survived.

- Both were un-expected, a surprise to those who didn't know God or hearken unto His Word.

- We are warned over and over, the time is near! **MARANATHA!** Again I say...

Matthew 25:13 "Watch ye therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."

Revelation 22:20 "... surely I come quickly."

- We're not told to look for and prepare for the tribulation, we're told to look for Jesus and do His will.

Titus 2:13 "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;"

V: 11b *"...hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."*

- That crown can't be taken from us, unless we allow it, or give it away - as Adam and Eve did.

Matthew 24:4-5 ⁴"Take heed that no man deceive you. ⁵For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

- If it's written on your heart, no one can take it away by way of deception or deceit.

2 Corinthians 3:3 "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."

Psalms 119:11 "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Matthew 22:37 "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

- Losing your reward is not the same as losing your salvation.

1 Corinthians 3:14-15 ¹⁴"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: But he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

2 John 8 "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

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

V: 12a *"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God,..."*

- The subject of this portion of scripture is the reward, the pillar and the name, but notice that Jesus talks about "My" God speaking of the Father. The One for whom He lived to do the will of, the One who sent Him to die for us – absolute obedience and devotion.
- A pillar in the temple never leaves, it is permanent, always in the presence of God.
- Pillar (G-178) firm, permanent fixture
Hebrew: monument, or sacred stone, personal memorial.
- There is still a pillar, the only one left from the city of Philadelphia, standing on a hillside amongst the trees. It is all that remains from the city of John's day.
- Always in the presence of God, I like that!
- In the spiritual temple now being erected, each believer is a living stone. We will be part of the temple of God!

Ephesians 2:19-22 ¹⁹Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; ²⁰and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; ²¹in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a Holy Temple in the Lord: ²²In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit."

1 Peter 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

V: 12b *"... and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."*

- Branded! We will bear the mark of God, being identified with Him!

Isaiah 62:2 "And the gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name."

Revelation 14:1 "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads."

Psalms 37:37 "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

Isaiah 56:4-5 "For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant: even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new."

- *Versus the mark of the beast which means certain death!*

Revelation 13:16 **Revelation 19:20**

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

- True followers of the Lord will hear Him, He encourages us to listen.

John 8:31b-32 "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Proverbs 8:33 "Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not."

Jeremiah 13:10 "This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing."

- Those that don't listen are considered evil...
- We were made to hear the voice / word of God.

Deuteronomy 4:36 "Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee..."

- Philadelphia was a good, obedient, listening church. They obeyed the Word of God.

Laodicea

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

V: 14a *"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write;..."*

- Dear Laodicea...

BACKGROUND:

- Laodicea: "Justice of the people" / rule of the people.
- Known as "the city of compromise", "the apostate church".
- Being militarily vulnerable, they got along with everybody in the spirit of compromise.
- Founded by Antiochus II, they were a prosperous banking center.
- Laodicea started with a Seleucid foundation, Seleucus being one of Alexander's generals who took Syria. Lysimachus took Asia Minor, and then Seleucus moved in and took it from Lysimachus, including Laodicea.
- Laodicea was named after Laodice, wife of Antiochus, actually one of several that were named Laodicea, but this was the most famous.
- Located 40 miles East / inland from Ephesus on the Lycus river, in a great valley.
- Known also as the "Gate of Phrygia" - a crossroads for the great caravan routes coming out of the East. As such it was a center of commerce, banking, science, and medicine.
- Laodicea was also known for its manufacture of clothing and mercantile.
- Jupiter / Zeus was the object of worship in Laodicea - Greek culture was the order of the day.
- The Laodiceans were self-sufficient. When their city was destroyed by a massive earthquake in 60 A.D. they refused financial help from Rome, rebuilding at their own expense. A trait that would follow them and cost them later.

V: 14b *"... These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;"*

- From Jesus / 3 titles:

1. The Amen.
2. The faithful and true witness.
3. The creator.

- As with Philadelphia this title goes beyond the title / description from Revelation chapter 1, verse 5.

“The Amen”

- This is the only place in scripture where this title is used as a proper name.
- Amen: (G281) amen, of Heb. or. [H543]; trustworthy; true; surely, so be it, truly, verily. (Greek & Hebrew are the same.)

“Faithful and true witness”

- Witnesses simply don't get any better than this!
- This title is from **Rev. 1:5** “...and from Jesus who is the faithful and true witness,...”
- The word witness - "martus" - in Greek is the source of the word "martyr", Jesus Christ was a faithful witness unto death! A martyr.

(Messianic prophecy)

Isaiah 55:4 "Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."

