***Session 8*** ***Jesus’ Message to the Church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22)***

1. the primary message: The call to overome being spiritually lukewarm
	1. Jesus promised the church of Laodicea deep fellowship and honor now and in the age to come.
	He required that they repent of their lukewarmness in their relationship with Him. Their problem was spiritual blindness and pride, and they were too easily contented with their financial blessing.

14“To the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot…16you are lukewarm…17Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—18I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire…19As many as I love, I rebuke… 20Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone…opens the door, I will come…and dine with him…21To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne…’” (Rev. 3:14-21)

*Tonight we are looking at the Church after God’s own heart: the seven churches in the Book of Revelation. Approximately sixty years after the resurrection, Jesus comes and speaks from His heart what He sees in the Church that He affirms and that He wants to see multiplied and what He wants to see repented of and removed from the Church. Then He gives some of the most marvelous spiritual promises for this age in part, then released in fullness in the age to come. He highlights different facets of His own majesty and personality in ministry, and He takes two or three facets of His personality and applies them to the particular challenge or promise that He gives to each one of these churches. We all are mostly familiar with the Church of Laodicea. We have heard it over the years. He highlights three aspects of His personality that say, “If you will engage with Me according to this part of My ministry and personality, it will help you to shake off lukewarmness.” That is the message He is giving here. As you know, all seven churches are in modern-day Turkey today. Those seven churches were quite close to one another geographically.*

*Jesus’ promise to this very wealthy church at Laodicea: He promised them deep fellowship with Him now and tremendous honor and closeness to God in the age to come. However, it required that they repent of lukewarmness in order to enter into that. The problem is, they were spiritually blind and spiritually proud. So when He said, “Lukewarm,” they were saying “We are not lukewarm. We are doing well.” He said, “That is the problem: you do not see the truth about where your heart is.”*

*Now, He was not rebuking them in the sense of “How dare you!” He was saying “No, I am contending for your greatness. I am contending that you would be rich in God, and this is the way forward.”*

*They were so easily contented with the external blessings. You see, Laodicea was a rich city and a rich church, and they looked at the economic increase and thought “Wow! I think it is good.”*

*But the Lord said, as it were, “Well, I have blessed you in this, but do not misinterpret that as My thinking that your hunger and the state of your relationship with Me is good, because it is not, even though I have blessed you.”*

*Many people when they are under the Lord’s blessing economically, and even ministries, it is really easy to assume, “Well, all of this money is coming in, so God’s favor is upon us!”*

*He would say, “Yes, but that is not the same thing as My being in agreement with your spiritual condition.” This is kind of an unsettling statement that Jesus is making because big, beautiful, and glorious facilities and buildings and people are not the same thing as spiritual hunger and a deep connection with His heart. And so this message to this church is really particular to the western world. Not only the western world, but we really are in need of this message.*

*I am going to give a quick overview of this passage for those of you who are not familiar with it, then we will look at the details in just a moment. Revelation 3:14-21: “To the angel (to the messenger) of the church of Laodicea write, ‘These things’—Jesus is speaking—‘says, “I am the Amen. I am the Faithful and True Witness. I am the Beginning of the creation of God.”’”*

*Maybe they were thinking, “Okay.”*

*In verse 15, He continues, “I know your works.” Verses 15, 16, and 17 are tough. He says, “You are not hot nor cold. You are lukewarm. You’re spiritually passive and lukewarm.” Verse 16, “Because you are lukewarm,” verse 17, “here is how you view yourself.” This is speaking to individual believers and the corporate ministry as well to the whole Church. “You say in your heart, ‘We are rich! Look the economic favor is here! We are wealthy.’”*

*It is talking about physically, financially wealthy here. “We do not really have need of anything. We are famous. People appreciate us. We have a good reputation” (I am adding that into the text here.)*

*Jesus said, “You do not think you have need of anything but (verse 17) what you do not know is that you are desperately in need. You are desperately in need!” And that is one of the most challenging things, I believe, for the Lord to take a church that is growing, and money, favor, and circumstances seem to be going well, and not all of them, but many of them do not understand the possibility that before the Lord, speaking about their spiritual relationship with Him, He says “You are wretched.” Now He does not mean the essence of their being is: “you are wretched.” He is talking about the state of their relationship to Him. He said “It is wretched. It is not strong. It is not vibrant. You are not living fascinated with Me. You are not connecting with My heart. Your spiritual life, your relationship is miserable actually. Your spiritual life is poor. It is deficient. It is broken. You are spiritually blind, and you are spiritually naked.”*

*Now again, He is not talking about the core identity of who they are as believers. I have heard some people quote this and say, “I am just wretched!” and I say, “Well, no, actually you are sons of God, you are the Bride of Christ, and who you are in the Spirit is different than the state of your relationship right now in this season.” He is talking about the condition of their relationship to Him.*

*He said in verse 18, “You do not have to settle for where you are at. You can change it.” And so I am giving you some divine counsel, beloved. You know it is intense when Jesus is counseling the Church. It is intense, which might not be the correct word, and it is important. Jesus is saying, “I can tell you the way through this problem. Buy from Me gold.”*

*They said, “We have gold!”*

*He said, “No, no. Not just gold in the market. I am not saying to trade in the market and get a higher price for the gold you have. I am talking about spiritual gold, and here is one caveat: it is gold that has been refined in the fire. There will be some testing and challenging for that gold to be pure.”*

*Maybe they said, “Okay, we think we know what You mean,” but they probably did not.*

