

## ***Revelation 3***

### **To the Church in Sardis**

#### The City

- Sardis was the capital city of Lydia.
- It was founded about 1,200 BC.
- The original city sat on the top of a 1,500 foot high plateau. There was one narrow road leading into the city. The other sides of the plateau were just steep cliffs. This made the city very safe and nearly impenetrable by invading armies.
- Sardis was the home of Aesop, who's fables we all heard as children.
- Gold and silver coins were first minted here.
- The city of Sardis was famous for the industries that operated there. Carpet, wool and dyed cloth were their primary products. It is said that the art of dyeing was invented at Sardis.
- At one time, Sardis had been one of the greatest cities in the world. Sardis were famed around the world for their wealth
- Sardis came under attack by Cyrus the Persian, King Croesus and his people retreated to their city, believing they were safe. One night, one of the Persian soldiers saw a Sardinian soldier drop his helmet over the wall of the city. He watched as that soldier followed a hidden path down the side of the mountain to retrieve his helmet. When nightfall came, Cyrus and his troops followed the hidden path up the side of the mountain, entered the city while the guards slept and conquered Sardis.
- Sardis regained some of its former wealth under the reign of Alexander the Great, but was invaded and defeated by Antiochus the Great, who also entered the city at night while the guards slept.
- When the Romans came, Sardis was still a wealthy, powerful city, but it was just a shell of its former self. By John's day, Sardis was just a shell of what it had been. The people had grown lazy, degenerate, immoral and complacent. Sardis was dying through apathy and indifference.
- The city was proud of its past; it was proud of its reputation. But, its reputation was all it had left. For all intents and purposes, the city of Sardis was dead, even while it lived.

#### The Church

Apparently, the church in Sardis had adopted the atmosphere of the city. The church had become a thermometer that registered the temperature of the city instead of a thermostat that changed the temperature of the city. This church that had become lazy, apathetic and complacent. Just as surely as the city of Sardis was dying, so was the church in that city. Jesus has no words of commendation for them, (Except for 3:4, "*Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.*" ) but He does have some words of counsel.

I would like for us to look at our Lord's words to this dying church. There is a word of warning for us in these verses as well. Let me just remind you that these letters can be viewed three ways. 1.) Practically – These letters were written to real churches with real issues. 2.) Prophetically – These letters picture the church at various stages of church history. 3.) Personally – These letters have something to say to every church and every believer who comes under the sound of their message.

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### The Commendation

The Sardis Church was so spiritually dead the Lord skipped over the usual commendation and turned directly to His concerns.

### The Challenge

***1 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.***

The "seven Spirits of God" refer to the Holy Spirit in His complete ministry. The seven-fold ministry of the Spirit is defined in Isaiah 11:2. 1. The Spirit of the Lord. 2. The Spirit of wisdom. 3. The Spirit of understanding. 4. The Spirit of counsel. 5. The Spirit of strength. 6. The Spirit of knowledge. 7. Spirit of fear, which is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom (Prov. 1:7)

In His hand is the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This is a reminder to the churches that we are to operate, not under the power of human skill, leadership and organization, but under the awesome power of the Holy Spirit. When the church walks in the power of the flesh, we will surely fail, but when we walk in the power of the Spirit, there will be success. There will be glory and there will be power and life instead of deadness and ineffectiveness!

When the human spirit is in control of the human body, amazing things can be accomplished. For instance, a pianist can sit down at a keyboard; perform thousands of delicate, precise movements that will produce beautiful music. In the same way, when the Spirit of God is in control of the members of the church, great things can be accomplished. However, when He is not, paralysis is the result and nothing can be accomplished for God. (John 15:5)

This a message the modern church needs today. We are trying every method under the sun to reach sinners, and to do the work of the church, but, all the power we need is found in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. What we need is not a new method; but a new desire to seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit and do everything according to the teachings of the Word of God.

The "seven stars" are the Pastors of the churches, ( Rev. 1:20). They are the messengers who bring the people the Word of God.

The church was just going through the motions. The Lord pronounced the church dead. It was full of unbelieving people playing church. The church was like a museum where stuffed animals are on exhibit in their natural habitat, and everything appears normal, but nothing is alive. He does not commend their works and He does not condemn their works. He merely tells them that He knows everything they are doing.