John 14:6 "... I am the way, *the truth*, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Psalms 89:36-37 ³⁶His seed shall endure forever, and His throne as the sun before me. ³⁷It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in Heaven."

John 1:17 "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

- The faithful and true witness vs: a church that was neither faithful or true, not a good witness and denied the deity of Christ.
- Possibly being corrupted by the philosophies of men.

Colossians 2:8

Colossians 2:8 "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

The creator / Ruler:

- "The beginning of the creation of God" - Greek translates to "He is the original cause of creation" - not a creation Himself, also translated as "ruler".

"beginning" (G 746). arche, ar-khay'; a commencement, or chief in order, time, place or rank; the origin, active cause of.

John 1:1-4 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Colossians 1:16-18 ¹⁶For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible, and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him. ¹⁷And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. ¹⁸And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence."

- Worldly success had caused indifference to their spiritual needs.

As Jesus described the 4 soils:

Matthew 13:22 "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

Psalms 34:18 "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

V: 15a *"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot:..."*

- No commendation for Laodicea, only rebuke, only bad works described.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Psalms 139:23 "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts."

V: 15b *"... I would thou wert cold or hot."*

- I wish you were one or the other, take a stand!

Joshua 24:15 "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the Gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Matthew 12:30 "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

1 Corinthians 16:13 "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

- We are called to be on fire for Jesus. Ephesus was rebuked for being "cold" having forgotten it's first love, luke warm isn't good enough either!
- Jesus is on fire from head to toe, we are expected to be also, following His example.

Jeremiah 23:29 "Is not my word like as a fire? Saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

** especially useful for getting through hard heads!

Hebrews 12:29 "For our God is a consuming fire."

Jesus is described as having fire in His eyes:

Revelation 19:12 "His eyes were as a flame of fire..."

The Laodiceans simply aren't going with the program:

Romans 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren."

- The church of Laodicea wasn't completely apostate, it's candlestick hasn't been removed, and Jesus was still in the midst of the candlesticks, there is still time to heed His warning.

V:15-16 Because of the geography the Laodiceans had difficulty obtaining fresh water.

- They built an aqueduct running from the Phrygian mountains to Laodicea transporting the snow melt / run off to Laodicea. The water started out ice cold, but by the time it got there it had warmed up to being luke warm and unpleasant.
- There were hot springs near the Lycus and Meander rivers which produced extremely hot water which turns to steam. It is now used for thermodynamic power, back then it was transported back to Laodicea, but by the time it got there it had cooled, becoming lukewarm and detestable.
- Their trust in materialism brought them to a detestable lukewarm state.

Matthew 6:24 "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

James 4:4 "... know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

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

- A nauseating state!

Jeremiah 2:13 "For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

Hosea 4:6 "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."

Jeremiah 25:7

- A cold church is one that denies the basic doctrines of faith. It is given over to formalities and is carrying on in active opposition to the word of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Hot speaks of those with a real spiritual fervor and passion, much the way the Ephesians started out. Even though they had gotten away from their first / best love, the Spirit of God had taken them to great heights in their personal relationship with Christ.
- Many denominations have departed from the faith, apostatizing - becoming lukewarm and un-acceptable. Trying to maintain a "middle of the road" position.

Similar to what Paul described to Timothy:

2 Timothy 3:5 "Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

- You say you are Christians and that you love me, but you don't mean it. You make me sick!
- Cold & dead churches aren't a hindrance, they don't mislead, they don't do anything - they're dead.
- Lukewarm - middle of the road churches are just that. In the way!

- Today, smug, arrogant, lukewarm Laodiceans make compromises with the world, such as ordaining practicing homosexuals, and seeking unity with any and every belief system (ecumenical movement) including those that deny Jesus. These churches are market driven with watered down messages intended more not to offend and entertain than to present the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Luke 12:51 "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on Earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division:"

- Protestantism started out following the basic doctrines of Biblical faith, based on the Word of God, but has slid greatly.
- What divides the church today is not the various denominations, or Protestants vs: Catholics, the division is between those who believe the Word of God, follow it, love it, obey it, and those who don't and reject it.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"I will spew thee out of my mouth" - pretty strong language.

- I will vomit you out of my mouth, reject you completely.

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

- Worldly wealth is not the yardstick to measure our relationship with God.
- Smyrna was poor, yet Christ considered them rich, a stark contrast! The Laodiceans are spiritually bankrupt.

Jeremiah 9:23 "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:"

James 2:5 "Hearken my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love Him?"

