

(Through the Bible) Revelation 2-3

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith's sermon explores the messages to the seven churches in Revelation, emphasizing love, faithfulness, and the need for repentance in the church today.

Duration: 55:54

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 8:39-44, Revelation 1:16, Revelation 2:2, Revelation 2:9, Revelation 3:14-15, Revelation 3:17

Topics: "Through The Bible"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the book of Revelation and its three sections. The first section, 'the things which are,' refers to the present state of the church. The second section, 'the things which will be after these things,' will be explored in the next sermon. The speaker emphasizes the importance of listening to what the Spirit is saying to the church and seeking God's truth. The sermon also touches on the need for love in the church and the danger of losing one's first love. The speaker encourages repentance and warns of the consequences of losing God's presence. The sermon concludes with a discussion of the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which are condemned by God.

Transcript

Under the angel of the church of Ephesus, write, These things saith he that holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. And so, the description of Jesus, out of chapter 1, he holds the seven stars in his right hand, he walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and you'll find that his message is going to be relative to this description. It's going to come up again in the message to the church of Ephesus.

It should be noted that each of these churches comprise a period of church history. And you can find that it fits very well to the periods of church history. And we will point out these periods of church history as we go through the seven messages.

These seven churches exist today. The conditions and the state, you will find, are relative to the church today. So, they exist concurrently, and they were addressed to the seven churches that existed, then dealing with situations that did exist within the churches, but they also have a historic application, which we will also see.

Now, to the church of Ephesus, I know thy works. He says that to each of the churches. And thy labor, and thy patience.

Now, John, in the first chapter, described himself as, on the island of Patmos, for the testimony of Jesus Christ. And he said he was their brother and companion in tribulation, in the kingdom, and patience. Now, towards the end of the first century, they began to realize that the coming of Jesus wasn't as quick as they thought originally it was going to be.

They were all anticipating the Lord to return immediately to establish the kingdom. There were rumors going around that the Lord had promised John that he would not die before the kingdom was established. John, in the last chapter of his gospel, said that is not so, that's not what Jesus said.

Jesus said to Peter when he asked about, when Jesus told Peter how he was going to be martyred for the gospel's sake, he said, but what about him, pointing to John? Jesus said, look, if I want him to remain alive till I come, what's that to you? You follow me, you know, you take care of Peter, I'll take care of John. And so many said the Lord said that he wasn't, John wasn't going to die. John said, no, he didn't say that.

The Lord just said, if I will, that he should stay alive till I come. But Peter, in his epistle, began to encourage the people towards patience in waiting for the coming Lord. James had said, have patience, brother, establish your souls, for the Lord is waiting for the complete fruit of harvest.

So in the patience, in waiting for the kingdom. And so the church has been patiently waiting for the kingdom. And because of our patient waiting for the kingdom, scoffers have come and said, ah, where's the promise of his coming? You know, the world is going on as it was, there's nothing different.

You know, it's always been the fight of good against evil, you know, they can show you headlines of the papers in 1897 that read like today, they said it's been happening all the way along. Where is the promise? Since our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning. So the patient waiting for the kingdom as the Lord is patiently waiting for the complete fruit of harvest.

I know thy works, thy labor, thy patience, how you cannot bear them, which are evil. So they, they really had the gift of discernment going. One of the problems of the church is it is the evil that exists within it.

And Jesus declared in the kingdom parables that it was going to happen. The seed is going to fall on various types of soil and that there would be an abnormal growth to the church like a mustard seed, a small seed, but it grows into a tree, abnormal growth. And the birds of the air, which are always a symbol of evil, will come and lodge in its branches.

And then there had been a lot of evil birds lodged in the branches of the church and they exist today. A lot of dirty birds in the church. The woman who took the three loaves and hid in at the leaven until it had permeated.

And so the leaven, a symbol of evil, permeating the whole church. The history of the church is shameful. I have no defense for it.