*He continued, “But lest you misunderstand what I am saying here: as many as I love,” verse 19, “I rebuke. I am rebuking you because I am contending for your greatness, for you being rich in God, for your full breakthrough. I am with you. I am counseling you because I want to wake you up, because I have plans for you, but you are too easily contented in the way that you are living before Me. You are so easily contented and I have so much more for you.”*

*Verse 20 is the famous verse that we all are familiar with, “Behold, I stand at the door,” the door of your heart as well as the door of that local church. Of course that Church is spread out all over the city. “I am knocking.” That is, I am wanting a new entry into your life. Now we often use this verse for unbelievers—Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart—and that is okay to do that, but He is talking to believers, to the church. He is saying, “I want a wider entrance into your life, but you have to open the door. I have all authority, but I will not force you to open the door of your heart. I will not force you to have a greater interaction with Me. However, if you do open the door to a greater interaction with Me, a greater embracing of My leadership, a greater focus on who I am in My glory and who we are together in relationship, if you will open your heart to that, I will come into you and we will feast together, we will dine.”*

*Now that has an application in this age: you will enjoy the Word. It will fascinate you now and, in the age to come at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and more and more and more. He would say, “As a matter of fact, if you overcome this issue of spiritual passivity, you will reign with Me in the age to come, literally, on a throne.”*

*Now every believer—and I am assuming that there will be two or three billion believers from the past to the present to the great revival that is coming—not every believer will sit on a throne in a governmental position in the millennial kingdom. Some folks read that and think, “Wow!” No, He is saying to the believers that face lukewarmness and they contend against it and open the door of their life in greater ways to Him, He will be watching, and He will dine with them, and He will promise them that they will be on thrones in the age to come in a way that not even close to every believer will be on thrones. I think that there will be many, but I do not believe that it will be the majority. This is for those that take this issue of lukewarmness to heart. Really it is the issue of loving God with all of our heart; that is what lukewarmness is about. It is the neglect to cultivate the heart response to love Him with all of our heart.*

* 1. Laodicea was a center for banking, manufacturing clothing (soft wool), and medicine. A famous school of medicine there developed a treatment to help cure eye diseases. Because the city lacked an adequate water supply, they built an aqueduct to bring them water from neighboring Hierapolis (known for its hot springs) and Colossae (known for its cold springs).

*Laodicea is interesting. I want to point out three different facets of that city verified in history: it was a banking center; it was a center for manufacturing clothing; and it had a medical school that was well known in the area. And the reason I am saying that is because those were very familiar in the city there and so Jesus, particularly in verse 18, gives them an exhortation and appeals to each one of these. He says “You are a banking center, but buy gold from Me.” Do not be content with just the gold that is in your hand. Gold in your hand is good, but if it makes you content without getting gold in your walk with God, then that gold in your hand is actually a hindrance.*

*“I want you to buy spiritual heavenly clothing from Me; I know that you are a center for manufacturing clothing, but I want you to get clothing from Me, not just from the store down the road” because they had finer garments and all kinds of choices. He said, in effect, “Yes, the greater garments are the ones you get from Me, but you will not have them until the age to come.”*

*“And you have a famous medical school, but I want you to put eye salve on your eyes.” You see, at that med school they had developed a medicine that could treat eye diseases in the ancient world. I mean it was not modern like today, but it was cutting-edge for that day. He says, “I have a salve. I have a lotion for your eyes that is actually far more dynamic than the one your city is famous for.”*

*Now the city lacked an adequate water supply, so they built aqueducts and shipped in water from neighboring cities and famously they brought in hot water from one city and cool water from another. Jesus said, “You know that hot water and cool water? Your walk with Me is neither hot or cold!” So He was really appealing to what was happening in that culture in a way that was easily understood by them.*

1. Jesus’ revelation of Himself
	1. This description reveals aspects of Jesus’ majesty, personality and ministry.

14These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God. (Rev. 3:14)

*Well, as I have mentioned in all seven churches Jesus highlights facets of His personality, His ministry, and His majesty. He said here, “These three facets of My personality, if you will engage with Me according to them, it will help you shake off lukewarmness.” And so these three facets of His ministry and personality are very relevant to shaking off lukewarmness and cultivating a lifestyle of walking in the first commandment because that is what the lukewarmness charge is: “I want you to love Me with all of your heart, all of your soul! I want you all in because I am all in. I want you to love Me with all of your heart because I love you with all of My heart. I am into this dynamic relationship where we bring our all into the relationship.” And I like to say that His all is a lot bigger than our all, but we are to bring our all into the relationship and never be content with lukewarmness.*

*First of all He says, “I am the Amen,” and then secondly, “I am the Faithful and True Witness,” and thirdly, “I am the beginning of the creation of God.”*

*Let’s look at each one of these facets of His ministry. Again, these three are not the only ones, but they are particularly important to overcoming lukewarmness, so they ought to be at the top of our list to say, “Okay, we really want to grasp this,” because I think that spiritual lukewarmness is one of the most common descriptions of the Church, not just in the west, but around the world. The Body of Christ is struggling with spiritual lukewarmness and I believe is in the early days of the generation of the greatest revival in history where the Church is going to shake off the lukewarmness and walk in her identity as a cherished Bride. The Spirit and the Bride crying, “Come Lord Jesus!” as the Bride will be prepared for His coming because she will be walking in wholehearted love for Him and for one another.*

* 1. ***The Amen***: *Amen* means *to be true*. Jesus is “the Amen” since all His promises are true (2 Cor. 1:20). *Amen* is also translated as, “Truly, truly, I say to you.” The “God of truth” (Isa. 65:17)
	is literally “the God of Amen.” As “The Amen,” Jesus lives in agreement with His Father.
	He requires that we agree with Him to release the certainty of His blessings and promises.

