

Laodicea: The Lukewarm Church

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[0:00] Tonight, we're on Laodicea, which is the last of the seven churches.

Revelation 3, verses 14-22. Who is the hardest person to reach with the gospel? Think about that for a moment.

Some people might think the atheist. It's certainly difficult to preach the gospel to someone who rejects the existence of God completely, along with the thought of him having a moral law or him being sovereign over his creation, even thinking that he is the creator or that he has authority over his creation and the authority to punish sin.

Convincing atheists that there is a God and that his law applies to them is definitely an uphill battle. But maybe a more difficult person to try to reach is the zealous religionist.

Someone steeped in false teaching, trained in the apologetics of his or her faith, and they're prepared to debate and defend against the truth of the gospel.

[1:18] It's certainly difficult to penetrate someone who's had decades of that kind of false religion, those false beliefs. It's hard to have conversations with them in which the light of God's truth shines into their heart.

Or maybe it's someone like a postmodern agnostic with a skewed worldview that rejects the very notion of fixed, objective, authoritative, knowable truth.

There's hardly enough common philosophical ground to even begin a conversation with a person like that. Gospel opportunities are few and far between with such staunch opponents of such a thing as absolute truth.

However, one type of believer is harder to reach with the gospel than others. Worse than any outspoken, overt rejecter of God's word is the self-righteous hypocrite who believes he doesn't need the gospel.

He thinks that by his religion or morality, he's on God's good side. Nothing is more spiritually dead than false assurance of salvation.

[2:32] Nothing more rapidly inoculates a sinner to the Spirit's work through his conscience than the erroneous assumption that his sins have already been forgiven. So the main idea for this morning's or this evening's study is this.

The church today is overrun with men and women who have never repented and believed savingly in the Lord, but are nonetheless convinced they are right with God and will not receive his judgment.

So your first fill in there is convinced. Some of these people sit under the teachings of God's word week after week in the church, yet they are unmoved by its truth and unaware of the true condition of their own hearts.

They don't believe they remain lost in their sins. There's not much you could say or do to convince them of their need for the Savior. And I bring all of this up to you because such was the state of the church in Laodicea.

Regarding the Lord's letter to the churches in Revelation, John Stott wrote this. He said, Perhaps none of the seven letters is more appropriate to the 20th century church than this one, speaking of the one to Laodicea.

[3:51] It describes vividly the respectable, sentimental, nominal, skin-deep religiosity which is so widespread among us today. Our Christianity is flabby and anemic.

And he concludes by saying, We appear to have taken a lukewarm bath of religion. Christ's letter to the church in Laodicea is a powerful reminder that there is a vast and difficult mission field hiding in the church pews.

People who come to church every Sunday. Laodicea was a wealthy and a very prominent city, but it had a significant and off-putting fault with its water supply.

So some information about the city that will help us better understand the Lord's message to it. Nearby, Hierapolis was known throughout the region for its natural hot springs. They remain a tourist attraction, in fact, to this day.

Colossae featured a perennial cold natural water system, but Laodicea's nearest sources of water were either too polluted or were inconsistent. To solve the problem, they constructed an underground aqueduct to deliver water into the city.

[5:07] However, traveling at least five miles through stone and clay pipes made the water filthy and unpleasant to drink. It would have arrived to the city's central water tower tepid and dirty, smelling foul and tasting worse.

Have you ever tasted bad water before? It's gross. Sulphur, Oklahoma. I hear some amens from that as well.

A place to avoid for me, I guess. From the ruins that remain, it's clear that the water contains significant amounts of calcium, carbonate, and other impurities. So maybe a good sermon illustration, I want to go get some water from Sulphur, Oklahoma, and bring it in here, and we could all take a drink and spit it out.

Not in the sanctuary, though. Or not at each other. We'd have to do that outside. So in verse 14, hence the name Sulphur, Oklahoma. I guess it's fitting. So in verse 14, Christ identifies himself. There he refers to himself again as in the angel. I didn't even read the Scripture, did I? Let's stop and let's read. Verse 14, And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write, The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

[6:29] I know your works. You are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.

