

The Church at Laodicea: The Fashionable Church (Part 2)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 07 August 2013

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] I started last week looking at the letter to the church of Laodicea, the final letter in the seven letters to the churches in Asia Minor and Laodicea being that final one.

If you remember that we're going to look at four things, kind of divide this letter into four parts. And we just got through one of those last week and that one was the dynamic Christ. So that's where we went last week. And now we're ready to take up point number two, which is the deluded church.

The deluded church is number two. That's the next thing we want to see in this letter. The deluded church. Now, it's obvious when you read the letter.

In fact, I meant to do that. Let's do that right now first. And then we'll get to what is obvious when you read the letter. Okay? Starting then with verse 14 of Revelation chapter 3.

[1:27] Let me read the entire letter once again. And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things says the Amen, the faithful and the true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

That's what we looked at last week. We really didn't get very far into the letter last week. Verse 15, I know your words, that you are neither cold nor hot.

I can wish you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth. I sure wish they didn't use that word.

Spew. Yeah. King James says spew. All right. I'll just change that to spew. Forget that I said that vomit. All right. I will spew you out of my mouth because you say, I am rich.

This is what they were saying of themselves, of course. I am rich. I have become wealthy and have need of nothing. I don't need a thing. This is what they were saying, what they believed about themselves.

[2:35] And he said, do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. So not only were they not rich and needed nothing, but Jesus said you do need a lot of things.

And then he added a few more onto that. Verse 18, I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich in white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed.

And anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. 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 dine with him and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit 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. So there's the final letter.

Now, again, at least from the early part of when Jesus first starts to begin to give his condemnation or his criticism of this church, the language that is used here makes it pretty clear that this church made him sick.

[4:08] Just made him sick or it was nauseating. Now, all those are kind of what they call, again, anthropomorphisms.

God doesn't have a stomach like we do. He's not flesh and blood. And so these are just kind of descriptions to put an emphasis on how God felt about this church.

And it nauseated him, made him sick. And there were two things primarily. And we can divide them into two. First one, the church's sickening compromise.

That's the first one. Talk about why he was so nauseated toward this church that he would want to spew them out of his mouth.

All right, well, I'll stick with that one. Although it's right there in print. Verses 15 and 16. He knows your works. All right, so, you know, Jesus is not in the dark about this church at Laodicea.

[5:14] Not in the dark about our church. Not in the dark about anything about us. He's not in the dark about anything. He knows all things. So I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. And he says, I wish that you were cold or hot.

Which is kind of an interesting thing. You know, one way or the other. I wish you were one or the other. So then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. All right, so spiritually speaking, I think we could say, or maybe we could describe it this way, the church at Laodicea was room temperature. You know, they were lukewarm.

But what does that mean? It means that the church was marked by compromise. It completely compromised their true calling.

Who they were to be in Christ as a church and even as individual believers. They totally compromised all of that. It's a good example in the Old Testament.

[6:21] I think you would agree with me. Lot probably was a prime example of lukewarm. A lot of things we can learn from the story about Lot and his family and Sodom and what happened, you know, in that when the angels came.

And that whole story is very interesting. There are a number of things in the story that are instructive for us culturally and otherwise. But if you just take Lot and his family, certainly his wife, you'd have to say here's an example of kind of what we might call a backslidden believer who's just kind of laxed, become lazy, and has compromised.

You know, you can see how in Scripture Lot was out of the country and then he pitched his tent towards Sodom and then pretty soon he's living in Sodom. And it's really a picture of kind of the gradual move away from God and toward sin.

And so I think he's a picture of a backslidden believer. The citizens of that city and Sodom, I think clearly they detested Lot.

And yet, for some reason, he was given a high place on the city council. We could call it city council there in Sodom. He had become kind of an important person. But all along, they ridiculed his, quote, religion, his worship of Yahweh God, ridiculed him, laughed at his sermons.

[8:00] I think early on he probably was a witness for Yahweh. And I think he continued to worship Yahweh. I don't think he became an idolater. But he just kind of compromised his faith.

And pretty soon, Lot, I think, became totally kind of incorporated into the culture of Sodom. Not that he necessarily participated, but he was just saturated by it and affected by it.

And it may have bothered him at the first, but then eventually he scarcely noticed it. And Lot lost a lot because of that. Lot lost a lot. That's pretty good.

