

EP48 Revelation 3:14-22 P3

The Church at Laodicea

Overall Theme: Let Me In

Revelation 3:14-22

To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, now says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are now neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So, because you are now lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am about to now vomit you out of My mouth. 'Because you now say, "I am now rich, and have become wealthy, and now have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are now wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I now advise you to buy from Me gold having been refining by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may choose to clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may now see.

'Those whom I now love, I now reprove and now discipline; therefore, you are commanded to now be zealous and repent. 'Behold, I stand at the door and now knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will choose to come into him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 'He who is now overcoming, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 'He who is now having an ear, is commanded to hear what the Spirit now says to the churches.'

In our last podcast Jesus presented those at Laodicea with His solution, which in good business-like terms, amounts to a bargained for exchange. As a matter of lifestyle, they must buy **from Him** the gold being refined in the fire, the white garments, and the eye salve of the Spirit of God. There is no other source of these items. As good as that might sound, this is a very troubling solution, for it starts with the fire, and as we know fire burns and is very painful. But this is the only pathway to destroying our personal delusion and complacency, and it is how He leads us to take **Step 2** in our salvation journey and choose to become like that little child dependent upon Him for all things all the time.

With that let's pick back up with a beautiful promise.

Those Whom I Love

Revelation 3:19

Those whom I **now** love {as a friend}, I **now** reprove and **now** discipline; therefore, you are commanded to **now** be zealous and repent.

Friends & Not Lovers

What I find interesting is that Jesus did not use the word “*agape*” when He said, “*those whom I now love,*” but the word “*phileo,*” which communicates the type of love that friends share. This is consistent with His tone throughout the letter. Jesus is that friend who will honestly tell us the truth. At the same time, this is a bit sad. Their relationship is more that of friends than it is of lovers.

Clearly, Jesus is not speaking to bondservants (Chosen ones), which are known as the beloved (“*agapetos*” in Greek), but to those who are merely friends in His household (the “Called” of God). And, of course, we know what His friends are capable of—what happened to Him and how He was wounded in the house of His friends.¹

It is also important to note that this church is not dealing with enemies from without, nor enemies from within. There is no indication of persecution at the hands of the Jews or the trade-guilds, nor are there false teachers which are leading them into idolatry. **The enemies which the Lord is dealing with are the enemies within their own soul, their pride, arrogance, self-sufficiency, and complacency, all of which derive from their wrong belief and unbelief.** They simply have not known their neediness for His life to be lived in-and-through theirs.

In comparison to the other letters, however, Jesus is communicating to them so gently and tenderly, like a good friend. He is not mad, He is not being harsh (well, except for the vomit comment, which hopefully gets the attention of every friend in His household); rather, He tells them that He must bring this reproof or correction and, literally (in the Greek), train them up like a child and educate and correct them. It is a very welcoming and disarming approach.

Basically, He says that they need to first learn **WHY** they can look to Him to be their exclusive supplier for their needs such that they can then choose Him to be their exclusive supplier. And His intent is to educate them and bring them up to speed on how spiritual business is to be conducted.

Clearly God has a different sentiment towards the “believer” who just does not know the truth and has not yet been trained in the truth than He does those:

- who love the law and their own attempts at keeping the law, or doing what is right (Ephesus)
- who manipulate others with religion to get what they want (Pergamum)
- who are looking to the idols of their hearts to be their provision (Thyatira)
- who use their spirituality to dominate others in His name (Sardis).

JESUS IS THEIR FRIEND, BUT HE NOW WANTS TO BECOME THEIR LOVER.

Be Zealous & Repent

He commands them to choose to **now** be zealous, or hot² (much like the healing waters of Hierapolis), and to have their life defined by repentance—by an agreement that He must be their exclusive supplier

¹ ***Zechariah 13:6***

² “zealous” is rendered in the *present active imperative*

for all that they need in this life.³ We have discussed repentance now many times. Once again, Jesus is not looking for them to feel bad and say they are sorry. He is looking for them to agree with His reproof and let Him correct them, or literally, train them up like a child, so they can come to know Him as both a friend and as a lover.

But with this reference to being zealous, or hot, and its overtones to the healing waters of Hierapolis, He is hinting at His purpose for standing at the door and knocking. He desires their deep inner healing.