I do not seek to defend the history of the church. I am embarrassed by the history of the church. Whenever I go into a college classroom to lecture, I'm so often challenged by the history of the church.

And I always say, I have no defense. The church's history is rotten. I have no defense for the history of the church.

I will defend Jesus Christ and my faith in him and the simple gospel as it was taught by him and practiced by the disciples, his apostles. But what happened in the church, I'm not going to try to excuse, I'm not going to try to defend. I'm only going to apologize and say that doesn't represent true Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ.

But God helped us to be a true and faithful witness of what he wanted his church to be. You cannot bear those that are evil. They had the purging power within the church of Ephesus, and it's a healthy body that can purge the poisons from its system.

It's when the church begins to tolerate the poison that it's going to die. You know, if your body gets so weak it can't purge poisons anymore, then, you know, death is going to follow very soon. It's necessary that the healthy body purge itself of the poisons within it.

Thank God we have Romaine, purge the poison from the body. You have borne, you have patience, and for my name's sake you have labored. Their labor was done in the name of Jesus.

For his name's sake they labored and they did not faint and they've got all of the works and all of these efforts going. They are a tremendously active church. All of the committees are functioning as they're designed to.

Nevertheless, I have this against thee, because you have left your first law. And so what the Lord was really longing for is not so much works, but just a loving relationship with these people. That's what God longs to have with you tonight.

The Lord is just looking for a loving relationship with you. We're so often trying to substitute our works, our efforts, for just plain fellowship. And the Lord longs for just plain fellowship.

Rather than busying yourself for him, he'd rather you just sit, relax, and share time in love and fellowship with him. I have this against you. You've left your first law.

That excitement, that thrill that you knew in the beginning. God said to Israel, I remember the love that you had for me when I was a spouse to you in the wilderness. How that you were talking about me all the time.

What happened? Jesus is saying. I'm missing the first law. That first bloom of love that you had.

So remember. From whence you are fallen. And notice it is falling this backsliding.

You've gone backwards. You should have a deeper relationship of love with the Lord tonight than ever before. Remember from whence you have fallen.

Remember those exciting days of following the Lord wherever he might lead. Hey, we were daring. We would do anything for Jesus.

We'd go anywhere for Jesus. Our love. Remember from whence you have fallen and repent.

Change. Turn. And then repeat.

Do thy first works. Or else. I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place unless you repent.

So the warning is that he will not stay in a loveless church. He will take that church away from his presence. For where was Jesus walking in the midst? This saith he who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

And so it's relevant now to the message of judgment that he announces. If you don't repent. I'm going to take and remove the church from the place of my presence.

I won't stay, he is saying, in a church that lacks love. And the tragedy of the church, so many churches today, is there is a lack of love and thus the absence of the Spirit. And what ensues then is fighting and bickering and all the other things that we see.

Oh, how important it is that we maintain this love. More important than having miracles or anything else is having love. Paul said, I'll show you a more excellent way.

Not all work miracles, not all have the gift of healings, not all speak with tongues, but God wants that we should all have love. Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, if I don't have love, it's meaningless. It's just sounds, it's just noise.

Though I have the gift of prophecy or I understand all things, if I have not love, really nothing. Though I give my body to be burned, sell everything I have and give to the poor, if I don't have love, it's meaningless. Love is everything.

You've left, he said, your first love. Oh, what an indictment. You better repent, he said, or else the next thing that goes is my presence.

I'm not going to stay. But this you do have. You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

What are the deeds of the Nicolaitans? The Greek words Nikolaos, or Niko and Laos, the word Niko is priest or priesthood, and Laos is the laity, the common people. So it's this establishing of a spiritual hierarchy where a man would come between you and God and would say, no, you can't go directly to God. You come to me and I'll go to God for you.

That's exactly what Jesus died to set aside. You see, when Jesus died, the veil of the temple was torn from the top to the bottom as God was signifying to all men that everyone can now have direct access to the throne of God. And in Hebrews we read, therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace that we might receive mercy in the time of need.