Okay. He lost his fortune in Sodom. He had to flee the place. Left everything behind.

He lost, maybe not his entire family, but he lost his family in Sodom. Lost his wife, for sure. And you might argue that he almost totally lost his faith in Sodom.

[9:06] He just almost totally compromised it and abandoned it. And why? Because Lot wanted the best of both worlds. I think he pictures that, you know, with a kind of a Christian who has the temptation of having one foot in the world and one foot in heaven.

You know, and so he wants the best of both worlds. The world, this world, and as well as the world to come. And he compromised. Good example of what was going on at the church at Laodicea.

I heard about a little girl who came home from Sunday school. And her mother asked her to recite the Bible verse that she had learned that morning and memorized that morning.

It was Matthew 20, verse 16. Many are called, but few are chosen. But when the little girl recited the passage, she said, many are cold and few are frozen.

And, you know, yeah, that's about what it deserves. But that fits Laodicea to the teeth.

[10:16] They were cold. Well, not really cold. They were just in between, lukewarm. And Jesus said, I could wish you were cold or hot. One extreme or the other.

And I think that means that apparently there would have been some hope for them, or there's more hope for them, if they had been totally cold. It's something to work with there, something to bring them to their senses.

You're totally cold. But they were just in between, you know, just kind of compromised. So that they felt comfortable. They were far enough away from the Lord so that they had compromised their faith.

But they weren't so far that, you know, that they were overrun with guilt about their distance from God. They were lukewarm. And they were completely compromised.

And compromise is something God absolutely hates. Detests. And you couldn't have more vivid language to describe how God feels about compromise.

[11 : 18] He just spews you right out of his mouth. Makes him sick. Jesus says something else about the church's delusion. Not only the church's sickening compromise, but also the church's sickening complacency.

Complacency. I think maybe I gave you that word in there, didn't I? Or did I? Yeah. I forgot to change that when I made the handouts. But maybe there was a purpose for that.

Verse 17. Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

And so, clearly the idea there is that the Laodiceans were ignorant of their true condition before God. They had just lost sight of that.

They did not realize just really where they were spiritually before God. From a worldly point of view, this church had it all.

[12 : 23] Had everything going for them. From a worldly perspective. And in their own estimation, in their own worldly evaluation, they didn't need anything. They were prosperous.

I think that's the implication here. Prosperous as a church. And they were very proud. But they were powerless. Had no power spiritually.

And, you know, it's true of many churches today. That's why, you know, many see the Laodicean church as prophetic of that part of the history of the church, the age of the church that we're living in right now.

Now, we rather like to think of it in those terms, not only because we kind of see things in this letter that describe a lot of churches today, but we also like to think of it in those terms because that means this is the last age.

And maybe we'll even be here when Jesus comes. And maybe that's true. Maybe that's right. But there are a lot of churches that are just like the Laodiceans.

[13 : 28] They're rich, but wretched. Prosperous, but they are powerless. And so some churches today are, I think, under the same delusion that the church of Laodicea was under.

And they are today experiencing the same kind of complacency about spiritual things, which means that some churches today have then abandoned their true calling, abandoned their one true calling, to be the church, to be the evangelist of the world, to go to all the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And there's several reasons why churches have abandoned that calling. They abandoned the calling for at least one of the seven ways that I'm going to give you here.

And we could probably add to this list, but I couldn't think of any other isms. So that tips you off what the blanks are going to look like. One would be through, and this might seem a little odd, but I'll explain it, through fundamentalism.

Now, I am a fundamentalist, not in the pejorative way that some people use that term.

[14 : 48] That means I believe in the fundamentals of faith. Don't you? Amen. All right. You should. But fundamentalism is something a little bit different. Because what it describes is a church that is just kind of living and breathing dry orthodoxy.

All they care about is just dry orthodoxy. They may be straight as a gun barrel theologically, but they have no care for people, no passion really for the lost.

There's no part of the heart that's engaged in their ministry. It's all head. It's all orthodoxy. And some churches have gone that route.

So they're cold as ice and they're hard as clay. So some have abandoned their true calling, and they feel good about it because they're so doctrinal and so intent on learning doctrine and teaching doctrine, but they have no passion.

I think every preacher, every believer, every church should have the proper balance of head and heart. Head and heart when we preach.