For you say, I am rich. I have prospered and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments, so that you may clothe yourself, and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.

To those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me.

The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered 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 here we see in verse 14 that Christ identifies himself. And he identifies himself as the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

[7:43] So here for the second time, in his messages to these churches, the Lord breaks away from his pattern of referring to the imagery of John's initial vision of him on Patmos.

In fact, there's no imagery here at all. He simply says that he is the Amen. The word Amen, many of you probably know, is often used in Scripture to affirm the truthfulness of a statement.

It's a verbal guarantee that what has been said is true. It carries the same essential meaning as the phrase, truly, truly, that appears before many statements that Christ made.

Truly, at the beginning of a statement, affirms that what is about to be said is true, and then Amen at the end of it reaffirms that what has been said was in fact the truth.

It sort of seals the certainty of the statement that was made. This is the only place in Scripture where the Word serves as a title for Christ. But this isn't merely a comment about the truthfulness of the Lord and His promises.

[8:50] 2 Corinthians 1.20 Christ Himself is the fulfillment, we see, of all of God's promises.

Every promise of grace and blessing, every covenant of peace and forgiveness is validated in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The whole of the Old Testament points to Him as He accomplishes and guarantees all of God's covenants with His people.

He is God's Amen. He is the One who confirms all the divine promises that are made in Scripture. Christ identifies Himself also as the faithful and true witness in verse 14.

So not only does He validate what God has said and promised, but whatever He says is true too. His words are always faithful. His words are always true.

He never lies. He is completely and totally truthful at all times. As He said of Himself in John 14.6, remember He said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

[10 : 05] When Christ speaks, as we talked about this morning, He speaks on behalf of God. God, as God, and His testimony is always true without error.

At the outset of His letter to the Laodicea, He establishes this and reminds them that what He says to them is spoken with absolute accuracy and clarity regarding the spiritual condition that they are in.

There's a third phrase about Christ that He uses to identify Himself in verse 14. And He says that He is the beginning of the creation of God.

Now, many false teachers have attempted to use that verse to deny the deity of Christ. And they do so by asserting that He is simply a created being like the rest of us.

And again, if you're paying attention to this morning's sermon, you know that that's not the case. That distorted view of Christ is fundamental to many modern cults and false religions.

[11 : 11] There's many Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others who believe that today. It's an ancient lie that goes back to the very earliest days of the church.

This has been something that the church has had to fight against throughout the history of the church. In fact, Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians to protect them from succumbing to a similar strain of heresy.

Regarding Christ's deity, he wrote in Colossians 1, 15-19, he said, He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. Read this this morning.

For by Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. Verse 19, For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

[12 : 17] And so, in Colossians 1, 15, where Paul speaks of Him being firstborn, in the Greek that's *protokos*, it does not signify chronology, but preeminence and supremacy.

In the same way, the Greek word translated in Revelations 3, 14, as beginning is *arche*, the same word that we talked about this morning in John 1. And it is not used to identify Christ as part of the creation, but rather as the source of creation.

John affirmed this truth again in his gospel. It was in verse 3, and we'll get there. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. So we understand from God's word that Christ is not another created being.

He is creator. He is author of all physical and spiritual life, which will be the topic of next Sunday's sermon.

There you get a little preview. And I know you're all excited. Secondly, we see that Christ is revolted, revolted by hypocritical conduct, by the hypocritical conduct of the Laodicean church.

[13 : 39] He's revolted by what is happening there. The same false teaching that had threatened the Colossian church had likely made its way to the church in Laodicea.

The church in Laodicea must have succumbed to the belief that Christ was not the *arche*, the initiator and originator of life, all life that exists.

They must have denied that He was the creator, but in fact they must have affirmed that He was a part of creation, that He was a created being.

In this way, the Laodicean church was filled with unbelievers. We have a church where every member was an unbeliever. And that is no different from the Mormon church, or those who belong to the Jehovah's Witness church, or any other liberal church today that denies the deity of Jesus Christ.

They all can be thrown into that category. In this way, the Laodicean church, again, it was filled with unbelievers. From the outset, Christ's letter to the Laodiceans demonstrates that the church had erred disastrously, and this was a serious offense to Him.