20For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen… (2 Cor. 1:20)

*Well, first of all He presents Himself and says, “I am the Amen.” Now the “Amen” basically means: “What I say is true,” and we respond by saying “Okay, that is self-evident.” What He is saying is in 2 Corinthians 1:20, “All of My promises are yes; all My promises are amen!” which means they are true. Amen means true, and what He is really saying is, “You need to actively believe in My promises to effectively shake off lukewarmness.”*

*A lot of people try to shake off lukewarmness just by the power of resolve: “I hate being lukewarm! I am going to quit this!” and maybe they will go to more worship services, which is good, but there is more to it than that.*

*He would say, “I want you to actively, actively engage with My promises over your life.” We all have promises—general promises, salvation promises, etc. Many believers easily relegate those promises to “Yeah, I believe in them,” but they do not actually speak them back to God. They do not talk to God about them nor thank Him for them and ask for a greater revelation of them. They just kind of passively agree, “Yeah, yeah, we believe the promises.”*

*And the Lord would say, “Is it in your conversation with Me?”*

*“Well, no, but you know them, I know them, so I do not have to talk about them.”*

*The Lord would say, “No, I want you actively engaging with the things I promise you. I want those promises on your lips and in your conversations with Me. Thanking Me for them. Asking Me for greater insights, searching them out, talking about them with other believers, and it will stir your heart if you see I am the Amen.” These promises are not just technically right; they are a matter of life and death for your spiritual life right now. In a minute we are going to see that He is going to give them promises in verse 18 and verse 21 where He says, “I want you to believe those promises. It matters what you do. Those promises are real. I am watching you! I want you to engage with Me as the Amen, the One whose promises are true.”*

*Now as the “Amen,” Jesus in His humanity had to agree with His Father’s promises. We think, “Well, He is Jesus and the Father is the Father, so that was pretty easy.”*

*He had to intentionally agree with His Father and the Father’s promises. And He said several times, “I am here to do the will of Him who sent Me” and the idea is, “I believe what He told Me, that if I embrace all of the things He told Me and would stand with resistance against temptations, He will be true to His promises.” Now we sort of think that was automatic for Jesus but I believe that He actually and intentionally engaged with those promises.*

*Here is the point: He requires us to engage with those promises because not all of His promises are guarantees. I mean, the idea that we are going to live forever in the New Jerusalem, that is a guarantee for a born-again believer. However, many promises God gives you in this age are invitations to partner with Him; they are not guaranteed. He is saying, “If you respond, I will do this.” Now, there are many biblical promises for the age to come, but if we engage with Him, we get a greater measure of those promises. And so when He says, “I am the Amen,” He does not just mean that His promises are true. He is saying, “I want active engagement from your heart with My promises, and if you do that, that is one more important way to cast off spiritual lukewarmness.”*

* 1. ***The Faithful and True Witness***: What He speaks is reliable and truthful (3:7). Jesus was about to tell them the truth in both positive and negative ways. He revealed great promises in 3:18-21 along with their spiritual condition in 3:15-17. He never exaggerates, flatters, or unjustly criticizes.

*He goes on and says of Himself, “I am the Faithful and True Witness.” Now when He talks about the True Witness, He does not just mean that His promises are true. That was covered under the name, “I am the Amen.” When He says that He is a True Witness, what He is saying is: “I tell the truth about God.” The culture tells lies about God. Even in the Church there are lies about God. “I tell the truth about God. I tell the truth about you. I tell the truth about the Church. I tell the truth about the end times. I tell the truth about the nations. I tell the truth, and if you will engage with what I say about you, positive and negative things, if you will engage with Me about the things I say about you, about your relationship with the Lord, the Church, the nations, the end times, eternity, you will shake off the spirit of lukewarmness. I do not lie about these narratives. They are true narratives.” And He would say, “It will help you shake off the spirit of lukewarmness.”*

*Well, He tells them positive things, great promises in verses 13 to 21, but He also tells them negative things about their spiritual condition in verses 15 to 17. He tells them, “You are miserable. You are poor. You are blind; you are naked.” And the thing about Jesus is that His witness is true. He never flatters or exaggerates. He never looks at someone and says, “You are awesome in the way you are walking with Me!” if they are not. He would say, “I see your heart intent, but you need to change the way that you are responding to Me.” And not only does He not exaggerate or flatter—because as humans that is easy for us to yield to that—He does not have a critical spirit either. He does not speak out of exasperation and frustration. He does not unjustly criticize. Everything that He says is true. He is going to tell them some amazing promises in verses 18 and 21, but He is going to also tell them some painful things in verses 15 to 17 about their spiritual condition. And so He says, as it were, “You need to believe My narrative about God and life and the nations and what is happening. Believe My narrative about your life—where you are; who you are in God and what the condition of your spiritual life is right now—because I am only talking to you to help you. I am talking to you as My dearly beloved.”*

* 1. ***The Beginning of creation***:He is the beginning or the “first” cause of creation. In other words, all the power and reason for creation “begins” with Him (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-18; Rev. 1:11).

*Then He says that He is the beginning of creation. Now this phrase is used by a number of different cult groups and cult religions, and they completely misinterpret it. When it says, “I am the beginning of creation,” He does not mean He was the first one created. He is the uncreated God, like the Father and the Spirit. There was never a time where Jesus did not exist. He is uncreated like the Father. What He is saying here is, “I am the first cause for creation. I am the beginning source of power for creation, and I am the reason for creation. I am at the very beginning of why and how creation came into being. That is who I am.”*

* + 1. Some translate the *“Beginning”* of creation as the *“Originator”* of creation (Berean Study Bible), the *“Ruler “*of creation (NIV), or the *“Source”* of creation (Contemporary Bible).