[16:00] It's not just simply dry orthodoxy, but there's passion and emotion in preaching and teaching and in the way you live out your Christian faith in your life and as a church ministers to a community.

So fundamentalism is one. Two, through isolationism. I'm not even sure if that's a real word, but my spell check told me it was okay, so I went with it.

Isolationism. And that is, you know, where a church, where believers begin to think that when the Bible teaches that believers should be separated from the world, that they take that so literally that it means total isolation from all unbelievers.

Now, some of that happens quite naturally, and especially to those who are in the ministry because we're just surrounded all the time by believers. And we're not in any other context but Christianity and church and ministry.

And, you know, some of it happens naturally, and naturally also to the laity because we have friends, and our friends tend to be believers, which is okay.

[17:22] But there are other ways that we should be mixing with and have influence among unbelievers.

And some have just chosen kind of an isolation. And so what happens? We lose contact with the lost. We don't even know how they think anymore. We don't even care what we need to do to reach them because we've lost all contact, all understanding of lostness.

And consequently, then, the church's evangelism, if there is any, is done kind of by silent proxy.

You know, give money to a mission board to do the world evangelism.

And so we're not on the front line, not directly involved in it. We give money to our church, pay our pastor to be the evangelist and, you know, things like that. And so it's kind of like evangelism.

And so it's kind of like evangelism by proxy. Because we're not going to sully ourselves with unbelievers. We're to be separated. And so isolationism can be a reason why a church would abandon its true calling.

[18:33] Number three, through ritualism. Ritualism. And that just simply means that a church focuses only on the external aspects of religion or their Christianity.

focusing more on style, stylistic things, you know, whether it pertains to music or how we decorate a sanctuary, the order of our service, our certain kinds of prayers that we may pray in church.

It becomes very liturgical and stylistic. And it really has no depth, no feeling, no substance, ceremony, rituals in worship.

It's kind of a ritualism. I think that fits the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. We visited a very large Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

And I was thankful that our translator, Victor, well-versed on the Orthodox Church. And he really shared a great bit of information that helped us understand just how it works and how they keep the people in bondage.

[19:52] And all they have to do is just simply take the steps of ritualism and they're okay. You know, their salvation is secure and so forth. So we're talking about ways a church will abandon the calling of God.

Number four, through rationalism. You know, there were so many isms out there. Rationalism. And it's, you know, through, this is how it works, through kind of a rationalistic way of thinking.

There are many churches and so-called Christians who start to accept and apply certain aspects of atheism.

Evolution. Evolution. You know, begin to mix evolution with their religion because, you know, they are rationalizing these things.

They're thinking very scientifically and maybe are succumbing to what they perceive to be the conventional wisdom of the day. You know. And so instead of sticking with the truth, that will always, by nature of the truth, always stand against any of these philosophies.

[21:13] A-tism. Evolutionism. And communism. These things. But yet there are many churches that have allowed there to be a mixture of these things in what they believe.

And, you know, so they begin then to deny anything that is supernatural. We're not just talking about something that was very popular back in the early 20th century at the height of theological liberalism, which is still alive today but is very strong in that day.

It's been replaced by other things since then. But we're not just talking about that. We're talking about even today where people want to accept evolution and still somehow believe the Bible.

And so in order to do that, they compromise the Bible or they explain away parts of the Bible in order to accommodate what they believe to be scientific, you see. Because they don't want to be thought of as idiots. You know, that's what all fundamentalists are. You know, they're just simply hayseeds and walk around barefoot and uneducated, which is ridiculous, isn't it?

[22 : 23] And so this is kind of a rationalism. And so what happens? You throw out the creation, divine creation. Throw out the virgin birth. Throw out, certainly throw out the resurrection.

I mean, we don't have to have resurrection to believe in Christ, do we? Yeah, we do. Throw that out. Throw out the second coming. You know, that's supernatural.

You know, that's not intelligent thinking. So it's a rationalism. Number five, through socialism. And I'm not talking about socialism in the sense of a kind of a form of government or a philosophy of government.

I'm talking about a social gospel where the church is starting to preach and teach some kind of a liberation theology, a social gospel.

You know, and so here's the emphasis. Feed mouths, not souls. Many, many a church and parachurch, quote, ministry, religious ministries that have abandoned the gospel and have totally focused on the physical.