Or throne of mercy to receive grace in the time of need. But that entry has been made through Jesus Christ. Now, there is within the Pentecostal churches that thing that is called shepherding, which is the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

You come to us and we will advise you what God has to say concerning who you should marry and what you should sell and what you should buy and when you should do this or that. And they seek to exercise a lordship over the people. It's the deeds of the Nicolaitans, that shepherding movement.

And of course, we see it in the Catholic Church with the priesthood. You come and confess your sins to me and I will remit your sins because I'll go to the Father and I'll take care of things for you. And it's putting

a man between you and God.

It's inserting here a man that stands between you and God. Now, we'll see this system develop when we get to the church of Thyatira, but at least the church of Ephesus it says hates it, which the Lord said, I hate it too. Why does he hate it? Because he died to abolish it.

It used to be that man could not come directly to God because of sin, but Jesus, dying for our sins, made access to God for every man. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Adam was banished from the garden of Eden because he had the choice of all of the trees that are in the garden you may eat, but the tree that is in the midst of the garden, that's something I eat thereof. Adam had the choice. He could have eaten of the tree of life, which was in the garden of Eden, but he chose rather to eat of the tree of knowledge and good and evil.

And in a sense, each of us make that same decision that Adam made. There's the tree of life available to each of us through the cross of Jesus Christ. But so many times people choose the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

I want to dabble in the evil things. I want to know about the evil. Now to him that overcomes, he can eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

God transplanted that tree. When Adam was driven from the garden of Eden, God placed a cherubim at the gate of the garden to guard it lest man should return and eat of the tree of life and live forever in a sinful state. The most horrible thing that could have happened to man.

God was protecting man from his own folly. But one day we'll eat of that tree of life. He that overcome it.

He that lives and believes in me, Jesus said, will never die. So he is the tree of life really and partaking of him we have eternal life. Unto the angel of the church of Smyrna, or in Smyrna, right.

Now the church of Ephesus historically is your first period of church history up until the death of the apostles. The book of Acts. Towards the end there was a growing cold as they began to formalize the religion.

The church of Smyrna is the church of the 2nd and 3rd century that went through such tremendous suffering and persecution from the Roman government. Estimated that 6 million Christians were martyred during this period of time. Some of them fed to the lions, stretched on the racks, crucified by the hundreds as the Roman emperors at various periods sought to stamp out Christianity.

And so did this church that was going to experience such tremendous suffering and persecution. The message of Jesus is one of a different nature. It's a message of comfort, a message of hope.

To the angel of the church of Smyrna, right, these things saith the first and the last. Remember his description of himself? The first and the last. I was dead and I am alive again.

Who was dead and is alive. Because many, 6 million of this church are to be martyred for their faith. I know thy works and the tribulation and poverty, but you are rich.

Poor in material things, but rich in spiritual things. I know the blasphemy of those that say they are Jews and they are not. They are the synagogue of Satan.

Now, when Jesus was in a confrontation with the religious leaders of his day, they said, we have Abraham as our father. Jesus said, if Abraham was your father, then you believe in me. For Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it.

And they said, what do you mean Abraham saw you? You're not even 50 years old. What are you talking about? And Jesus said, well, before Abraham was, I am. And they took up stones to kill him.

But then Jesus said, I am of my father. And if you were of my father, you would know me. But you are of your father, the devil.

Who is he talking to? The religious leaders, the Pharisees. Now he is saying of them, I know those who say they are Jews. They're really not.

Paul the Apostle tells us that not all who have the law are justified. For circumcision is not an outward ritual. It's really something of the heart.

It's something that takes place within a person's heart. It's not an outward ritual that a person goes through. It's an inward work within the heart.

And there were many who were trusting in the law. We have the law. And they were trusting in the outward observance of the law, where in reality, what really mattered was in the person's heart.

And Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount brought out this truth in chapter 5. He said, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you're not going to enter the kingdom of heaven. For you have heard that it hath been said by those in old times that thou shalt not kill. But I say unto you, that if you hate your brother, you're guilty.

