



THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

"Knock, knock, knockin' On Your Heart's Door"

3:18-22

Revelation 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and 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.

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Revelation 3:20 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.

Revelation 3:21 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.

Revelation 3:22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' "

After 13 years as the world's richest person, Bill Gates appears to have been dethroned. Mexican telecommunications tycoon Carlos Slim has taken the top spot on the list with a net worth of \$67.8 billion.

Imagine for a moment the Laodicean's were waiting to see if they were on Jesus' list of the first century's world's richest. It's not too farfetched. In verse seventeen they described themselves as **rich, wealthy, and in need of nothing.**

The letter was read. There was no list; only an appraisal. Jesus said that they were **wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.**

They were making the classic blunder of thinking that worldly success is a mark of spiritual depth. In their case it was just the opposite. To the extent they trusted in their riches they had grown self-sufficient. They needed to become Savior-dependent.

Jesus spoke to them in a language they would understand:

Revelation 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and 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.

He **counseled** them to **buy**. Jesus sounds almost like a financial advisor. Trouble was, the things Jesus listed could not really be bought with any of their material resources.

Sure, you could **buy... gold**. But when Jesus is the gold-broker and He describes it's purity as being **refined in the fire** He's not talking about gold from the earth. He's talking about Job-gold:

Job 23:10 But He knows the way that I take; **When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.**

Remember we said that the root words for 'Laodicea' mean *the rule and decision of the people*. They were avoiding any **works** that would test them or cause trials for them. They were content in their comfort-zone. As a result they remained spiritually raw and unrefined. If there is no fire there can be no refinement. With some refining fire they would not just have **gold**; they would **be gold!**

Jesus counseled them to **buy... white garments that you may be clothed**. In this case Jesus portrayed Himself as their clothier and fashion consultant. Historians claim Laodicea was noted for

producing a fine black wool that was coveted by fashionistas. For a Laodicean to wear a common white garment would be a huge fashion faux pas.

Except that Jesus was not talking about their earthly wardrobe. Often in the Bible your salvation is illustrated by the use of garments. A sinner is depicted as wearing filthy rags before the Lord. When you are saved it's like the Lord removing the filthy rags, cleansing you all over, and exchanging your old clothing for a white garment. It represents His righteousness that can only be given to you, never earned or merited.

The Lord spoke of the **shame of their nakedness not [being] revealed**. I think of it like this. They had been saved and thus, spiritually speaking, given white robes of righteousness. But they became worldly. In their worldliness they strutted around proudly in their expensive black wool. If they could see themselves as Jesus did, it was as if they had taken off their robes of righteousness. In a spiritual sense they were **naked**.

It doesn't mean they were not saved. They hadn't apostasized and renounced their righteousness. It's just a graphic way of expressing the stupidity of becoming worldly. You think you're wearing Armani. Jesus says you're wearing your birthday suit!

Thus His final comment, **anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see**. A popular eye medicine known as "Phrygian powder" was one of Laodicea's sources of wealth. The medical school at Laodicea was famous for the preparation and use of this eye salve.

The Laodicean's had no need of Phrygian powder. Again this was a spiritual **salve** only Jesus could supply. It was His way of telling them to look at things spiritually, *not* materially. They needed to see the world, and themselves, as He saw them.

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Being **rebuked** and **chastened** by the Lord revealed His love for them. It's a good thing. William Barclay comments, "It is God's final punishment to leave man alone."

Love is not all soft and fluffy. It's not all touchy-feely. It is jealous for the loved one. It fights tooth-and-nail when the situation calls for it.

The Lord is jealous over you with a pure and godly jealousy. When you see the Lord as jealous, you want to be **zealous and repent**. Change your mind and agree with His appraisal.

Revelation 3:20 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.

Is this verse evangelistic? Is it spoken to nonbelievers?

It certainly applies to nonbelievers. But our context so far is to those Jesus loves. So we want to apply its tough love to ourselves.

Earlier in this letter Jesus portrayed Himself as sitting down to eat with the Laodicean's. The **works** they served Him were **lukewarm** and so He vomited them out of His mouth.

Zealous repentance would restore their works to their rightful spiritual temperature.

Eating with someone doesn't immediately strike us as significant. In Bible times, however, sharing a meal was the most intimate form of personal relationship. It is humbling to think that the creator of Heaven and earth wants nothing more than to share Himself with you.

Holman Hunt is the artist who has painted the most popular rendition of this verse. As you examine the painting you notice that there is no knob or handle on the **door** upon which Jesus is **knocking**. The artist's explanation is that, since the door represents the door of your heart, there is no handle on the outside; you must open your heart to Jesus from within. He will not and cannot force His way in.

Why won't Jesus force His way in? Love cannot be forced or it ceases to be love. Love requires choice, and choice requires a will that is free to choose.

This image may be borrowed from the Old Testament. This is similar to - or perhaps a quotation of - Song of Solomon 5:2, *It is the voice of my beloved! He knocks, saying, 'open for me, my sister, my love.*

Jesus is the lover, your lover, wanting to come in and have a relationship with you.

Jesus described having a three-course meal:

1. First He said, *I will come in to him*. It speaks of having a renewed sense of Jesus' presence in your life.
2. Second He said, *I will... dine with him*. In the illustration He has come to your house. He takes what we put at His disposal and blesses it and multiplies it. Think loaves and fishes. His presence gives our lives their power.
3. Third He said, *and he [will dine] with Me*. You one-on-one with God at an intimate dinner. Speaks to me of passion.

Presence... Power... Passion. Our walk should be marked by these kinds of words.

Revelation 3:21 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.

Him who overcomes is just shorthand for the average Christian. You read in First John 5:5,

1 John 5:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Do you believe that *Jesus is the Son of God*? Then you are an overcomer!

Jesus said He *overcame and sat down with* [His] *Father on His throne*. In Hebrews 12:2 you read,

Hebrews 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus' mission was to go to the Cross and there die for the sins of the world as our Substitute and Savior. Upon mission completion He was raised and now sits in glory with Father.

Our mission, in the context of this letter, is to overcome the world and remain instead in intimate fellowship with Jesus. Upon mission completion we will be raised or raptured and sit in glory with Jesus.

Adam Clarke writes,

This is the worst of the seven Churches, and yet the most eminent of all the promises are made to it, showing that the worst may repent, finally conquer, and attain even to the highest state of glory.

Revelation 3:22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' '

Any Christian in **any** church at **any** time is to hear and heed these words.

Let them encourage you to listen for the gentle knocking of your Lover, the Lord, Jesus Christ. Enjoy Him.

- being changed to bring change -