[23 : 40] And that's a shame. That's a social gospel. And it's even worse than that, really, because the underlying theology is that, you know, that poverty, to deliver a man from poverty, that's salvation.

That's what salvation is. And this is the idea. You know, if a man or woman has food and gets out of their poverty and gets a job and feels good about himself or herself, that's what salvation is.

That's a social gospel. So what we've got to do as a church is make the world a better place to live in, you know, and protect the planet. And, you know, because this is our home and salvation is not off somewhere else.

It's all right here. And so we've got to lift mankind up to a better life. And that's what salvation is.

That's the social gospel.

That's socialism in a religious sense. Number six, through occultism. Occultism. Occult is, or occult, if you want to pronounce it that way.

[24 : 58] That's probably more correct. Thank you. And that is, you know, and we can identify some of this in some of the denominations, some of the mainline denominations.

Some of them would be more in the Pentecostal area, in the prophetic movement, you know, where, you know, there's just this longing for some new touch from the spirit world.

You know, it's just kind of an openness to, you know, esoterical things and mystical things. And so we long for that.

And so when, you know, we kind of, these kind of people, when they make contact with that, they don't really question the source of it. I mean, it's the experience.

And, you know, you might deny it and say that that's just not true. And they would come back and say, but it didn't happen to you. It happened to me. And if it happened to me, it's real.

[26 : 07] It's true. But it could be the devil. In fact, I think in most cases it is. It's demonic. That's why I say it's occultism. And there are churches over the years, and I use the word church loosely, of course, that have moved in that direction.

Entire movements within, you know, elements of Christianity that have moved toward occultism. Number seven, this is the one that hits probably more of us than any of these, and that would be through materialism.

Materialism, where money is the solution for every problem. And that kind of thinking exists in evangelical churches.

I've met people like this. I have pastored people like this. Not here. I mean, I'm serious. I've not been confronted by that here, though all of us have a taint of this.

And it's like we can't totally ever break out of that. But I'm talking about a pattern, an emphasis, a focus of the church where money is the answer for it.

[27 : 35] So what we do is we hire people to do all the ministry. And if we can hire the best of the people, then we'll have a good church, a growing church.

You know, we've got to make sure our pastor has a doctorate. And because if he has a doctorate, then our church is going to be much better. Build bigger buildings.

Build bigger buildings. Yeah. Now, I'm telling you, there are churches who think this way. Think this way. They wouldn't consider ever calling a pastor or even some of their other staff members. They weren't well educated. And so they're willing to pay a little bit more because we have this thinking that, you know, our church will grow because of that and be a better church. But that's not how it works. That's not how it works. And so we're making a mistake. That's a part of materialism. And, you know, so we build big buildings.

[28:37] And buildings are great things to have and wonderful things. But if that's our focus, that's where our heart is, then we have lost our way is the point.

And so we, if it's not, hire great, you know, staff and build bigger buildings and have all the latest technology and devise bigger and better programs.

Am I stepping on anybody's toes? Person next to you. Oh, yeah. It's the other guy. Person next to you. Or, you know, in Christendom as a whole, especially in America, I mean, you know, all you have to do, what we've got to do is publish more how-to books, you know.

I mean, you go to any Christian bookstore and just notice how many books there are out there. I mean, it's just almost sickening how many books there are out there on how to do it, you know. And so here's the answer. If we want to be successful in our ministry as a church, then we need to get a book on that, you know, and find out what somebody has written about that.

[29:51] And then we'll take everything that person has written and we'll plug that into our church and we're sure to be successful, you know. You know what I'm talking about? This is a materialistic, very flesh-based kind of outlook on ministry.

And when a church does that, they lose their way. They lose the true calling. And Jesus says, verse 17, You say, I'm rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and do not even know. You don't even know that you're wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. All right, so, the dynamic Christ, the deluded church, we've got to move forward.

I wanted to finish this tonight. Third, the definite choice. These points really are almost meaningless. It's just that they are alliterated. That's all that really matters to me. I appreciate them. I appreciate them. Thank you. I've got one.

[30:56] One test one. Anyone else? One test one. The Lord, here's the good part of the letter. The Lord wants to restore this church. And He gives them a choice.