Some of the signs that a church is dying.

- A dying church rests on its past accomplishments and is satisfied with its present state.
- A dying church is more concerned about their rituals and their formalities than they are about spirituality.
- A dying church is more concerned about social change than they are about seeing people changed by the power of God.
- A dying church is more concerned with material growth than it is with spiritual growth.
- A dying church is more concerned with pleasing men than it is with pleasing God.
- A dying church clings more tightly to its creeds and confessions than it does to the Word of God.
- A dying church is one that loses its conviction that the Bible is the Word of God.

***2 Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.***

The metaphor has changed from death to sleep. The Lord appeals to the godly remnant that remained and not to the unbelievers in the church. Dead people can't wake up. (page 45 in book). Jesus calls upon them to wake up. His command is for them to wake up and realize that the victories of yesterday are not sufficient for this day!

While we ought to be thankful for what the Lord has done for us, we will never reach a place where can let up! There is no time to look back to yesterday! Our vision ought to be for today and for tomorrow. Look around! We are aging! Who will take our place? We can't be satisfied with what we have or we will lose the fire that made us strong! We must fight the tendency to become still, satisfied, complacent and apathetic.

The Lord gives this church four activities that they are to be busily engaged in. These things will help any church that has been caught napping on Jesus!

1. Revive – “strengthen the things which remain” - He tells them that not everything about them has died. There are still some things that have a spark of life in them. These things are to be revived before they die out. This is a call for them to get stirred up again for the things of God! It is a call to revival! It is possible to be busy in the things of God and yet to be doing nothing for God. What churches like this need is to be stirred by the Spirit of God into new life and activity for the glory of God!

2. Remember – “Remember therefore what you have received and heard.” They are to remember where the Lord brought them from and what He has done for them. They are to remember the days when they served the Lord out of a glad heart and wanted more than anything to do His will! They are to remember what it was like to walk in the power of God while the fire of His glory burned in and He used them for His glory!

3. Resolve – “Hold it fast” - This church is told to hold on to the things that are still alive in their midst. They are to resolve before the Lord that they will not allow those things to die as well.

4. Repent – “Repent” - In this verse, they are confronted concerning their sin. When the things of God are allowed to die, the only recourse the church has is repentance. The idea of repentance is foreign one to many in our day and time. People seem to have the opinion that whatever they want to do is just fine and should be accepted by everyone. When there is sin in the life of an individual, there must be repentance before there can be restoration and revival. The same is true for a church. When a church has allowed itself to be lulled into a state of slumber, their only hope is to repent!

What does it mean to repent? It means that we come to a place where we experience a change of mind and heart about our sins that results in a change of direction. We turn from our sins and we turn toward God. Repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of action! We may need to repent of laziness, complacency, apathy, etc.

Some signs of life in a church.

· Growth – All living things are characterized by growth. As long as you and I live in the bodies, we are maturing; we are changing; and we are growing. When the growth stops, it means we are dead! The church is no exception. When people think of growth in the church, they immediately think of numerical growth. I think that is part of it. But, the primary way a church demonstrates life is through spiritual growth. A church that is alive will continue to develop spiritually. When a church ceases to grow spiritually, it is degenerating and dying.

· Harmony – When a physical body develops problems, it is because there is disharmony in the body. Cancer is a good example of this. Some of the cells become infected by the cancer and they attack other cells in the body. If this is left unchecked, the result will be disintegration and death for that body. The same is true in the church. When a church is alive and well, there will be unity and harmony in the fellowship. When there isn't, the body is diseased and is headed for trouble, unless the infected parts come back into harmony. When a church becomes fractured, it is headed for disaster and death.

· Emotion/ Motion. The deceased person does not show one sign of emotion. They can't because they are dead. A living church is an emotional church! There will be times when we will laugh together, weep together, shout together, sing together, hurt together, and pray together. Motion – Another sign of life is motion. Physical bodies are bodies in motion. One sure sign of death is the absence of motion. When there is life in a church, there will be motion. The church will be active in the world doing the work of the Lord.