[15 : 00] Jesus affirms that He is the Lord who created everything. That is the testimony of Scripture. The faithful and true witness of God.

That's who He says that He is. He is the one in whom all God's promises are fulfilled, and He demands that He be worshipped as such.

Laodicea has the grim distinction of being the only church to which Christ says nothing good at all. He has no good comment to make towards them.

There are no redeeming features in this church to be declared about anyone in this congregation. Apparently, there was no wheat, only tares.

The Lord says in verses 15-16, I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot.

[15 : 56] So because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. In effect, what He's saying is this, I know you, I know what you are, I know what you're doing, you're lukewarm, and you make me want to vomit.

I mean, you know, if you've ever had anybody say that to you before, you make me want to vomit. I mean, that's pretty revolting, isn't it? And hopefully, I don't know, maybe you've said that to somebody before, but you understand the picture that, you know, He is absolutely revolted by what is going on there.

It makes Him want to gag. It makes Him sick. This would have been, again, a very vivid condemnation for the people of Laodicea.

They would have understood the picture that He was presenting to them. Again, their water wasn't hot like it was in Hierapolis. It wasn't cold and clear like the stream that fed into Colossae.

Instead, the water in Laodicea was mucky. It was toxic. It was tepid. It was gross. Again, flowing through miles of filthy clay and stone pipes, it became contaminated. It became gross to drink, unable to quench your thirst or restore your strength.

[17 : 11] Quite literally, it was something that nauseated you. With imagery that would have been immediately familiar to every resident of Laodicea, the Lord delivered a stunning rebuke for the church there.

Again, He says, quite literally, you make me sick. In verse 15 again, He says, I wish that you were cold or hot. Spiritually hot people are alive and they're fervent in their love for the Lord.

As a matter of fact, you probably heard somebody say, they're on fire for the Lord. And we understand what that means. They're hot for Him. They exhibit the transforming work of the Spirit and a passion to reach lost people with the gospel.

On the other hand, spiritually cold people openly reject the truth of God's Word and salvation through His Son. They are spiritually dull.

They are spiritually dead with no interest in Christ or His church whatsoever. The lukewarm Laodiceans were landings in the middle of these two.

[18 : 21] They couldn't be hot because they were still unregenerate. They were still unsaved. They didn't qualify as cold either because they had not publicly rejected the truth.

Instead, they were hypocrites claiming to love the Lord while holding to a false Christ and to a false gospel. They maintained an outward show, an appearance of faith and of devotion to the Lord, but really they were more like the Pharisees than they were like Christ.

They were self-satisfied. They were self-righteous, religious people who were far from the truth, who were far from the Lord. Paul described the lukewarm to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3.5.

He describes them as being those who are holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power. That would be a perfect description of these people.

The Lord warned His disciples of the horrifying future that awaits such spiritual pretenders. Matthew 7.22-23. He says, Of that day, many will say to Me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name?

[19 : 33] And in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles. And then I will declare to them, I never knew You. Depart from Me, You who practice lawlessness.

So such hypocritical churches have always existed throughout the history of the church. This is a reality.

There's churches that are filled with unconverted and unrepentant people. They proclaim all sorts of false doctrines and all sorts of erroneous beliefs about Christ and who He is and where He came from and what He's done.

And these types of people nauseate the Lord. The lukewarm church in Laodicea disgusted Him. Even openly cold hearts would have been a more honest reflection of the spiritual state, and it would have left them open to the sting of sin's guilt.

Instead, these people lulled themselves into spiritual self-satisfaction unaware that their heresy and hypocrisy had dulled their ability to assess their own spiritual condition accurately.

[20:49] Christ describes the debt of their self-deception in His letter in verse 17. He says of them, You say, I am rich and have become wealthy and have need of nothing and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

So the Lord tells them that they are absolutely ignorant of the reality of their spiritual condition. And the same is true of all unbelievers who come together in a church.

They're in no position to assess the state of their hearts. They are collectively blinded to spiritual reality, to spiritual truth. Laodicea was famous for its material wealth.

It seems that the church's own identity was bound up not just in false security of those material riches, but also in their supposed spiritual wealth.