Healing from Within

Revelation 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door and **now** knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will **choose** to come into him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

Fiction Alert

FICTION ALERT

Far too often this verse has been used as an evangelistic tool with the aim of converting unbelievers. *“Jesus stands at the door of your heart and if you open the door, He will come into to you, and you will be saved and be assured of going to heaven.”*

The problem however is that Jesus is not speaking to unbelievers, He is speaking to His friends, those in His household who need to be tutored and trained up in the way they should go. What He says is intended to be a testimony to the churches (those who are in His household and not to those in the world).⁴ Hence, the closing statement: *“He who is now having an ear, he is commanded to hear what the Spirit now says to the churches.”* Therefore, to apply this verse in the context of a “come to Jesus” call of salvation to the unbeliever is wrong and misses the whole beautiful but terrifying message.

The Beautiful

Let us start with the beauty of fellowship and intimacy. This idea of dining together highlights His desire to not just be friends, but to take the next step in friendship and be intimate friends—lovers even. This is the type of relationship we all long for, but which many do not believe they can find with God, or with anyone for that matter.

In Eastern tradition, bringing someone into your home and dining with them was considered a beautiful act of friendship and an opportunity to build intimacy. It was a time when everyone stopped and rested, and just enjoyed one another. It was a very respected time, honored by all. Jesus’ goal is a peaceful

³ “repent” is rendered in the *aorist active imperative*

⁴ **Revelation 22:16**

and restful relationship, and that is a **beautiful** thing.

The Terrifying

This image of a parental figure standing outside of the door and knocking can be terrifying to a prideful, arrogant, self-sufficient, and complacent child that has yet to be trained in relationship, and who has yet learned to trust the authority in his or her life. But more on that in a moment.

Yahweh has taken His position at the door, and He has always been there.⁵ **Yahweh Shammah** is there,⁶ and has never taken His eyes or His attention off them or us. He has been waiting for the right time to knock. But He **now** knocks.⁷ Now is the time.

Like a loving and wise parent, He is always there watching over His children, but He also knows when it is the right time to come to them for their training, for their discipline. Perhaps, the Laodiceans were too young in their faith and not ready. Perhaps **Yahweh Raah**⁸ had to carefully lead them to this place to prepare them for His knock. Either way, **now is the time**.

Illustration



Let us consider the imagery. Imagine that your soul is a long hallway with many, many doors, most of which are shut tight. We start off life with our doors wide open allowing access and trusting those who are given the duty and the responsibility to care for us. But as we experience pain and trauma (wounds) from our family, friends, loved ones, and from the world at large, we start to shut those doors determined to protect ourselves to ensure that we will never be hurt that way

again by those who should have protected, cared for, and loved us.

And with our doors shut, we attempt to keep people out and at a safe distance, exchanging the opportunity to experience deep intimacy for our own version of protection. We simply do not want anyone to cause us such deep pain. We also never want to ever look in those doors ever again, it is far too traumatizing. So, they remain shut and locked-down tight.

Shutting the door, however, does not actually help; in fact, just the opposite, it makes things worse. It locks in the pain, the agony, the shame, the guilt, and the fear. In that little room, these emotions fester and create a horrible infection inside our soul. As a result, what flows from our lives is not genuine friendship, humility, gentleness, patience, and tolerance in love; rather, our lives become marked by all manner of self-serving fruits of the *flesh* as we become the guardian and protector of our soul. Hence, the expressions of pride, arrogance, self-sufficiency, and complacency.

Worst of all, the longer it festers, the more we become afraid to ever open that door. So, depending upon the trauma, we may even add some reinforcing features. Hence, we bolt the door, nail up wooden

⁵ "stand" is rendered in the *perfect active indicative*

⁶ **Yahweh** who is there. See **Ezekiel 48:35; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19**

⁷ "knock" is rendered in the *present active indicative*

⁸ **Yahweh** our Shepherd

braces, weld metal bars to block the access, and we can become entirely shut down in that area of our life. But we still try to pretend that we are ok and doing well; in fact, some of us love to hang a Jesus poster or a scripture reference on the outside of the door so others will know that we are ok with ourselves and ok with God.

However, instead of having intimacy and shared meals with others (including **Yahweh**), we feast alone and comfort ourselves with our version of gold, clothing, and eye salve, whatever that may be.