He gives this church three things they must choose. Three things they must choose. First, they must choose a restoration of spiritual value or values.

Verse 18, I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire that you may be rich. See, they already said they're rich, but you're not rich.

You're poor. You're impoverished. And so, there's my counsel to you. Buy from me gold refined in the fire. Now, this is a metaphor, of course. But what it's pointing to is, again, reinforcing the truth, the reality that this church had no spiritual value.

No spiritual value. And essentially, I think Jesus is saying that it's time to get back on the gold standard. You know, you hear a lot about the gold standard.

[32:13] Probably not as much anymore today. We certainly don't operate according to the gold standard in our currency anymore. Long past. But spiritually speaking, the church needs to operate on the gold standard, which means it's time to return to Jesus, to return to him.

Money can't buy it. Only repentance and yieldedness, obedience can buy these values. So, the pure gold is the life of Jesus in the church.

That's what he's getting at. There's the real value of the church. The very life of Jesus. Operating freely.

That's the whole dynamic of the church. It's the very life of Christ. In our worship. In our preaching. In our teaching. In our deaconing. In our singing.

In all of it. The very life. Our missions. The very life of Christ. Then they must choose a restoration of spiritual virtues. A restoration of spiritual virtues.

[33:22] Verse 18. That you may be clothed. That the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed. It's not just open here. You need to be covered.

You need to be clothed. And, of course, the church. He's saying was naked. The church was naked. But not to themselves. They're naked.

Not even to the world around them. But naked before God. They were naked before God. Which means that they were self-deceived. Do you remember that cute little story about the emperor's

new clothes?

What you thought of. Yeah. I can imagine. You know. He's walking around naked. And he thinks that he has wonderful clothes on.

And everybody's afraid to tell him. Certainly the ones who supposedly tailored all of these beautiful clothes. They couldn't tell him. And everybody else was afraid to tell him.

[34 : 22] And he's walking around naked. And that's like the church at Laodicea. They're like that foolish king. And so the Lord demanded that they, he said, buy white raiment.

Buy white raiment to cover their shame. It means to obtain it. To get that.

That white raiment. That purity. Which, again, is Christ. Christ is not their own righteousness. It's the righteousness of Christ.

And so really when you kind of sum those two things up. The spiritual value that they need was to choose Christ. To turn back to him.

And then he is the only way to secure spiritual value. Or virtue rather. It's all about Christ. And one more thing they must choose.

[35 : 21] It's restoration of spiritual vision. Restoration of spiritual vision. When the church becomes worldly. And this is what had happened to the church of Laodicea.

It happened to a lot of churches today. Every church struggles with some taint of worldliness. Because every believer is tainted with some of that.

But when the church becomes worldly. That becomes the description of the church. Then the worldliness clouds their vision. Proverbs 29, 18.

Where there is no vision, the people perish. And the church dies. Dies out. Becomes lukewarm. It's not cold or hot. It's just nothing to it. No vision.

And so this is what Jesus says to Laodicea. And I think says to any church that has lost its biblical vision for ministry. It's kind of like saying come out of your blind alley.

[36 : 28] You walk around and you don't even know where you are. Or get your head out of the sand. Like the ostrich. The proverbial ostrich with his head in the sand. And I think he says to the church.

Let me give you a fresh vision. A vision of heaven and hell. And we need both of those visions.

Heaven and hell. That is we need him to give us a vision of the sweetness of grace.

But also to give us a fresh vision of the seriousness of judgment. We have to have both of those things. And Laodicea then was poor, naked, blind.

And Jesus is gracious to open a church's eyes to this reality. And that's what we need to come away with from this passage.

He's gracious to open our eyes to that. And that's what he's doing, I think, with the church of Laodicea. Like he's saying, wake up. Open your eyes. This is who you are.

[37 : 35] You've not been able to see that. Now see this. You're poor, naked, and blind. You're not rich and clothed and need nothing.

You're all these other things. And then when he does open the church's eyes to this thing, to this reality, what do we do?

What does the church do? What are we to do? Well, when Jesus opens our eyes to sin, what do we do? We repent. And that's exactly what he said in verse 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.

Therefore, be zealous or earnest or deliberate or diligent. And do what? Repent. Repent. All right. So the dynamic Christ, the deluded church, the definite choice.