*Some translations say He is the “Originator” of creation. That is a right idea. Some say He is the “Ruler” of creation. In other words He has the first place of authority. Some translations say the He is the “Chief” of creation. Some say the “Source.” So when the New King James says He is the “Beginning,” it means “I am the Source and the starting place for where creation came out of Me. Not just that I have power over it, I am the reason for creation. That reason is anchored in My heart and My being.”*

*The point of it here is that if He has the power to create, if He is the beginning of all authority and power of creation, then His words here must be listened to. That is the idea. He is really saying, “I have infinite power.” That is what He is really saying. In other words, “So listen to My words carefully right now because I have the ability to bring to pass what I have begun in your life. You may think these promises are too big, too grandiose, but I finish what I start in your life. I can bring it to pass. I can bring to pass My end-time purposes. I can bring to pass My King, Jesus’ throne coming to the earth and filling the earth with glory. I am the Source of power from which creation originated. It came from My source, and it is under My authority.” That is what He is saying there.*

* + 1. Jesus is the uncreated God like the Father. There was never a time He did not exist.
		2. Thus it was the creator of the earth and the One with all authority over it speaking to them.

*That is a very necessary characteristic of Him and of interacting with Him in order to cast off lukewarmness because when I believe He has this kind of authority—now we all believe it technically, but we do not live conscious of it—however, when I am intentional and conscious of His authority as the first in power over all creation and the Source of creation, I think, “Well, that means Your promises are true. That means that You have authority over me!” I mean that is remarkable; this is amazing.*

1. Correction for compromise
	1. In love, Jesus disciplined His people so that they might be rich in God.

15“…you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16so because you are lukewarm… I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked…19As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. (Rev. 3:15-19)

*Next, He said, “You are neither hot nor cold. I wish you were hot or cold, but you are lukewarm, so I am going to vomit you.” Most translations say, “I am going to spit you out of My mouth!” and that is important for us to understand. He is talking about their relationship to Him, “Because here is what you say, ‘Hey, I am rich. We have a lot of money. We are under God’s favor. Look how much He has given us. Look at our facilities. Look at our fame. Look at our honor. Look at how fast we are growing!’” He says, “Do not measure your internal connection and the condition of your spiritual life by those externals.”*

*Over my forty years of ministry I have heard people say, “Do you see that church? It is so big, and there is so much money, and there are so many people! Man, they must be doing something right!”*

*I don’t ever give this answer, but I think, “No! That is not the grid. Big and beautiful externally so it must be okay is not the grid” Sometimes they are right, but I think, “No, no, that is the problem with the Laodicean mindset. They think big, beautiful, famous, glorious, and amazing must be right.” I look at that, and I say “No, I am not the critic of other ministries, but I am not easily sold on what Jesus said in a very opposite way of evaluating spiritual lives and ministries.” Again, I am not called to evaluate others, but I say, “Lord, I want to engage with you. I want to be among a people that go deep with You. I like big and beautiful; however, that is not the real point. It’s cool, I like it, and I will take it every time You offer it, but I am really locked into something else. I am not going to get sidetracked and distracted by the grace of God in this.”*

*He says, verse 17, “You say you have need of nothing.” In essence He is saying “You are so easily content. You say you have money. So your property values went up? So I gave you lots of favor in financial issues? And so now you are content? Are you kidding? Do you think as the Genesis God that is all I have to offer you–circumstances that are nice and easy with favor? I have so much more to give you than that! Why are you saying that is enough? I am the Beautiful God! I want to absolutely ravish your heart with My beauty. You do not know that your spiritual life is wretched. Again, not the core of their being, not the essence of their identity in God. That is not what He is talking about. He is talking about the state of their spiritual life. Their interaction with Him is what He is talking about in this season. He says, “It is wretched. It is poor. It is miserable. It is poor. It is blind! Be zealous! Be intentional! Do not be casual. Cast off that mindset! I am the Beautiful God. Cast off that way of thinking. Come after Me with all of your heart because I am coming after you with all of My heart.”*

* 1. ***As many as I love, I rebuke***:Jesus rebukes and disciplines His people to free them from passivity. Jesus spoke with tender love for them. Jesus jealously calls us to wholehearted love and obedience. He zealously insists on that which deepens our relationship with Him and results in our greatness.

12For whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights. (Prov. 3:12)

*Now we are going to go right to verse 19. The Lord makes it clear that He loves those He corrects. If He loves you, He will correct you. Look at Proverbs 3:12. It says that in the way a father delights in his own son, the Lord says, “I correct you because I delight in you. I correct you because I have a future for you. I correct you because I am contending for your breakthrough and your greatness!”*

5Do you think the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit…in us yearns jealously?” (Jas. 4:5)

*This verse in James 4:5–I have heard people say over the years, “Man, the Lord is hitting me on this issue. He will not let up!”*

 *I respond with, “I know! It is because He loves you”*

*“No! He is hemming me in! He will not let up on this point!”*

*James 4:5 says, “He yearns jealously”–that you would submit that area. He is coming after you. He is after your heart. He is jealous because He sees who you are to Him, and He sees what your potential is in the grace of God, and He is after your heart, so He is coming after you. So when you say He will not let up, you might in the flesh say, “Oh my!” but in your spirit say, “Thank You, Lord! Wow! Let me see what You see about my life and let me understand why You are so jealous and unrelenting.”*

* 1. ***I wish you were cold or hot***: Those who are spiritually cold are in a better position to see their great need. One who feels the emptiness of a cold heart often searches desperately for answers.