As time goes on, we incur more injury, especially the kind of wounds that seem so unjust that we cannot begin to understand why they happen. Therefore, we shut more doors, further restricting access to our soul; after all, now we have so many more reasons to no longer trust people or God for that matter. Instead, we double down, so-to-speak, and trust even more in our own wisdom, our own abilities, our own leadership, and our own view of what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

This is one of the reasons, for instance, why so many marriages are unsatisfying, stagnant, and cold, and face many relational difficulties. Each person is so locked down that they do not know how, or are just unwilling, to let their spouse into those deep places in their soul. As a result, they sacrifice shared intimacy for protection. Each spouse knows that true vulnerability might once again expose them to serious harm. Oh sure, they may test the waters and crack a door or two, but as soon as the other spouse does not handle things “right,” the door is once again slammed shut, thereby restricting true intimacy.

But Jesus loves us too much to leave us in that condition. Therefore, He hangs out in the corridor of our soul watching and waiting, and when the time is right to deal with the troubles in a specific room, He goes to that door, and He knocks.

The knock may seem scary and make us feel that we are in trouble, **but His goal is relationship**. He wants us to live in such a way that we hear His voice and open the door to Him, so He can come in and clean up the mess and make the room habitable for intimate fellowship and for a loving friendship that is rooted in His *agape* love. But for most who have been locked down and are self-protecting, to hear a knock at our door is terrifying. We do not want anyone in there!

He Speaks but Are We Listening?

Clearly, this passage assumes that He speaks to us and that we can hear His voice, or at least discern His knock, which can come in many forms: a dream, a vision, a word from God, a passage from the **Codex**, a word from someone in our lives, a song, something in creation, and so on. He is very creative in how He knocks and gets our attention. Still, many of us really struggle with this issue. We often feel that He does not talk to us, at least not in the way we want Him to talk to us, which is another reason we keep our doors shut tight.

The real issue however comes down to our **willingness** to listen. “...if anyone hears My voice” is rendered in the *aorist* tense. Therefore, this is not addressing our now, a moment in time, nor our future, but our overall ability in life to hear Him speak or to hear Him knock.

Why Do We Not Hear?

In general, we do not hear because we are not positioned to hear. When out of fear and the attempt to protect ourselves, we have so many doors in our soul shut and barricaded from within, it is practically impossible to hear His voice. And that is why Jesus, (except for the vomiting comment which was terrifying and disgusting), has talked so gently and tenderly to the Laodiceans. He knows they are hiding in their

self-sufficiency because, truth be told, they have been hurt and they are deeply afraid.

Therefore, He assures them that He has been there, and as a good friend who is faithful and true, He now knocks.⁹ All they need to do is open the door and He will do the rest. Opening the door is simply an expression of **willingness** to engage in a deeper relationship.

There is a beautiful passage in **Romans** that says, “*faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*”¹⁰ The odd thing is that both times “hearing” is rendered as a noun and not a verb. The idea is that the word of Christ can position us to be those who are hearing as our identity, as our existence, as something which defines our personhood. The word of Christ can reach down deep into those places of fear and transform them into faith.

The word of Christ, the **Codex**, is filled with story after story which is all intended to help us know **WHY** we can trust Him, **WHY** we can bet our lives on who He says He is, or said another way, **WHY** we can open the doors in our soul to the one who is faithful and true. After all, His word is living and active, therefore, it will work its way into the tightest spots in our soul and bring instruction (or truth) to the thoughts and intentions of our inner man.¹¹

It Is All About Relationship

Jesus wants to experience deep intimacy with us in each room in our soul. He desires us to be **willing** to open each door and let Him into every nook and cranny in order that He might be free to go-in-and-out as He pleases and experience fellowship with the entirety of our being. In every room that is now controlled by fear, He wants us to now have faith.¹²

The pathway, however, to this level of intimacy is through the fire; it is how we get the opportunity to make the **exchange** of what is *flesh* for the *divine*.

He Knocks

“*Behold, I stand at the door and now knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will choose to come into him and will dine with him, and he with Me.*” And so, He **now** knocks. It does not say that He keeps knocking over-and-over again until we open the door out of sheer annoyance (it is not rendered as a *participle*). No! He knocks to get our attention. He brings events in our life that will awaken us like an unexpected knock on the door.