And one more. The dual challenge. There's a dual challenge here. It's to the same group of people, but it's a dual challenge. Well, I say same group of people.

[38 : 40] There was a mixture of people in this church. I think it's pretty clear. There were saints, that is, believers. Some were sinning saints and others were spiritual saints.

And that kind of describes the church. Now, you know, the church also can have unbelievers as a part of their worship and even God help us on our roles.

But primarily the church is made up of sinning saints and spiritual saints. Now, we're all sinners. We sin every day. But I mean the pattern of the life is I'm going in the wrong direction.

Backslidden, sinning saints and spiritual saints. Spiritual saints. The first challenge, I think, is primarily directed toward the sinning saints. And it is this famous passage here in verse 20.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice, opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with me.

[39:47] Now, I know that this verse is used quite often as an evangelistic text.

And I would say two things about that. Number one, it's not meant for that. It's not intended for that. Though, I would say then, number two, that some of the scenario, the, you know, it's like the famous picture.

Who was it that, Hunt was his name, I think, that painted that famous picture of Jesus standing at the door. You know, he's on the outside and he's knocking on the door.

And the door doesn't have any doorknob on it. And I think there's even kind of a, in some versions of it, because I've seen it both ways, there's kind of a silhouette of a heart around the border of this thing.

[40:49] And the idea being that Jesus is knocking at the heart door of that lost person. And all that person needs to do is open the door. Jesus is not going to open it for you.

There's no doorknob on the outside. He's not a gate crasher. He's not going to push himself on you. You must decide. And that's kind of the typical scenario. Now, I would say to you that you can make an application of this scenario, but you need to be careful.

And the application would be this. Even the text says that he's standing at the door knocking, but he says, if anyone hears, hears my voice and opens the door.

And so it points, I think, it can point to the reality that Jesus calls. Jesus called the gospel is his call. And those who believe are those who hear. And those who hear are the ones who open, open the door. Now, having said that, that's not what this passage is about.

[41:58] This is the door of the church. This is the letter to a church. And he's addressing believers inside and the tragedy of a church that has closed its door to Jesus.

And many have. The door is open to anybody who wants to come in, but not Jesus. And so here is Jesus.

Here's the visual. That Jesus is knocking at the door of the church at Laodicea. Because they have abandoned him. They've compromised their faith.

They have turned from him. And they need him again in the church. And this is, I think, what he's saying here.

So he's addressing those in the church that have closed the door to him. But then I think there's something here said in verses 21 and 22 to the spiritual saints.

[43:00] He says there, To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit 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. Now, this kind of, again, very visual thing, is really more of a reality than this other kind of visual of the door and Jesus knocking. This visual in these two verses is a very real thing. And one day we'll see it. And that's the throne of God. And Jesus seated at the right hand in the throne of God. And so what it means is to sit down with God, the Father, on his throne, really suggests two glorious realities for the believer, for the church one day.

Now, we have not realized this yet. But this is coming. This is in the future. But there are two things. One, it is a, to sit down by the throne of God, it is a posture of rest.

Rest, just as it was for Jesus. Because, you see, Jesus said when he died upon the cross, what did he say just before he died? It is finished.

[44:27] It is finished. That is, what's finished? He's finished? No. No. Redemption is finished. It's accomplished. All that needs to be done has been done.

And it's finished. That's what Jesus meant by that. And then when you go to Hebrews 1.3, it teaches there that after Jesus completed that work of redemption, what?

He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. That means rest. His work is done and he's rested. And one of these days, his church, his true church, we're going to rest from our labors.

Now, in a spiritual sense, we have rested in his rest because he accomplished redemption for us. But our work that is a part of, a continuation of that great, wonderful plan of redemption, and that work will one day be finished.

And we will sit with him at the right hand of the throne of God. And that's a posture of rest. It's a glorious promise.

[45 : 35] And then, too, it's also a position of honor. It's a position of honor. And not honor above God or above Jesus, but an honor for who we are, the bride of Christ, the blood-bought people of Christ, something that angels have desired to look into, to have and cannot have.

And there's great honor in this. And the honor all belongs to the Lord, but he is allowing us to be a part of that because we're in him.

All right, so this is what Jesus promises the church at Laodicea. And so it's not all bad. It's actually ultimately very good.

And he says, and here's the challenge, he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the church.