*He said, “I wish that you were cold or hot.” That is, “I would rather you were cold instead of lukewarm.”*

*You think, “Really?” But here is what I have discovered over the years: that a person who is spiritually cold is actually in a better position to see their need.*

*When I talk to a person, and they say, “Man, I do not know God at all. We are really far away. It is bad,” they are more likely to get desperate, whereas a person who is lukewarm will say, “I do not know what is the problem. We are good! I love God. God loves me. I do not get what you are talking about.” It is so hard, and it takes more to awaken a spiritually lethargic, lukewarm person because they are just not concerned and have enough of God to think, “Hey, I am in!” but they are compromised enough so nothing is alive or moving on the inside, yet it is so hard to get their attention. But with someone who is cold, the chances of them getting desperate and seeking out desperate answers is actually better.*

*The Lord says, “I would rather you be cold! You would be more open to what I am telling you right now.”*

* 1. ***Lukewarm***: This is opposite of walking in the first commandment to love God with all their heart.
	2. ***I will vomit you out of My mouth***: Jesus’ heart was sick (His stomach hurt) with concern over them and what they were losing in their relationship with Him. He is not “repulsed” by the people who are lukewarm but feels anguish for them because of His love and investment in them. He does not despise His people. He boldly declared His love (3:19) and desire that they rule with Him (3:21). The Greek word *emew* translated *“to vomit”* iscommonly translated as *“to spit out”* (ESV, NIV).

*He said, “I will spit you out of My mouth.” Now one can misunderstand this. “I will vomit you out of My mouth” is the New King James translation. Vomit is a strong word. And the problem with that word is that you could misunderstand it. Jesus is not saying, “I am repulsed by you.” That is not what He is saying. He is saying, “My heart is sick over the way you are responding to Me. It hurts My stomach. It does not taste good to Me because I see so much more of who you are! It hurts My stomach when I look at you.” That is what He is saying, because He is concerned over how much they are neglecting in their relationship with Him.*

*Again, some people might read that and say, “Boy, He just wants to vomit! Man, He must be repulsed with us.”*

*He would say, “No, I have anguish! Anguish because of the investment I have in you and who you are to Me.” He does not despise His people. We find in verse 19, which we already read, He said, “I love the ones I discipline. I am doing it because I love you.” Then, in verse 21, He said, “I want you to rule with Me forever. I have not written you off. I do not despise you. I am not repulsed by you. I am coming after you!” And so do not misunderstand that translation of the word “vomit” there and think that He is against us. He is saying “No, My heart is hurting. I love you, and I want you on thrones with Me. I want to rule together with you.”*

* + 1. God feels the pain of those He disciplines while still considering them His dearly beloved. The Holy Spirit can feel grieved or sick at heart over the lives of believers.

9In all their affliction He was afflicted…in His love…He redeemed them… (Isa. 63:9)

*In Isaiah 63:9, God was speaking through the prophet Isaiah and said, “In all of Israel’s affliction the Lord was afflicted in their affliction.” That is, when they were in pain He was in pain because He loved them so much. And so He is not repulsed. He is not looking at them saying “Just get out of My space here!”*

7I have given the dearly beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies. (Jer. 12:7)

*Look at what Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 12:7: “I have given the dearly beloved of My soul into the hands of her enemies.” We know in context that was the Babylonian captivity in 586 BC. He said, “You are the dearly beloved of My soul! I am giving you over to Babylonian captivity for seventy years to wake you up because you are the dearly beloved of My soul.” I am saying this so you do not misinterpret the word ‘vomit’ here, but you understand anguish of this commitment and how dear we are to the Lord.*

30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. (Eph. 4:30)

* + 1. ***“I am rich and have need of nothing”***: They misinterpreted God’s financial blessing on their church as His approval of their spiritual life and lack of hunger for Him.

*He said, as it were, “You have misinterpreted your financial wealth. You are so easily satisfied. ‘I have need of nothing.’ Really?”*

*So many believers are so easily satisfied. They have the assurance that when they die their passport has been stamped, so they will go to heaven. They have a few Christian friends, and they reach out a little bit and try to be a blessing here and there, but their heart is not deeply engaged, and they are saying, “Well, you know I am okay, I think. I am trying harder. Maybe next year.”*

*The Lord would say, “No, no, no! Do not be easily satisfied! I have so much I want to give you.”*

* 1. ***You do not know you are wretched***: This is a most disturbing thing for Jesus to say to a believer.

*He said, “You do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” Again, this is the condition of their spiritual life. I mean, these are the words of the One who said, “I am the Faithful Witness.” That is, “I am not going to flatter you, but I am not going to unjustly criticize you. I am going to point out blind spots to wake you up because I care about you.”*

* + 1. ***Wretched***: This Greek word means “calloused or hardened,” that is, to be spiritually dull.

*Wretched: they are calloused and hard in their heart. They are not responsive to the Spirit. They do not feel the Lord’s presence. They are spiritually dull. They are spiritually bored.*

* + 1. ***Miserable***: They were spiritually bored and without an appetite for the Word and prayer.

*Miserable: They are spiritually bored. For example, I was talking to some believer the other day, and I said, “You know a believer in compromise is miserable. They have too much of God to enjoy sin and too much sin to enjoy God.”*

*They are the most miserable people on the earth because they know enough in their memory and experience. “I know it is true; I just do not want it right now,” and they are indulging in this, that and the other and saying, “It used to be more satisfying. I remember it being better than this.”*

*I have talked with different people over the years saying, “There is nothing more miserable than a believer in compromise. They are not just spiritually bored; they cannot enjoy God because of too much compromise, but they cannot enjoy their compromise because they have too much God.” Now, the absolutely hardened unbeliever is imbibing in their darkness and enjoying it for a season. However the born-again believer trying to live straddled over the fence in both worlds, their spiritual lives are miserable.*

* + 1. ***Poor***: Being spiritually poor and deficient is not the same as being “poor in spirit” (Mt. 5:3).