The knock is intended to provoke us to want to hear what He has been saying, or to at least begin to understand that we have not heard a word He has been saying. But since He did not render this as a *participle* (knocking), it implies that if we do not open, if we do not want to hear, He is not going to stand their banging, and He is not going to break down the door. He loves us too much to not respect our wishes. Remember, He never violates our personal sovereignty—it is always still our choice. Like a good businessman, He made an offer, but it is up to us to accept His offer.

If, however, we take a risk and open a door when He knocks, Jesus will come in and begin to make that room habitable for fellowship. He will clean out the pain, the agony, the shame, the guilt, the fear, and all

⁹ Rendered in the *present active indicative*

¹⁰ **Romans 10:17**

¹¹ See **Hebrews 4:12**

¹² Note: fear is the antonym to faith.

our distorted emotions that have been locked inside that room. This is the extremely difficult part that most people simply do not want to do, for He requires us to look at what He did (what was done to us through various agencies that He directed, whether people, spirits, angels, institutions, and so on) and to look at what we did, and to honestly discuss it.

If we choose to open the door, over time He will show us **why** He allowed us to be hurt in the first place—**why** each-and-every wound was **necessary** and part of His beautiful plan for our lives. This understanding is all secured in His name: **Yahweh Qanna** (the Jealous one), **Yahweh Raah** (our Shepherd), **Yahweh Mekoddishkem** (the one who sets us apart), **Yahweh Adonai** (the absolute sovereign despot who causes all things), and **Yahweh Yasha** (the one who frees us or saves us from ourselves).

He then will secure us in His *agape* love. Over time, we will even become convinced that each wound was not only purposeful and necessary, **but was also the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God for our lives**.¹³ Don't get me wrong, this does not mean that we will ever like the trauma, but we will understand why it was all an expression of His great love for us, as He did all things in His jealous pursuit to possess us.

I know it is scary and so hard to open those doors and risk being hurt all over again, especially since most of us have worked so hard to pretend that those doors do not even exist. Moreover, if **Yahweh** was responsible for all our wounds, what guarantees do we have that we will not be hurt again in the future, especially if we risk being vulnerable and open some doors? That is a powerful question. This is the reason the Spirit has been communicating to us the truth about His name **Yahweh**—telling us **WHO** He is and **WHY** we can, and need to, trust Him. He is the faithful and true Witness of God.

He wants us to know that we do not have to live controlled by our fear, entrapped by our pain, or controlled by all the dysfunctional ways in which we have tried to play God to protect ourselves. He wants us to know that even in the most horrific tragedies which He caused in our lives, we were always being loved and jealously pursued by God.

Everything that has happened in our lives has been prescribed by **Yahweh Adonai**—the Sovereign Lord, as **ALL THINGS** are from Him (He is the originating source—the **Alpha**), by Him (He directs it all), and to Him (or for His glorious purposes).¹⁴ Therefore, it has all been necessary, and nothing has been random, arbitrary, or capricious.¹⁵ It has been the means through which we have come to God to find new life.

And if we are feeling a little chapped in the hide, or downright furious, over the events of our life, **Jeremiah** tells us that **Yahweh** is sorry for the wounds that He had to give us.¹⁶ Yes, He had to give us—they were all necessary if we were ever going to come to share His *divine nature*. Our *flesh* (the sin nature) is so strong and powerful that if He did not do radical surgery on our lives, we would be forever enslaved in its deathly grip.

The desire of His heart however has never been to hurt us, but to bring true permanent healing. With every door that by faith is opened, Jesus will enter that room and if we let Him, He will bring true healing in to the deepest of wounds.¹⁷ By His loving hand, He wants us to be whole and complete in Him, so that

¹³ **Romans 12:2**

¹⁴ **Romans 11:36; Hebrews 2:10; 1 Corinthians 8:6**

¹⁵ **Ephesians 1:11; Romans 8:29-30**

¹⁶ **Jeremiah 42:10**

¹⁷ See **Deuteronomy 32:39; Job 5:18; Psalm 147:3; Jeremiah 30:12-17; 31:15-20; Isaiah 30:26; Hosea 6:1-3**

we can “dine” together or, said another way, enjoy our time in the depth of intimacy and the richness of fellowship. He simply wants there to be nothing in the way of our fellowship with Him.