They knew the truth about Christ, but they denied His deity. They knew the truth about God, but worshipped a God of their own design, of their own making. They believed that they are spiritually rich because of this and that their knowledge sets them apart and above others, but they have no idea how they are in reality nauseating the Lord whom they profess to know and believe in.

[22:10] It's a sickening condition thinking you're spiritually rich when in reality you're spiritually bankrupt, of thinking you're beautiful when in reality you're ugly, or imagining you're to be envied when you're utterly pitiable, or believing you see everything clearly when you're lost and blind, of believing you're draped in spiritual finery with your filthy, when in reality you're filthy and naked.

And so that is the situation the Lord says that the Laodicean church was in. And then the Lord confronted them bluntly with the reality of all of this.

Again, in verse 17 he says, you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. And there are a lot of churches today who think that what they're doing, they're doing on the Lord's behalf.

They think that they are being backed up by God's Word to do it. They think that they are doing the right thing, but in reality they do not know that they are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

I had a conversation this morning with somebody after church who was a part of the Methodist church and he was upset about how, you know, June is Pride Month and how many in the United Methodist Church, especially here in the United States of America, they have thrown their full support behind that community.

[23:40] And so he was upset by that and so he's, you know, looking for other churches and, you know, and that's what we talked about is the inerrancy of Scripture and believing that God's Word is infallible and that when it comes to God's Word, our opinions and our feelings do not, do not, are not elevated over it.

They come beneath it. If I think away or feel away and God's Word says something differently, well then who's right and who's wrong? God's Word is right and it's me who is wrong because this is God's Word and I am a fallen, sinful human being.

And so we see that, man. And doesn't it disgust you when you see that? Especially on Facebook nowadays, social media, it's revolting to us but now how do we respond to those revolting feelings that we have?

Well, we take the Lord for our example. And so we see in verse 18 that Christ counsels the Laodicean church. He's upset.

He's revolted by what he sees, what he witnesses, but yet he still gives them counsel and he'll give them hope. As a remedy for their wretched spiritual state, Christ says, I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich in white garments so that you may clothe yourself and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

[25:09] So what he does here for these hypocrites is he offers them grace. It's his first reaction is to offer them grace. That should be ours as well.

He could have judged them on the spot, but at this point, he withholds their destruction and instead he calls them to repent.

He shows them the error of their ways. Their money could not buy what they needed most. What they needed most was from him. No amount of money could redeem or save their souls.

Christ's words emphasize the futility of their material riches. And so he advised them to buy from him. It's an echo of God's word through the prophet Isaiah.

In Isaiah 55, 1, there it says, Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without cost.

[26 : 12] Christ's righteousness is not for sale for sinners. The price has already been paid. The Lord directed the unredeemed church at Laodicea to buy three items from him, and all of those things symbolize the redemption that they so desperately needed.

The first was to buy gold refined by fire so that you may become rich. Here he's talking about the spiritual gold that had been refined and purged of impurities.

It was perfect and priceless, especially when compared to the physical gold they so highly prized. Peter described true saving faith in 1 Peter 1, 7 as this, as it being more precious than gold which is perishable even though tested by fire.

The Laodiceans trusted in their vast wealth. Christ offered them the true spiritual riches of salvation which is a right relationship with him.

Revelations 3, 18 again, he also instructed them to buy white garments so that you may clothe yourself and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed. The white robes may depict their cleansed and purified works of obedience.

[27 : 28] The garments were described by Isaiah in Isaiah 61, 10. There he says, I will rejoice greatly in the Lord. My soul will exult in my God for he has clothed me with garments of salvation.

He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness. Their self-righteousness was nothing more than filthy rags. Again, going from Isaiah 64, 6. They needed to be cloaked or clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Then finally, the Lord told them that they need to buy from him eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. And so this eye salve that the Laodiceans were known actually for producing and for selling, they believed that it had a miracle cure.

At best, in reality, it was able to soothe irritated eyes. And that's a stark contrast to the salve that Christ was offering to them to these unrepentant sinners.