*He says, “You are poor.” Meaning, you are deficient. You cannot see the truth. You do not have a sense of My presence. You are deficient in your spiritual life. You are not reaching to move in power. You have given up moving in power, prophesying, witnessing, being used by God. You do not even think about it anymore. You quit reaching for it. There is a deficiency. You are poor in your spiritual life. There is not a dynamic hope. There is not a dynamic vision. You are not reaching like you used to. Your spiritual life is really poor right now. This is the One, the Faithful Witness that is talking to them.*

*Now, this is not the same thing as being “poor in spirit,” which is humility in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, so do not mix those up.*

* + 1. ***Blind***: Being spiritually blind includes not seeing the truth about God or one’s own condition.

*Blind: You do not see the truth about God. You do not see how glorious He is. You do not see the truth about your own condition so you think you are okay when you are spiritually blind. You do not see the truth of your spiritual identity and who you are to Him. You do not see the truth about your potential destiny. If you would just wake up! You cannot see any of it; none of it makes sense to you. Your spiritual identity is obscured; you live in shame and condemnation, without a sense of His presence and with a spirit of rejection and fear. And, you are okay with that! He would say, “No, no! You are My sons and daughters! You are My Bride. You are in My kingdom. You are My ambassadors. You are spiritually blind and you cannot see who you and what I have for you!”*

* + 1. ***Naked***: Being spiritually naked speaks of believers who will lack being rewarded with heavenly garments in the age to come— ones that express how they loved Jesus in this age.

*Naked: And then He goes on to say this very important statement that is easy to miss. He says, “You are spiritually naked.” This is an odd idea to most believers—the idea of being spiritually naked—He uses this idea four or five times in the Book of Revelation and John mentions it also in his epistle as well. It is talking about that we as born-again believers are saved by the free grace of God, and we receive the gift of righteousness as the free gift of God, and so we are in the kingdom for free. Because of what Jesus did, not because of what we did. However after we stand before the Lord and are accepted freely because of what Jesus did, He gives us garments in the age to come based on our dedication in this age. And so He was saying, in effect, “In the age to come you will not have those garments and you will not appreciate it then. Right now you think, ‘Oh, who cares? I will figure it out. I will love God then, and it will all work out!’” He was saying, “You will not be happy. You are living in a way where you will be spiritually naked in those heavenly garments,” which will be described several more times in the Book of Revelation as related to your acts of obedience as a believer. Not earning salvation, but the Lord rewarding people because of their devotion and their commitment to walk with Him even in this life.*

1. exhortation to respond: buy gold and garments and use eye Salve
	1. Jesus gave three exhortations with promises that have temporal and eternal applications.

18I 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…19Therefore be zealous and repent. (Rev. 3:18-19)

*Now He gives them three exhortations. In verse 14, He gave them three facets of His personality and of His ministry. He said, “I am the Amen, I am the Faithful Witness, and I am the Beginning or the Fountain and Source of the creation of God, the Power and the Reason.” Now He is going to give them three exhortations here, and then He is going to give them some promises.*

***Exhortation 1****: Verse 18, “I counsel you.” Remember, when Jesus the Great Shepherd is counseling us through the word of God, this is rich. “Buy from Me gold, but not just gold like you have in your city. Spiritual gold.” Okay. “It is gold refined in the fire.” Why? “I want you rich.” Well, because of the free gift of salvation, every believer will end up in the New Jerusalem, I mean that is pretty rich, no matter what. I mean, we will be in the Eternal City with a resurrected body. That is good. However, He is saying, as it were, “No, you can actually be rich in God above and beyond that. You can do it or not do it, as it is up to you.”*

*You can have treasure in heaven related to your choices. This is not about salvation. You are not earning salvation. I love to make this point that eternal rewards are Jesus expressing in that day and in the age to come how He feels about the way you were devoted to Him in this age. He looks at our weak devotion. You know our devotion seems so weak, and our weak service and our weak love do not seem very great, but He is so extravagant. He gives rewards. I mean we cannot even imagine that we earn them, but He says, “The way you sought to love Me—I am going to express openly how I feel about the way you loved Me.” That is what eternal rewards are about. And they are amazing.*

*So He says, in effect, “I want you rich. I want you rich in this age in your spirit. However, I want you to have treasure in heaven to the full capacity that I have given you ability to have. Do not neglect this. Buy spiritual gold from Me.”*

***Exhortation 2****: “Buy spiritual garments that you may be clothed and so that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed.” Now, the nakedness means a lifestyle where you have lived for yourself, even as a believer. So have that nakedness reversed. He is not talking about earning salvation here. He is talking about something additional to that. About that nakedness, that standing before God having no garments in addition to the free ones given to you because of your devotion. He is saying, “Reverse that situation in your life. Do not be spiritually naked. In this age or in the age to come, there is more to be had.”*

*Of course most believers would look at that and say, “Well, I will just take my chances,” and the Lord says “I gave you My word clearly.” I mean, that is why I love these three chapters Revelation 1, 2 and 3. My goodness, there is so much dynamic reality and truth in these!*

*Then He says,* ***exhortation 3****, “And the next thing I want you to do is to anoint your eyes with eye salve.” He is referring to the medical school in Laodicea where they would put the ointment on their eye to be healed of a physical eye disease. He is saying, in effect, “Engage in the process so you can be remedied from your spiritual disease, your spiritual eye disease.” Well, let’s look at these just ever so briefly.*

* 1. ***I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire***: The gold of a deep relationship with Jesus makes us rich in this age by tenderizing our heart to feel more love from Him and for Him.