HE KNOCKS, WE OPEN, AND HE CHOOSES TO COME IN AND DOES THE WORK OF HEALING. THIS IS THE PATHWAY BY WHICH HE COMES TO LIVE HIS LIFE IN OURS—BY WHICH WE COME TO ABIDE IN HIM AND HE IN US. THIS PICTURE IS JUST ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING THAT WE NEED TO BUY FROM HIM GOLD REFINED BY FIRE, SO THAT WE MAY BECOME RICH, WHITE GARMENTS SO THAT WE MAY CLOTHE OURSELVES AND THAT THE SHAME OF OUR NAKEDNESS MAY NOT BE REVEALED, AND EYE SALVE TO ANOINT OUR EYES SO THAT WE MAY SEE.

A Matter of Trust

What we just learned is extremely hard to hear, despite the platitudes regarding His good and loving intentions. Because He is **Yahweh Adonai**, the Sovereign Lord and absolute despot. Thus, by the very definition of His name, He directed all the damage that has been done in our lives. And all the sin (our sin as well as the sin of others) has simply been a tool He uses or the agency by which He accomplishes His grand purposes. Again, nothing in our lives is random or arbitrary; rather, it all happens according to His plan as **ALL THINGS** are from Him, through Him (or by Him), and to Him.¹⁸ Yes, **ALL THINGS!**

For many, when they come to realize this truth, they become furious with God and suddenly it makes sense why it has been so hard to trust Him completely with their heart, mind, soul, and strength. They have tried so hard to trust Him but have just not been able to do it. The reason is that at the core of their being, they believe that He simply cannot be trusted to care for them; hence, the shut doors. By the way, this is rarely a cognitive realization, but it is something that must be fully understood in the depth of our soul as the Spirit of truth enlightens us to our true condition.

Yes, He, **Yahweh**, did it all; He has been responsible for all of it. But please consider why. He had to give us the **choice** to decide whether we really want Him for who He says He is, and not for the cliché’s that have been spoken about Him in our religion. Choice was necessary because the Father wants a true passionate and committed lover for His Son. He is in search of a bride. He does not want an arranged marriage, He does not want an automaton, a mail order bride, or a servant to love. What joy is there in those kinds of arrangements?

The Father wants His Son to experience the unbridled passion of true love from a woman who freely gives herself to Him because she wants to, and chooses to, surrender herself to the Son and only to the Son. And Jesus wants a woman, a bride, who could choose anyone else whom she wanted, but still decided on her own volition (with a healthy dose of encouragement from the Spirit) to dig down deep in her soul and choose to give her heart, mind, soul, and strength to Him. As silly as it may sound, the entire events of our life have been about the Father finding “true love” for His Son.

Unfortunately, this could only happen if we were given the free **choice** to choose everything else and everyone else; hence, the need for sin and rebellion to practically open-up that choice to us. And our free

¹⁸ *Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6, 11:12; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 2:10*

choice then led to the corresponding need for Jesus to provide redemption from that choice, from the sin and rebellion that produces death. You see, once we made the choice to give ourselves to Jesus, the practical need for the sin and rebellion in our lives ran its course and was and is no longer necessary. Thus, it was only right and fitting that He died for our sin, so that once we made the choice to be given to Jesus, we can then choose to live free from the bondage of that rebellion.¹⁹

Strangely (and this might come as a total surprise), His death was not tragic and sad, as so many suppose, but it was purposeful and fitting since He was the one who in the first place set out to find a bride who would choose to love Him as He loves. After all, He was the one who created evil to be used as a tool to find Himself a bride.²⁰ I know, most of you probably did not know that God created evil. But that is what the **Codex** explicitly says (not so much in our translations, but in the original Hebrew). Once again, this should not be a surprise when we realize that **ALL** things are from Him, by Him, and to Him—even evil (or as the Hebrew renders it, “*Ra*”)!²¹

With that said, most of us have not liked the journey, but when we choose to give Him permission to love us and heal us in each room within the long corridor of our soul, we will one-day be satisfied, and we will understand. In fact, do not be surprised to find yourself rejoicing in Him, finally fully convinced that He loves you.