Matthew 19:23-24 "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of Heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

2 Corinthians 6:10; Matthew 5:3 1; Timothy 6:5; Romans 8:13; 1 Corinthians 1:26

- Laodicea is saying "I have all I need, I need nothing", including Jesus apparently.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

- What a contrast between the judgment of God and that of man. Only God's judgment counts!
- Laodicea is worse off than any of the other churches being wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.
- There is an inscription on the cathedral in Lubeck, Germany that fits the Laodicean church, and the many churches like it.

Thus speaketh Christ our Lord to us:

Ye call me Master and obey me not.
Ye call me Light and see me not.
Ye call me Way and walk me not.
Ye call me Life and choose me not.
Ye call me Wise and follow me not.
Ye call me Fair and love me not.
Ye call me Rich and ask me not.
Ye call me Eternal and seek me not.
Ye call me Noble and serve me not.
Ye call me Gracious and trust me not.
Ye call me Might and honor me not.
Ye call me Just and fear me not.
If I condemn you, blame me not.

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

- The precious blood of Jesus, tried in the fire is our richness.

Jesus freely gives us all things:

Isaiah 55:1 "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

- They are attempting to cover themselves with their own righteousness.

Isaiah 64:6 "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we do all fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

- The righteousness of Jesus is our covering, our raiment, and covers our shame.

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,..."

- In Laodicea they developed what was known in the Roman world as "Phrygian Powder" a salve for the eyes and ears developed from the local clay. It was sold widely throughout the empire. Modern analysis has determined that there is / was no healing value what so ever, merely the product of excellent marketing.
- Jesus' message to the church is personal and applicable to where we are today.
- The Holy Spirit is the salve that gives us eyes to see and ears to hear, spiritual discernment.

Ephesians 1:17-18 "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints..."

- The Laodicean church is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. But there is a cure in our redeemer - the only cure!

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

- Christ loves them and desires their repentance. He loves the church that doesn't love Him.

Proverb 3:11-12 "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction. For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."

Job 5:17 "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty."

- When we are chastened, it proves that we're His children!

Hebrews 12:5-6 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

- Be zealous, hot, on fire, white hot!!
- Repent, turn away from what you were doing.

V: 20 *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will sup with him, and he with Me."*

- "I stand at the door and knock." I am close, the time is almost a hand! Maranatha!
- Jesus wants in to our hearts and lives, but He won't force Himself upon us.
- This is not an evangelistic call to un-believers, it is a picture of Jesus being shut out, on the outside of His church at the end of the church age. He is knocking to be let in by any individual believer who desires a close relationship with Him.
- This call is directed at lukewarm, compromising Christians, call them to repentance and fellowship with God.
- Jesus and His righteousness have to come to us, because nothing we can say or do, aside from accepting Jesus can get us to Heaven.

Titus 3:5 *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"*

- Jesus has moved Heaven and Hell to get to the door of our hearts, it's still our choice whether we invite Him in or not.
- The door to fellowship is still available to us, we can have fellowship and communion with Jesus, and sup - feed on the Word of God with Him.

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

- Jesus emphasizes His relationship to His Father.
- We will reign with Christ.

2 Timothy 2:12 *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us:"*

Revelation 20:6 *"Blessed and Holy is He that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."*

- Grace in action! Jesus invites those that He is about to "spew" out of His mouth to repent and join Him at His throne.

- Here we see that Laodicea, like the other churches are promised a reward that involves a portion of the description of the ages to come.

Ephesus:	The tree of Life,	Rev. 22:2
Smyrna:	No second death,	Rev. 20:6
Pergamum:	New name,	Rev. 22:4
Thyatira:	The Morning Star,	Rev. 22:16
Sardis:	White raiment,	Rev. 19:8
Philadelphia:	New Jerusalem,	Rev. 21:2
Laodicea:	Sharing of His throne,	Rev. 20:4

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

- Believers in Christ know Him, and respond to His voice.

John 10:28 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me:"

John 12:28-30 "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, an angel spake to Him. Jesus answered and said, this voice came not because of me but for your sakes."

- You have to walk with Jesus to understand. With the parables some heard, but walked away not understanding. Others continued walking with Jesus. He then explained the parables to those that were still with Him.

John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

- No Holy Spirit, no understanding – no Holy Spirit = no ears to hear.
- This is the last direct mention of the church until the last chapter, Revelation 22:16. From chapter 4 until then, while the church is in Heaven, enjoying the wedding feast, the 70th. week of Daniel plays out on Earth.
- It is extremely important that we understand and heed the lessons contained in the seven letters to the seven churches.
- Jesus repeats this last exhortation 7 times, once in each of the letters, that means it's important!