*When He says, “I counsel you to buy from Me gold,” this troubles some people because they think Jesus is somewhat mistaken about salvation by faith.*

*It’s like, “Oh no! He is telling us to earn it! Jesus, get back into right doctrine! We cannot earn it. Remember it is free. Remember what You said earlier?” That is not what is happening.*

* + 1. Jesus exhorts us to “buy gold” or to engage in the God-ordained process of acquiring a deep relationship with God. In “buying” gold, we do not “earn” it, but we invest ourselves in a costly way to position ourselves to receive “gold.” Isaiah called the people “to buy food”
		by listening or being attentive to the Spirit, then responding to what we hear (55:1-3).

1“Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money…buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money 2…Listen carefully to Me…and let your soul delight in abundance. 3Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live…
(Isa. 55:1-3)

*He is telling them to acquire gold, or here is the statement I am comfortable with: Engage in the God-ordained process that acquires a deep relationship with Him. When He says, “Buy,” He is not saying, “Earn.” He is saying “Engage in the God-ordained process.” It is costly. It is going to cost you to engage in it, but if you engage in that process, it will end up that you will have spiritual gold in this age and in the age to come.*

*That spiritual gold in this age has several facets: Our hearts are tenderized. We feel love from God. We feel love back to God, and many other things. Beloved, when we engage in the process of acquiring spiritual gold, that means to position ourselves so our hearts are tenderized and we grow in the receiving of God’s love and the giving it back to Him. What a glorious way to live! And, of course, then there are eternal implications to that spiritual gold as well.*

*Isaiah talks about this and develops it, and I think undoubtedly Jesus is referencing this as well. Look at Isaiah 55:1. He said, “Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters,” meaning, respond. You have to respond at the heart level. You cannot just thirst and complain of thirsting. You have to come. You have to interact with the Lord is what he is saying. You need to respond. Then he addresses a seeming paradox: “If you have no money, cool. Buy it any way; you need it!” Isaiah, that is a little confusing! If we have no money, how can we buy it? He was saying, in effect, “I am not talking about physically giving money. I am talking about you buying it by interacting from the heart. That is what I am talking about.” Okay, that is kind of a new idea.*

*Then he went on and said, “Yes, you heard me right. Buy this spiritual wine and milk; not with money!” and they were probably asking “How do you buy it if it is not with money?”*

*Isaiah might say, “No, I am not talking about earning it! I am not giving money for it. I am talking about engaging in the God-ordained process that is costly, but it will result in you getting this spiritual food, the spiritual water, and the spiritual wine.” Then the Lord makes it really clear in verse 2. He says, as it were, “Let Me give it to you clearly here. Listen carefully to Me. This is what I am talking about: read My Word; talk to Me in the Word!” Oh, that is how you buy it! “Let your soul delight in Me!” Oh, that is how you buy it! It is not going to take money so we are not earning it. “No, you are not earning it. You are engaging with Me.” Then He says in verse 3, “Incline your ear, hear! Take the Word and talk to Me! That is what I mean by buy it!” Engage in the God-ordained process in order to gain this.*

* + 1. Acquiring gold and “becoming rich” refers to what happens in our heart in this age.
		It includes “gold” in context to receiving a heavenly treasure, crown, garments, etc.

12If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones… (1 Cor. 3:12)

7That the genuineness of your faith, being more precious than gold…though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus… (1 Pet. 1:7)

* + 1. Purified gold does not come easy. People mine for gold and then put it in the fire to refine it. Gold refined by fire involves a costly and painful process to remove the dross.

2He is like a refiner’s fire…3He will purify the sons…as gold and silver that they
may offer…an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:2-3)

* 1. ***I counsel you to buy white garments***: Jesus exhorted us “to buy” or acquire garments by righteous living that will result in being rewarded with heavenly garments (Rev. 19:8). Being spiritually naked in the age to come speaks of those believers who will lack being rewarded with heavenly garments. Jesus warns of the shame of a lacking garment because it reveals a lack of love for Him in this age.

8To her it was granted to be arrayed in fine…the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev. 19:8)

*He said, “I am going to counsel you not only to get spiritual gold” by engaging in the God-ordained process, meaning obedience, the Word, prayer, godly fellowship, those normal things. There is nothing special about it, nothing mysterious or secret. It is really simple things. “Sermon on the Mount” living is what He is talking about. He says the same thing, but a little bit differently: “Buy garments from Me.” Now remember, this is a city that manufactures garments. It is a city that is a banking center. That is why He is using gold and garments.*

*He is exhorting them now. Later on in Revelation 19, He explains and gives more detail on how we get these garments. How do we get heavenly garments besides the free robe of righteousness we receive by the blood of Jesus? He makes it clear in Revelation 19, a few chapters down the road there because we are still in chapter 3 here. He is describing the Bride in verse 8. He says “The Bride of Christ on the last day will have all of these garments,” and then the question is, “Where did she get them?” He says, “They are the gift of God given to her in response to her righteous deeds. She made righteous choices under temptation, under persecution, under the mandate of being a servant to give to others.” And, beloved, being a servant, giving when it is not feeling good or easy. And I am talking about being in the will of God. I am not talking about some co-dependent relationship where you are giving and all of that. I am talking about being in the will of God and serving. He says here that these are the righteous acts.”*