This is imaged for us in **Revelation 15:1-4** where those who are ultimately victorious in Jesus sing a new song and declare, “*great and marvelous are your deeds, oh Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are your ways, King of the nations!*” Yes, one day we will understand the beauty and glory of all that He had to take us through. We will come to accept that it has been the one and only pathway to a firm and stable trust in Him, such that we experience the deep Sabbath rest He speaks about where we finally set aside our work in exchange for His work.²²

Please do not miss the overall message communicated in the imagery of the fire, the white garments, the eye salve, His standing at the door, and the knock. The number one need for a woman is to be secured in love and provision. Accordingly, Jesus sees us as His woman, His bride, who can find all that she needs in Him. He is our security and our provision for all things all the time if we let Him be our security and provision for all things all the time. We just need to open the door when He now knocks, for unless we open the door, we simply will not know the intimacy and fellowship that He is offering.

Revelation 3:21

He who is **now** overcoming, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

¹⁹ See **Romans 8:12; Hebrews 2:10**

²⁰ **Isaiah 45:6-7, 31:1-2; Amos 3:6**

²¹ **Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6, 11:12; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 2:10**

²² **Hebrews 4:1**

Overcoming

Once again, we are confronted with the need to **now** be overcoming.²³ Aptly, this begs the question, **what do we need to overcome?** This speaks to our need to overcome our **fear**, which keeps our doors shut and locked, and our need to overcome our **complacency**, by which we come to think that we need nothing. Our pride, arrogance, and self-sufficiency are just the fruits that come from our having shut our doors and locked them down tight.

Therefore, we need to invite in the fire and ask the Spirit to make us **willing** to choose to identify with His righteousness alone and thereby reject all the ways we stand in our own “goodness” to find favor with man, with God, and more importantly, with ourselves. We need to ask the Spirit to make us **willing** to reject our view of life that has been based upon our being victims and let Him show us the truth that everything that has happened in our life has been intentional and necessary, purposed to lead us to know and experience intimacy with **Yahweh**—to know Him as our lover and not just our friend.

The Throne

Wow! Jesus makes quite a promise, and the implications are staggering. He will grant us to sit with Him on His throne, as He sat down with His Father on His throne. Now this is clearly a metaphor, Jesus is not sitting on His Father’s lap waiting for us to come sit on His lap, like one big dog-pile of spiritual authority. Rather, it speaks of the fact that Jesus’ authority (His throne) has been granted to Him by the Father, who is the source of all authority and who put everything under the power of Christ.²⁴ Accordingly, Jesus’ throne is above every power, rule, and authority (a reference to all the spiritual beings), and God has put all things under authority of Christ for our benefit.²⁵

Do not take this lightly. This promise speaks of the authority that Jesus will grant us—a shared authority with Him in the unseen realms. But take note, it is also a promise, in the here-and-now. However, the key to understanding this grant of authority is that this promise is exclusively granted to those who are **now** overcoming.

In the book of **Colossians**, we get a fantastic snippet pointing to this reality. I will be interposing a bit of commentary as we go through these verses, so the connection is more than clear, and I will ensure that the text conforms to the **Code**.

Colossians 3:1-4

Therefore, if you have been caused to be raised up with Christ {to where He, Jesus, sits on His throne}, you are commanded to **now** seek the things above, where Christ **now** sits, choosing to **now** be sitting at the right hand of God. {Hence, as Jesus is choosing to be sitting on this throne, so are we to be choosing} You are commanded to **now** set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life has been caused to be hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

²³ “overcomes” is rendered in the *present active participle*.

²⁴ **1 Corinthians 15:27-28**

²⁵ **Ephesians 1:21-22**

I want to make note of the fact that the Spirit refers to the believers at Colossae as those who have been **chosen** of God (saints and faithful brethren in Christ), i.e., they are those who are **now** overcoming.²⁶ The idea is clear, those who are Chosen of God have been raised up with Christ to where He now sits on His Father's throne. It is a past occurrence, and that is a statement of fact.²⁷ Hence, their life has already been hidden or concealed with Christ in God (as He, Jesus, **now** sits on His Father's throne).²⁸

As such, it is a present reality for the chosen of God, for those who are **now** overcoming. And they are commanded to live and function according to this truth. Hence, their minds are to **now** be set on the things above—that which occurs in the spiritual realms—and not on the things of this earth (where all things ultimately play out). When our minds are set on the things of this world, it is easy to be overwhelmed and defeated, but when we look at the view from the heavenlies, we remain encouraged and strong despite what is playing out in this world.