You've heard that it hath been said thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, if you look at a woman and lust after her in your heart, you've actually violated the law. For the law is spiritual.

And the outward observance doesn't do it. It's what's in a person's heart that really counts. And God is concerned of what's in your heart, not what you do on the outward.

Not the rituals that you may observe outwardly. What's going on in your heart? Is the love of God reigning in your heart? That's what matters. Do you have a genuine love for God or are you bound to a law and to rituals? And so, I know those, the blasphemy of those that say they are Jews, but really they are the synagogue of Satan.

Because they're opposed to Jesus Christ. They're fighting against Jesus Christ, God's Son. Fear none of those things which you will suffer.

Behold, the devil is going to cast some of you into prison that you may be tried. You're going to have tribulation for ten days. Be thou faithful unto death and I will give to you a crown of life.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. And he that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death. Don't fear those, he said, who are able to kill your body and after that have no power.

But fear him who after the body is killed has the power to cast your soul into Gehenna. Yea, I say unto you, fear ye him. Now, they may kill your body.

Don't worry about that. You'll not be hurt of the second death. And so, the words of comfort, the words of hope to these who were to be martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ.

Notice, no call to repentance. They're going to have enough just, you know, being martyred for their faith. Now, I do recommend highly that you read Fox's book of martyrs to get an insight to the church of Smyrna and the price that these people paid to believe in Jesus Christ.

Unto the angel of the church of Pergamos write, this is the development now of the state church under Constantine, these things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges and out of his mouth there went a sharp sword with two edges. The word of God which cuts in judgment. I know thy works and I know where you dwell.

Even where Satan's throne is. Where is Satan's throne? It's in the world. Here's a church that was trying to dwell in the world.

Never work. A church trying to join with the worldly system. A church state system.

The legislating of righteousness. The legislating of religious issues. It can't be done.

It has to come from the heart. It has to be within a person's heart to do it. You can't make laws that will make people righteous or cause people to live righteous lives.

That has to be a work of God's spirit within a person's heart. So here is a church that's trying to dwell in the world. I know where you dwell.

Where Satan's throne is. But you hold fast my name. You've not denied my faith.

Even in those days where in Antipas was my faithful martyr who was slain among you where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you because you have there those who hold to the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel to eat the things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. So the doctrine of Balaam was the introduction of idolatry to the people of God.

And it was at this time in the church history that they began to introduce representations of Jesus and of Mary and of the apostles and the saints and Moses and so forth. They began to introduce the arts and the statues and so forth within the churches and became a part of the church structure. The introduction of idols in the worship of God.

The doctrine of Balaam. Worshipping God in unprescribed ways. Jesus said, God is the spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Someone said, hey I go to the beach and I worship God at the beach. I believe you. I do too.

I go to the mountains and I worship God in the mountains. I do too. You see, God is the spirit.

They that worship him worship him in spirit and in truth. And we don't have to confine ourselves to a building to worship God. Nor should we.

We worship God everywhere. God is the spirit. Now, God has prescribed how we are to worship him.

To try to worship him in an unprescribed way is a spiritual fornication in a sense. You also have those that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans and so we find that in this period of church history there began to be the establishment of the professional ministry, the priesthood, the ruling over the laity. And here again the Lord says, I hate these things and repent or else I will come to thee quickly and will fight against you with the sword that is in my mouth.

He will come against them in judgment with his word. Now, he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches and to him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna. And I will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name written which no man knows except he who receives it.

The white stone was the stone of acceptance. The black stone was the stone of rejection, black ball. I'll give him a white stone, I will receive him, I will accept him and give him a name which no man knows except he who receives it.

Now unto the angel of the church of Thyatira. Now we have the development of the Roman Catholic system and please if you're a Roman Catholic or have a Catholic background don't be angry with me because we're going to lay it on the Protestants when we get to Sardis. At least the Lord has some good things to say about Thyatira and Pergamos he doesn't have anything good to say about Sardis so hang on, you'll get yours.