***4 Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5 The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.***

As bad as things were in Sardis, there were some there who were saved and seeking to serve the Lord. They are given the Lord's promise that they will walk with the Lord in white. White clothing was worn in Roman times during festivals and times of celebration. It was a symbol of purity, victory and festivity.

What a great promise to the faithful members of that church. Jesus says, “You are standing faithful. You have not defiled your garments with the deadness that exists all around you. You are saved and you are serving. One day, you will walk with Me in My Heaven. It will be a time of victory, festivity and purity.” That is His promise to us today who are saved.

Jesus also tells them that He will not blot out their names out of the book of life. In other words, they will be made secure in their relationship with Him. God is not saying that He blots out names. This verse is often used by people who try to say that Christians can “lose their salvation”. It is not a verse that serves as a threat of loss. It is a verse that offers a precious promise of absolute security to all those who believe in Jesus.

***6 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.***

### **To the Church in Philadelphia**

#### The City

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#### The Challenge

There were only two churches out of the seven that the Lord had nothing bad to say about them. This church and the Church at Smyrna. Of course the church had its imperfections as all churches do.

#### The Church

***7 “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.***

Jesus is speaking to a church that is striving to be holy in the midst of a corrupt and sinful world. He comes to say to them: “It is possible to live for God! I am holy, and I can help you be holy too.” Jesus’s identification of Himself as holy is a direct claim to His deity (Isa. 6:3)(1 Pet. 1:15).

The word “true” here means “that which is genuine”. We know that His Word is true, now He tells His people that He is the real Savior; He is the only genuine Lord. The word true is used in combination with holiness throughout Revelation to describe God (6:10,15:3, 16:7, 19:2,11).

These early believers were surrounded daily by that which was false. False gods and false worship abounded in that day. Jesus just wants them to know that He is the real deal. They are not wasting their time serving Him. They did not make a mistake when they turned their back on their idols and pagan gods. When they came to Jesus Christ, they came to the only Savior, Acts 4:12; John 14:6. We live in an age when many things are mere imitations. We have sugar substitutes, salt substitutes and meat substitutes. We have fake fur and fake leather. We have virtual reality and surrogate mothers. We are surrounded by that which is fake and pretend. It is a comfort to be reminded that at least one thing is real! Jesus is the real deal! Jesus is not a substitute for anything! When you trusted Jesus Christ, you got in on something that is real! Salvation is real! Prayer is real! Grace is real! Heaven is real! His presence is real! His Word is real! His power is real! Jesus, and not Coca-Cola, is the real thing.

## The Commendation

***8 I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.***

Jesus identifies Himself as the One Who is in control! He has the keys, and He opens and closes the doors.

1. He Carries the Keys – Jesus says that He has “the key of David”. What does this mean? God placed on His Son His kingdom and His government, ( Isa. 9:6). Keys grant you authority, access and availability. Jesus comes to this ancient church and says, “I have the keys!” He is telling you today that He “has the keys”. What kind of keys does Jesus have?

a. He Has the Keys of Sleep – Rev. 1:18. Jesus alone is the Master of death. You can’t even die until He opens the door! You can’t stay dead if you know Him, John 11:25-26.

b. He Has the Keys of Suffering – Rev. 1:18 - Only He can open Heaven and shut Hell. Jesus is the Key to Heaven!

c. He Has the Keys of Salvation – John 4:12; John 14:6; John 10:9. Only He can open the door into eternal life for those who will come to Him.

d. He Has the Keys of Service - 1 Cor. 16:9 – He decides when we serve, where we serve and how long we serve.

e. He Has the Keys of Safety – Col. 3:3 – No one can touch those who are locked away within Jesus Christ.

With the keys Jesus opens doors and closes doors. He Controls the Doors – Jesus is in the business of opening and closing doors in the lives of His people. When God opens a door of opportunity in your life; go through it. It may be a once in a lifetime opportunity. How tragic it would be to get to Heaven and see what we could have done if only we would have trusted the Lord and stepped through the open door, He gave us.

By the same token, when He closes a door, don’t try to force it open. You don’t want to be where God doesn’t want you to be. The path to blessing is to be where the Lord wants us to be, when He wants us to be there.