Now, it should be clear that our future experience of this rule and authority will be mind-blowing and beyond anything we can even now imagine, for then those who are **now** overcoming (the chosen of God) will be like Him, like Christ.²⁹ They will possess new supernatural bodies that have been transformed into conformity with the body of His glory, for they will bear the image of the heavenly man.³⁰

But this is a power and an authority that we are to also now experience and exercise. Jesus basically said this when He told His disciples: "*Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions* (which is **Code** for varying types of demonic spirits), *and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.*"³¹

I know that this seems a bit too fantastic for most of us. Authority over all the power of the enemy with nothing hurting us, is that a real thing? Yet, this is how the chosen of God, those who are **now** overcoming, are to live remembering that "*our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*"³² And the chosen of God have been granted the explicit authority to defeat these foes.

By the way, the rest of this book (**Revelation**) is all about the things above, and He wants us to see, hear, understand, and believe, so we can also share His throne and exercise His authority over every power, rule, and authority. What a privilege for those who are **now** overcoming—the chosen of God!

Notice that Jesus also had to overcome. Just like us, He had to learn to trust His Father during unbelievable and painful circumstances. He had to rely on His Father when those whom He came to love turned on Him, betrayed Him, denied Him, and terrorized Him. As a man, He had to overcome fear and stand, unmovable, in the face of spiritual and human opposition.

²⁶ **Colossians 3:12, 1:2**

²⁷ "raised" is rendered in the *aorist passive indicative*

²⁸ "hidden" is rendered in the *perfect passive indicative*

²⁹ **1 John 3:2**. See also **Romans 8:19**

³⁰ **1 Corinthians 42-49; Philippians 3:21**. See also **Romans 8:29**

³¹ **Luke 10:19**

³² **Ephesians 6:12**

And since He walked this path, He wants us to follow in His footsteps, so we can also know the depth of relational intimacy that comes from the shared experience of knowing Him in His suffering. Again, **it is all about relationship**. And if we have become *united* (literally planted) with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly in the likeness of His resurrection we shall choose to be.³³

Ears to Hear

Revelation 3:22

'He who is **now** having an ear, is **commanded** to hear what the Spirit **now** says to the churches.'

This letter brings home our need to position ourselves to hear what the Spirit now says to the churches, but it requires us to now and continually have an open ear that is tuned to Him, believing all that He has said and all that He has promised. Without that open ear, we will not understand, we will not hear, His knock will go unnoticed, and our lives will not be changed. We may be able to read the words, study them in Greek, and even teach the words, but we will not hear the words as the Spirit intends.

It is vital that we spend time in the word of God to explore who our God really is (as revealed in His name) and to give Him an opportunity to use His word to penetrate the hardest parts of our soul to build our faith and to help us to now be hearing.

With that said, we must always remember what we learned in the letter to Ephesus and Sardis. Reading our Bibles and working hard to “believe” God, can be just another religious exercise that does nothing to open our ears. We must be **willing** to let the word become to us an issue of faith, which is always a now thing. We must be **willing** to bet our lives on all that Jesus just revealed to us about Himself, and all that He has revealed about the believers who occupy these 7-churches.

The Spirit now speaks to you, and He now speaks to me. It is time to hear, for He knocks. After all, He is on a continual pursuit for the Called of God to become the Chosen of God, and for the Chosen of God to live as Jesus lived abiding in His power and His authority now and forever.

**YAHWEH IS THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS, HE IS OUR FRIEND,
AND IN HIS WORD, WE CAN DEPEND.**

If He says we are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, then we are. If He says we live in a delusion, we do. But He also provides us the solution, we just need to decide that He is our **I AM**, our only source for life and godliness, and then choose to buy from Him the gold, the garments, and the eye salve.

And with that, we finish the letters to the seven churches. But we will pick up in our next podcast with some reflections and another look into the promises He has made to those who are **now** overcoming.

³³ **Romans 6:5**. See also **Philippians 3:10-11**