There's something in the messages of Jesus to the churches to offend everybody so it's here. I think that it is wrong to just bury my head in the sand and say oh that doesn't exist or oh you know that's terrible or oh you know you shouldn't judge. You know if there is something wrong I want the Lord to show us.

If there's something wrong with what we're doing with what I'm doing I want God to show me, I don't want to be blind, I don't want to be bigoted and say no we've got the only way and we're it and you know there's nothing to improve on, I can't believe that. David said search me oh God and know my heart try me and know my thoughts, see if there's a way of wickedness in me and you lead me in your way. That's what I want.

I don't want to be headstrong and so set in my ways or in my traditions that I'm not open to the voice of the Spirit. Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit is saying. I want to hear what the Lord is saying to me.

And if there is something wrong or off in the way I am teaching or the way I'm living or whatever. I want to be open so that God can reveal it to my heart and show me. I don't want to be so dogmatic or narrow that I can't see the flaws that exist in my own life.

That would be terrible. To the church of Thyatira write these things saith the Son of God who has his eyes like unto a flame of fire and his feet like unto fine brass. Whenever you come across brass in the scriptures you're coming across a metal that is a symbol of judgment.

The laver in which the priest would wash was made of brass. Moses made a serpent of brass and lifted it up in the wilderness. It's a metal that is symbolic of God's judgment.

So eyes like a flame of fire. And fire is always looked at in the terms of judgment impurifying, the refining of the fire. I know Thy works and Your charity, love, Your service and Your faith.

And these are the dominant issues of the Roman Catholic Church. Their love and their service and their faith and their patience and their works. And this they have a lot of.

A lot of good works. And there are some marvelous, marvelous people in the Catholic Church. Highly admired.

Mother Teresa, just an unusual person. Marvelous. It's not saying things against those individuals because God has His overcomers.

It's just talking about a system. Notwithstanding, you see, though you have these things, I have a few things against you. First of all, because you allowed the woman Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit, which would be spiritual fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

So again, the introduction of idols in worship. Relics to be worshipped. The idols to be kissed or prayed to.

I gave her space to repent of her fornication and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed and those that commit adultery with her into the great tribulation. So here is now, first of all, the indication that the Catholic Church would exist right up until the coming of Jesus Christ and the rapture of the church.

Because he talks about them being allowed to go into the great tribulation. So this church will exist. You see, nothing was said of Ephesus.

That church existed in the first century. Smyrna existed in the second and third. And the church-state system joined by Constantine became divided and you had your eastern-western and now you have the development of this great system.

And the threat, they will exist to the last days and unless they repent, they will be cast into the great tribulation. What is the rationale there? If they do repent, they can escape the great tribulation. You see, the great tribulation would be judgment for their failure to repent.

Which means that repentance would bring you deliverance or escape from the great tribulation. And I will kill her children with death and all of the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins in the hearts and I will give unto everyone according to your works. Not so Lord, I want according to your mercy and grace, deal with me.

But unto you I say and unto the rest entirety as many as have not this doctrine and in which have not known the depths of Satan as they speak, I will put upon you no other burden. But that which you have already, hold fast till I come. And he that overcomes and keeps my works to the end, to him will I give power over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.

As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken in shivers even as I have received of my Father and I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And so these glorious promises of Jesus to the overcomers in this system.

Reigning with him upon the earth, ruling over the earth, receiving the morning star, even Jesus himself. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis, Protestant Reformation, write, These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God. And so the fullness of the Spirit is it dwelt in Jesus.

Isaiah 11th chapter. And the seven stars. I know thy works, that you have a name that you are alive, but really you are dead.

Dead Protestantism. And I'll tell you, if you don't believe it's dead, go to Europe. You go into a post-Christian era when you get to Europe.

It is dark. The church is dead. Protestant Reformation in Europe is dead.

You say you're alive, but really you're dead. Now be watchful and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die, for I have not found your works complete before God. The problem with the Protestant Reformation is that it wasn't complete.