There will be times along the way when God lines things up for His church. He may give us an opportunity to make inroads into our community. He may give an open door to ministry to our town. When that open door comes, it is not a time for delay. It is a time for faith and action. When we see that door opened, we must go through it, regardless of the cost. We need to pray that God will give us spiritual wisdom to see the doors when He opens them.

The Lord had given this church a powerful open door of ministry. Jesus says, “you have little strength”. This may mean that they were small in number and lacking in political and financial influence. They were weak, but they Lord was using them in a mighty fashion. They were weak, but they were making a tremendous impact on their city! When we are weak, He is strong (2 Cor. 12: 9-10).

Fundamental, Bible-believing churches are in the minority in our world today. However, if we will honor God's Word and keep Jesus at the center of all we do, the Lord will honor that by giving us an open door of ministry in this world, but we must make Him the centerpiece of our church and of our worship! God blessed that kind of church 2,000 years ago and I believe He still will today!

***9 I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.***

The phrase "synagogue of Satan" probably refers to the local Jews who were persecuting them. However, because they had kept His Word, and remained pure in doctrine, spread the Gospel, doing what they could through open doors of ministry, remained faithful, and did not deny His name, God blessed them, and the enemies of the cross were powerless to stop them. The phrase "*who claim to be Jews though they are not,*" can be interpreted by what Paul said in Rom. 2:28-29. This church is suffering at the hands of people who claim to love God but are lying! They have rejected their Messiah and they are headed to Hell, Rev. 21:8.

***10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.***

This is a precious promise to a suffering people. They have endured much, but they will be spared the horrors that will come upon the entire world and those who dwell in it. Jesus promises them that their faithfulness to them guarantees them deliverance from the terrible time of tribulation that is to come upon this earth. Unbelievers will face the wrath of God in the tribulation, but His people will not! I will talk more about the Rapture next week. I believe that the church will not pass through the tribulation. Jesus is coming and He is going to remove His church before God pours out His wrath upon this world, (Rom. 5:9),( 1 Thes. 4:16-18), ( 1 Cor. 15:51-52)

***11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.***

That means we are to live as if He might come at any minute, and we are to work like our time is short. But, as we watch and as we work, we are to be careful of how we live our lives. We must not allow ourselves to become like the world around us. We are to live for Jesus and guard everything He has given us, so that we can be confident of a reward when He comes. We will face our Lord some day at the Judgment Seat of Christ. That day can be a day of reward, or it can be a day of loss of reward (not loss of salvation as He will NEVER blot out our names from the Book of Life), which depends on how we live now, 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12.

***12 The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.***

Jesus tells these believers that He will make set them as a pillar in God's temple and they will go out no more. This was a message of hope to the people in Philadelphia. With all the earthquakes the city suffered, they were used to having to evacuate their city. Now, Jesus promises them that they will enjoy stability in His kingdom. Also, in that city, the highest honor that could be bestowed on an individual was for a pillar in one of the pagan temples to be dedicated in his/her honor. His/her name would be written on it and the reason for the honor would be inscribed there too. Jesus is saying to these saints, "You might not be well known or honored down here, but things are different in Heaven. You might be a nobody today on earth, but you are a somebody in Heaven!" Our names are known in heaven, and one day, we'll enter that city and be firmly fixed there forever! Praise His name! God puts His name on us to establish ownership. He has redeemed us and we are His forever! We might be living on the earth today, but we are headed for glory. Jesus new name is on us because we are special to Him. What if our new name reflected our love/service to the Lord here? I sure don't want to be called mediocre.

***13 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.***

### **To the Church in Laodicea**

#### The City

See book page 48

The city had one major shortfall in that there was no ready source of water in the city. Water had to be piped in through aqueducts. Water from the hot springs in Hierapolis six miles to the north was brought into the city. Water was also piped in from Colossae, which was located 10 miles to the east. The water was lukewarm, tasted putrid, and was not refreshing. This fact will be important as we move into the passage where the Lord talks about being lukewarm.

Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake in 61 AD. The city was so wealthy and so self-sufficient that they rebuilt their city with their own resources, refusing an offer of aid from Caesar.

The city was famous in its day for three primary characteristics.