One that would actually open their spiritual eyes to see truth. The false church at Laodicea had been blinded by heresy. They had been blinded by their own hypocrisy.

[28 : 40] They needed the Lord to open their eyes and to shine the light of His truth into their hearts, much like the Lord did for the Apostle Paul on his road to Damascus.

Salvation is the gold that makes us spiritually rich in faith. It is the white robe that covers our sinful nakedness with the righteousness of God through Christ. It is the eye salve that gives us the knowledge of God's illuminating grace and an understanding of His truth.

This is a magnificent image of the threefold blessings of salvation the treasure of the Lord freely pours out on His people. And then in verses 19-20, we see that Christ loves the lost.

He loves the lost. His words in verse 19 have led some to believe, though, that the church at Laodicea was not entirely apostate.

An apostate being a person who renounces a religious or political belief or principle. Some believe that there were some in the congregation who were saved and that the Lord says, those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, therefore be zealous and repent.

[29 : 53] And that's what they use that verse to take it to mean that this church wasn't entirely unrepentant, though I don't think that that's the case. While it might initially sound like He was talking to Christians, the context doesn't allow for that interpretation.

Scripture makes it clear that the Lord does love unrepentant sinners with a love that is truly compassionate. Here in the letter to Laodicea, Christ explains that His love for the world includes the way He reproves and disciplines their sin.

Reprove is another way to say He exposes and He convicts their sin. Describing the work of the Holy Spirit through the conscience of sinful men, Christ said in verse 8, and when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

God loves the world by exposing its sin and punishing its sin. The word translated as discipline in Revelation 3.19 is used twice in Luke 23 where there it is translated as punish.

Describing Christ's torture at the hand of Pilate. In 2 Timothy 2.25 it refers to God's conviction of unbelievers. And so the point is that God's love for sinners begins with His unmasking their sinfulness.

[31 : 18] If we've been saved by grace through faith in Christ, it's because the Lord first impressed upon us the guilt of our sin and the weight of His wrath towards our sin.

His love for each of us begins with His reproof and His discipline of us. So in spite of the church's error in hypocrisy, the Lord shows that He was compassionate towards them.

He is compassionately calling them to saving faith in Him. The Lord made a similar statement to Israel in Ezekiel 33.11 where there He said, Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from His way and live.

Turn back. Turn back from your evil ways for why will you die, O house of Israel? The Lord shows them the path to a right relationship with Him and He urges them, in verse 19, to be zealous and to repent.

The gospel message of Christ always involves repentance. Sinners must mourn over their sin and then hunger for righteousness that they understand that only Christ can provide for them.

[32:43] In 2 Corinthians 7.10, Paul explained the difference between regret and repentance.

There he says, For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

In his book studies in the Sermon on the Mount, Martin Lloyd-Jones gives us the powerful insight into the nature of repentance.

What repentance is really like. This is what he had to say. Repentance means that you realize that you are a guilty, vile sinner in the presence of God and that you are hell-bound.

It means that you begin to realize that this thing called sin is in you. That you long to get rid of it and that you turn your back on it in every shape and form.

You renounce the world whatever the cost. The world in its mind and outlook as well as its practice. And you deny yourself and you take up the cross and go after Christ.

[33:49] The Apostle Paul describes the urgency of Christ's call to repent in Acts 17.30-31. There he says, The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

Because he has fixed the day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed. And of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

The Lord's tenderness for the apostate Laodiceans is not limited to his call to repent. In verse 20, he delivers this very personal promise to them. He says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him and he with me.

This invitation is one of the most familiar in all of Scripture, but also one of the most misunderstood. Revelations 3.20 is frequently used, and you've probably heard it before and you may disagree with me, but it is frequently used by evangelists and preachers as a personal urgent plea from the Lord.

[34:59] It's explained as a promise that Christ merely waits at the doorstep of every sinner's heart eager to be granted access by them.

It often appears in tandem with the similarly unbiblical statement of people saying, well, just ask Jesus into your heart. There's no verse in Scripture.

There's no instance where that is ever presented, where that offer is ever made. Just ask Jesus into your heart. Now, I know that, like I think of when I was a boy in Sunday school and I came to salvation.