In the Protestant Reformation, they drew with it many of the pagan practices that originated in Babylonian religion systems. They came out, but not far enough. Their works weren't complete.

And so we find within the church today a lot of relics from the Babylonian system, the Babylonian religion. We just went through one, the celebration of Christmas. On December 25th.

Tremendous pagan celebration originating in Babylon. Adopted by Rome, called Saturnalia. Time of drunkenness and feasting and the giving of gifts and celebration as the sun passed through the winter solstice.

Adapted by the church, picked up by the Protestants. We're soon going to be entering into the Lent season, borrowed from the Babylonian system. So, it wasn't a complete reformation.

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard. Hold fast. Repent.

If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief and you'll not know what hour I'm coming upon thee. So now he's warning concerning his coming for the church. Paul said, you are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.

You are children of the light, therefore walk as children of the light. Now there are many today who are not watching for the return of Jesus Christ. There are many who, in the church, mock the idea of the Lord returning and interrupting history.

Did I say something wrong? Now it's a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments. And they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. So, within the Protestant Reformation, those great persons didn't defile their garments, walking with him in purity.

They are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment. And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before my Father, before his holy angels.

He that denies me before men, Jesus said, I will deny before my Father, but if you confess me before men, I will also confess you before my Father, which is in heaven. I'm looking forward to the Lord confessing my name before his Father. That's my only hope, man.

If that doesn't happen, I've had it. I will confess his name before the Father. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Now, we have the church of Philadelphia. The faithful remnant, those who are holding to the Word of God. Those who gather on Sunday evening to study the Word of God.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens. Now, he is borrowing a description not out of chapter 1 in this. The rest of the description is out of chapter 1. He's going back to Isaiah chapter 22 for this description.

And in the 22nd chapter of Isaiah, in verse 22, we read this prophecy concerning the Messiah. Well, go back to 21. I will clothe him with thy robe, I will strengthen him with thy girdle, I will commit thy government into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.

And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open. So, Jesus is here laying claim to that prophecy of the Messiah in Isaiah 22, 22. I have the key of David.

I open and no man can shut. I shut and no man can open. And I know thy works.

And behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. And that to me is exciting. The Lord sets before us an open door of opportunity.

No man can shut it. I believe that that open door will be open to us until the Lord comes. No man can shut it.

For thou hast a little strength. I don't see a super church or super saints. There's a doctrine known as the manifested sons of God that advocates the super sainthood.

One of these days, we're going to go into the phone booth and change our clothes, and we're going to come out with super power, and we're going to just point at the Russians, and they're going to shrivel and die. And all of the enemies of God, we're going to just subdue. When we are manifested finally as the sons of God before the world, balderdash.

You have a little strength. We're not very strong. You know, it is true that God is doing a wonderful work here, and it's exciting to see what God is doing, but hey, we've hardly touched the county.

You know, there's so many out there who need Jesus Christ that we can't really sit back and say, whoa, well, look how many we've got coming here. Hey, there's so many more to be reached. We have a little strength.

Thank God we have a little strength. Thank God that He's set before us the open door. Behold, I will make of them the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not.

They lie. Behold, I will make them to come and to worship before thy feet and to know that I have loved thee. There will be that day that will come when the Jews will recognize that Jesus is the Messiah.

That's the work that God is going to do in bringing the knowledge to these people. I do not feel called of God as an evangelist to the Jewish people or to the Jewish nation. I believe that that is something that God is going to do.

He may call others, and that isn't to say that God doesn't call people, as He did to the Jews, but He hasn't called me. And I don't feel that, you know, I have this great obligation to share the Gospel of the Jews. I believe that God has blinded their eyes until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

And so, the day will come when they will acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah, and I pray for that day, I long for that day, I hope for that day. But in the meantime, I share the truth of God with those who accept, with those who believe. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, and here it is, because you've kept His word, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation which is coming upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth.