1. Finances - It was a center of banking and finance, known through the Roman Empire for its wealth and financial power.
2. Fashion - It was renowned for the soft, black wool produced there. This wool was considered a luxury item and was sought after for clothing and rugs. Laodicea was the center of fashion in its day. The newest styles appeared here first.
3. Pharmaceuticals - There was a famous medical school in Laodicea which produced a tablet that was sold all over the Roman Empire. This tablet was crushed, mixed with water to form a paste. This paste was rubbed into the eyes and was supposed to cure a variety of eye problems.



## The Church

**14 "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.**

Notice how Jesus comes to this wayward church. He comes as the "Amen". This is a Hebrew word that means "So be it; let it be so; or it is so". It was used to express the ideas of faithfulness and truth, Isa. 65:16; Deut. 7:9. When we use it to end our prayers, we are saying, "Let it be so!" When we use it to respond to a message, we are saying, "It is so, or it is true!" It is a word of confirmation and finality. When Jesus comes to this church, He comes as God's final word to humanity, (Heb. 1:2). He comes as the confirmer of all God's promises, (2 Cor. 1:20).

He also comes as "the faithful and true witness". This church had a vision of itself that was flawed. Jesus wants them to know that He knows them as they really are and that He has come to reveal their true state. He has come to set the record straight.

Jesus also comes as "the ruler of God's creation." This identifies Jesus as the Creator and the Controller of all things. Not even a bird can fall to the ground without His knowledge/permission. He is in control. Jesus said to a church that thought it was in control that He is in control, and His hand is still on the wheel and He is the One Who controls the church.

We must remember that Jesus died for the church. He purchased it with His Own blood, (Acts 20:28). He builds it and He sustains it, (Matt. 16:18-19)( Eph. 2:19-22). The church exists for His glory. We are here for Him and for Him alone! Our duty is to preach Him; praise Him; promote Him; and publish Him.

This is not your church! This is not my church! It is His church! He possesses it and He is to control it.

## The Commendation

The Lord Jesus came to this rich, powerful church and He said to them "Laodicea, You Make Me Sick!" There were no words of commendation for this church.

## The Challenge

Since the Lord had nothing positive to say about this church He launches directly into His concerns.

**15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.**

Jesus tells the church that like the water in their city, they have become lukewarm. (Remember that water problem I spoke of earlier?) Water from the hot springs in Hierapolis six miles away was brought into the city by aqueducts. By the time it reached Laodicea, the water was no longer hot; it was

lukewarm. Cold water from Colossae was also piped in; by the time it reached Laodicea, this water was lukewarm as well. This tepid, lukewarm water made getting refreshment in Laodicea difficult.

The church had also become lukewarm. This means that they had lost their passion for the things of the Lord. They had become indifferent and apathetic. They had reached a place where they were going through the motions, and they were unmoved by the things of the Lord. Apparently, they were indifferent toward the cross of Jesus; the Word of God; and the condition of the lost people around them. These church folk were not burning hot with passion for Jesus. They were somewhere in between. Their condition made Jesus sick!

Is this not the condition of the modern church? People are going through the motions, but there is no burning passion for the things of the Lord! Church people in our day are no longer moved by the cross! They read about the crucifixion, they hear about it, and they sit unmoved! Church people in our day are unmoved by the plight of the lost! They know people are lost and they know that lost people are going to Hell; but they really don't care. They say, "That's terrible, I wish they would get saved." But, they don't pray or witness; they don't care! The average church in our day is a study in apathy! They are not exactly dead because they are praying, preaching, singing, etc. But, they are not exactly on fire either. There is no excitement and no passion about Who they serve, what they hear, and what they are doing. They are somewhere in the middle of the road. That is where the modern church is!

People enter the church, take their seat, fold their arms and say, "Bless me Lord!" They never feel the need to go to an altar to pray. They never have anything to testify about as to how the Lord is working in their lives. They never feel a need to do anything but come and go.

The lukewarm church is the hardest to pastor. The people may believe correctly, but they come in and out of the buildings and are indifferent. They've heard it all and are totally unmoved by it. You can't move them! It is also the hardest kind of church for the Lord to move. They just don't care! If people outside the church are saved, fine. If they aren't, that's fine too. If the preaching is good, great! If not, well, that's OK too. That's a tough attitude to handle! There are some things about which you cannot be indifferent! Indifference and apathy are not options when it comes to Jesus Christ! No one, who is right with God, can be unmoved/indifferent with Jesus. No one can hear the claims of Christ and be ambivalent! No one can walk in the middle of the road when it comes to Jesus! You are either for Him, or you are against Him! You must either accept Him or you must stone Him!