That's what they told us. And I was saved as a boy. So, you know, the Lord is able still to use our heirs, though, you know, I don't think that my Sunday school teachers had any idea that, you know, what they were saying wasn't really biblical.

I understand that what they were wanting to do is communicate the gospel to us that we would know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. But I remember being absolutely confused by that as a kid. Like, how, I see, you know, we don't have pictures of Jesus.

[36:06] Obviously, nobody was taking his portrait back then or anything like that. We have, but, you know, we have the pictures in our books and paintings and whatnot, and so we have an idea of what we think Jesus looked like.

And I remember looking at him and full-grown man and, you know, looking at myself, a little boy, and, you know, my heart and thinking, how is he getting there? That doesn't make sense, you know?

But you've got to understand that we've got to be careful about our words because, you know, we don't want to misinform and we want everything that we say in the church to be backed by Scripture and I'm telling you that there is no verse in Scripture that backs that statement up.

That's a cliché that exposes, in reality, a man-centered view of salvation that confuses and corrupts much of the church today.

One that veers sharply from what Scripture has to say. Again, I had a conversation today with somebody about this. Ephesians chapter 2, I think, is very clearly, tells us about our spiritual condition before the Lord brought us from spiritual death to spiritual life.

[37 : 16] Let me read that for you. And Paul, speaking to them, says, and you were dead. You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just like the rest of mankind.

So he puts all of us in this spiritually dead condition. Thankfully, verse 4 says, but God, being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

And to me, that's very clear. Who's the one who made us alive to Christ? It wasn't us answering the door or any of those things or us thinking, well, yeah, that sounds good to me. No, it was all of Christ. He made us alive together with him.

Then he backs that up by saying, by grace you have been saved and raised us up with him, seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.

And here I think he slam dunks it. For by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing. It is the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast.

[38 : 46] Revelation 3.20 is not a general statement about Christ knocking on the hearts of sinners, nor is it an accurate picture of his call to repent. We've got to understand the context here.

The fact is, I believe the door Christ refers to here was a specific door. Not the metaphorical door of every human heart. This is a specific invitation to a specific church, that church in Laodicea and others who might be like it.

Christ was not in that church is what he's saying here. There's nobody in that church who is a believer. Further proof that unlike the church in Sardis, there was not a single believer in this congregation.

In verse 20, he promised to come and bring the reality of true salvation into that apostate group if even some would respond to his call to repent and receive him.

Today, the Lord is similarly shut out of many congregations that claim his name but regularly dishonor him. Whether they're dead liberal churches, churches that preach a different gospel, or cults, they have no interest in the Christ of the Bible or the salvation that he offers.

[40 : 03] And just as was the case for the church in Laodicea, it takes the true expression of repentance and faith to open the door to Christ's presence and influence. The Lord wasn't merely offering his presence in the church.

He says, I will come into him and will dine with him and he with me. And so what he's illustrating here is something that they knew, something that we know, that a shared meal with somebody symbolizes unity and fellowship and intimacy.

We understand from Revelation 19.9 that believers will one day celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb with Christ. And we look forward to eternal intimacy with our Lord and Savior in heaven. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, right now we get a foretaste of that fellowship here on earth. It was that communion that Christ promised to anyone in the Laodicean church who would repent and who would believe savingly in him as Lord and Savior.

And then the Lord closes his letter to the Laodicean church with a word for all believers. He says, to his overcomers, he promises to grant them to sit down with him on his throne.

[41 : 19] And this is the pinnacle of Christ's promised blessing for believers who faithfully persevere which we are unable to fully comprehend. Christ promises not only immediate fellowship with believers but also to grant us to reign with him at his side throughout all eternity.

We do not receive a minimal salvation in Christ not sitting up right in the nosebleed sections while all the other whatever, you know, more holier ones are down closer to him, closer to the action.

That's not the case. He promises not only immediate fellowship with believers but also to grant us to reign with him in complete and total fellowship with him.

We are totally and we are completely grafted into the family of God and granted all of the privileges that sonship brings to us in his eternal kingdom.
We have much to look forward to. Much to look forward to. Thank you.