So, the promise of being kept from the great tribulation, because we've kept the word of His patience. Behold, I come quickly. Hold fast that which you have.

Don't let any man take your crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and He shall go no more out. And I will write upon Him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God.

And I will write upon Him my new name, Jehovah Tzig K'nu. The Lord is our righteousness, and He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the church. No call to repentance, commendation for keeping the word, the promise that He would also keep them.

Now, the final apostate condition of the church, the church of Laodicea, represented by those ministers that sued President Reagan for announcing the year of the Bible. Those ministers that are pro-abortion and pro-pornography and pro-every other evil that comes down the pike, who dress in clerical robes and claim to be ministers of Jesus Christ, but are really of the synagogue of Satan. To the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the A man, the faithful and the true witness.

Chapter 1. He is the faithful and the true witness. The beginning of the creation of God, or who was in the beginning of God's creation. In the beginning was the Word, that the Word was with God.

All things were made by Him. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot, so then because you are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

The nauseating state of the church. Because you say I am rich, endowed with great foundations and funds. We're rich.

We're increased with good. We need of nothing. You know not that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

Interesting how the church observes itself and how Jesus observes the church. Counsel. I counsel thee.

Buy from me gold that's tried in the fire, that you may be rich. White raiment that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness does not appear. Anoint your eyes with the eye salve that you might see, that is of the Holy Spirit.

As many as I love. And here He is loving the church in this sad condition. As many as I love.

I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and repent. Oh how patient the Lord is.

He still loves the church in this apostate condition. As many as I love I rebuke. If the Lord has rebuked you, then be thankful.

He loves you. If the Lord chastens you, be thankful. You're His child.

He loves you. Behold I stand at the door and knock. Actually the church has put Christ on the outside.

You read the Gallup polls and all and it's rather frightening to find out how many ministers do not really believe in the deity of Jesus Christ. Do not believe in the virgin birth. Do not believe that there is an actual heaven or hell.

I mean the percentages are down, you know, around 50, 60 percent that don't believe in these things. Sad. You wonder why they're ministers.

You know, of a book of fables, you might as well establish a new religion on Mother Goose Rhymes or something. Or Aesop's Fables. You know, why espouse a book that you can't trust or isn't true? I stand at the door and knock.

If any man will hear my voice and open the door, I'll come in and sup with him. Eating supper is a very significant act from a biblical standpoint, from a cultural standpoint at the time of Christ. It signified becoming one with the other person and Jesus is always wanting to eat supper with people.

What does it mean? It means He wants to become one with you. Just open the door, I'll come in and I'll become one with you. I'll eat supper with you.

Now, the Jew wouldn't eat with a Gentile. He didn't want to become one with a Gentile. You remember when Peter came to the house of Cornelius, he said, now look, you know, I'm really not supposed to be here.

You know, we Jews, we're not supposed to go into the house of a Gentile, but the Lord told me to come and so that's why I'm here. I mean, and he was apologizing. But he went into the house of Cornelius.

God was breaking down some of these barriers. Jesus doesn't care. He said, hey, just open the door, I'll come in and eat with you.

You can become one with me. I'll be glad to share with you, become one with you. Just open the door.

To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and have sat down with my Father in His throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches. And so, we come to the end of the second section of the book of Revelation, the things which are, and next week as we get into chapters 4 and 5, we will enter into the third section, the things which will be after these things of the church.

We'll take you to heaven next Sunday night. O God, give us ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. May we tonight, O God, listen to what you would say to us.

Search us, O Lord, know our hearts. Try us, O God, know our thoughts. If there is a way of unrighteousness, if there is a way of deceitfulness, God, help us that we would not deceive ourselves or be blind to the truth.

Lord, if there is something wrong in what we are doing, how we are doing it, let your Spirit, O God, reveal to our hearts, God, we don't want to go on living in a lie or a fallacy. We long to know your truth. Thy word is truth.

Teach us thy word, that we might walk in its precepts and live in its light. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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