C.S. Lewis hit it right on the head when he said, "*A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg - or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us.*"

***17 You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.***

When the people in Laodicea looked at themselves, they saw the perfect church. They were wealthy, powerful and they felt they had all they needed. Jesus said they were poor.

They looked at their position, their possessions and their power and they said, "We have arrived!" Jesus said that they were wretched. They were indifferent, apathetic, and blinded to their true spiritual condition, even they were famous for their eye ointment that was to help you see better. They were famous for their clothing, and Jesus said they were naked.

The sad truth is that some people get more excited about money in the bank than they do souls on the altar. They get more stirred up about a big number on a board than they do about sincere worship of the Lord. They are more blessed by what they have than by the Lord showing up and moving in a service! How do we see ourselves? How does He see us?

What we need more than money; more than crowds; more than buildings; more than recognition in the community; more than many of the things we place such great value in: we need Jesus I would rather have Him, His presence and His power than anything material you can name! We need Him! We must seek Him! We must welcome Him! We must worship Him!

***18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.***

See book page 49 Challenge

***19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.***

Jesus invites them to come to Him, then He gives them a much-needed words of advice.

In spite of their indifference toward Him, He still loves them! What a blessing! Jesus doesn't just write people off when they don't do as He pleases, but He calls them and continue to love them even what they reject Him and His love.

Jesus tells them, and us, that just because He loves us like we are, He loves us too much to leave us as we are. In an effort to get our attention, He will use two methods to turn us to Him: Rebuke and discipline. Those who refuse to walk in God's path will encounter trouble in their lives, (Prov. 13:15; 15:10) ( Jer. 2:19)

The word "earnest" gives us the word "zesty". It means "to come to a boil". Jesus is calling this church to "get on fire for Him". When they see their need and turn to Him, it will manifest itself in genuine repentance. Remember, repentance can be defined as "a change of mind that results in a change of direction." If Laodicea were to repent, they would come alive to the Lord and His presence in their church. They would be moved by the cross and by the plight of the lost sinner.

***20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.***

The sad truth is that Laodicea has evicted Jesus Christ from their church. He is on the outside trying to gain admission. Jesus promises us that if we hear His voice and open the door that He will come in.

Jesus does not need for the whole church to get on fire so that He can come in; He merely needs just one person to hear him and to open the door. If you will open the door to Jesus, He will come in to you. You can have revival in your life while everyone else sits around in deadness and apathy. Don't blame your dry condition on others; open the door and let Jesus in

Jesus is a gentleman! He will knock and He will call, but He will not break down the door. It must be opened by an act of the will.

Holman Hunt's famous painting, which depicts Jesus standing outside a door with a light in His hand. He is knocking on the door. When that painting was first finished, a man looked at it and commented to the painter, "You made a mistake." Holman Hunt said, "Where is the mistake?" The critic said, "You forgot to paint a handle on the outside of the door." Hunt responded, "There is no mistake. The handle is on the inside. Jesus knocks, but you must open the door!"

The ancient Greeks enjoyed three meals. They usually ate a large breakfast, a much smaller lunch, and then a leisurely evening meal, which they called "supper". At this evening meal, the family would take their time, talk and fellowship. It was a time of intimacy for the family. Jesus says, "If you will just open the door, I will come in and have fellowship with you!"

***21 To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.***

This verse is a promise that all the benefits of salvation will be given to the person who overcomes. The converted person will become identified with Jesus, His heavenly Father, and His heavenly Home. Those who come to Jesus are promised that they will reign with Him and rejoice with Him in His heaven someday. That is a powerful promise!

***22 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."***

Where does this message find you? Are you saved by His grace? Are you zealous and committed to the Lord and His work? Or, are you indifferent and apathetic toward the things of the Lord? Can you hear His voice calling: "Here I am, I stand at the door, and knock." Is the door open? Does it need to be? He wants our fellowship with Him. Does He have it?