*Did you know that most of your righteous acts—I would venture to say ninety-nine-point-nine percent of them—are very small righteous acts. There are not very many big ones in your life; they are choices you make about words you speak, where you put your eyes, what you do with your time and money, how you humble yourself in a situation. Those are the righteous acts, and the Lord says, “If you do those righteous acts, I will not even forget a cup of cold water that you give in My name. I will surely reward you. I will show you how I feel about the way you loved Me.” However the garments on the last day, like I have said many times in this series, believers have the potential of obtaining a huge amount of heavenly clothing. You do not just have the basic white t-shirt gown and that is it for billions of years. It’s not that the Lord will say, “Oh, I forgot about the dress code! Oh, gee whiz! I totally spaced that out.” No, there is much in the word of God about the Lord’s view of clothing and honor and beauty that is related to clothing, and you and many believers will undoubtedly have many, many types of clothing for all kinds of situations.*

*He is telling us here concerning the righteous decisions—these small little decisions because almost all of our righteous choices are small ones that are mostly unnoticed by most people. Their hearts, their words, their time, their money, it is what we do—Jesus says, “I am going to give you garments that reflect those choices you made.” Wow, what a statement!*

15Blessed is he who…keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. (Rev. 16:15)

* 1. ***Anoint your eyes with eye salve***:People in Laodicea put eye salve (medicine) on their eyes to be cured of eye diseases. Laodicea’s famous medical school exported a “powder” used as an eye salve. God’s people must take action in the grace of God to cure their spiritually sick eyes. Only the Spirit can give us revelation of Jesus as we feed on the Word (Eph. 1:17).

*Anoint your eyes. What He was saying is to apply the ointment on your eyes. He was talking about the medical school there where they applied the ointment to remedy the disease. Now, He was not saying to go get oil and put it on your eyes. He was saying, “In the same way you buy the garments and you buy the gold, apply the remedy.” In other words, engage with God. Take the action in the grace of God which positions you to grow in living understanding with the Lord. When He says, “Anoint your eyes,” again, it is not about physically putting that ointment on your eyes. I have seen people do that, and I say “That is not the point.”*

*That is like going down to the market somewhere and buying gold, “He told me to buy gold”*

*No, no, He is not talking about financial investments. He is talking about engaging in the God-ordained process that results in receiving spiritual gold, heavenly garments and engaging in the process that opens the eyes of your understanding. It’s the simple things: the Word, prayer, godly fellowship, serving, obeying the Lord in our thought life, what we do with our time, money, etc.*

1. Promise for overcomers: intimacy and authority
	1. Jesus beckons us to draw near to Him and promises great rewards for those who respond.

20Behold, 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. 21To 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. (Rev. 3:20-21)

*Now He is going to give two of the most remarkable promises. He says in verse 20, as it were, “I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door of their life, the door of their heart, to Me, that gives Me more access because I will not force My hand. I will yearn jealously.”*

*Remember James 4:5 at the beginning of this message where James said, “The Lord yearns jealously”?*

*He would say, “I will press you, but I will not make you. I will stay with it, but I am not going to force you to obey Me on that issue. If you want to do immorality, if you want to have bitterness, if you want to do division and strife, if you want to live in drunkenness, if you want to live in greed or whatever the list of fifty things are, I will let you, but I will resist you to try to win you over. But I will not force you to obey Me. I am knocking at the door.”*

* 1. ***I stand at the door and knock***: Jesus can open all doors (Rev. 3:7-8) except the door of our heart. Jesus will not violate our free will. When we neglect to invest the time and energy to open our heart to Him, we are not loved less by Jesus, but we minimize our ability to enjoy relating to Him, to receive greater understanding of Him, to enjoy godly fellowship, and to receive eternal rewards.

*Now remember last week when we looked at the Church of Philadelphia in Revelation 3, the same chapter, verses 7 and 8, He said, “I have the keys to all of the doors. I can open all of the doors; all of them.” This was just a few verses before this verse, “But I will not open your heart apart from you asking Me to. If you open your heart, I will touch your heart. I will not force Myself into your heart.” Look at what it says in verse 20. “I knock.” He keeps knocking. He keeps knocking. I love it.*

*He keeps knocking, yet if we neglect to respond, we are not loved less by Him. That is why He keeps on knocking to this church. And it is remarkable to me that of the seven churches the Laodicean church has the worst condition spiritually, but they have the greatest promises. How could it be? They are invited to eat with Jesus and sit on thrones. The church in the worst condition gets the greatest promises. I mean, that is remarkable, and Jesus could say, “That is who I am, and remember I am the Beginning of the creation of God. I have the power to pull this off. I am the Source of power for the entire created order. I can make this come to pass. I am the Faithful Witness; this is not a false promise.”*

*Beloved, He keeps knocking to the Laodiceans, and they have been neglecting, neglecting and neglecting. There is probably not a lot of active rebellious resistance. It is more like, “Well, later, later. Well, no, not that. I will give you that but not this.” It is just passivity.*

*And He does not love us less. He keeps knocking, and He keeps offering, “You will sit on thrones; you will rule with Me. In the age to come you and I will rule together; I want to share this with you. I want to eat with you.” Wow!*

*And so what happens if He keeps knocking and we do not answer? It minimizes our ability to enjoy Him. If we do not open the door, it does not mean that we are not saved. Beloved, I want to enjoy Him to the fullness. I want what Isaiah 55:2 said, “Delight your soul in abundance.” I want to be utterly enjoying the beauty of the Man Christ Jesus. If we turn Him away, we receive less understanding. Yes, we have some understanding, but I want more. I want to be fascinated. I want to read the word of God and feel the delight of fascination as I have experienced many times over the years, but I want more. Now, I do not always experience it, but I know the joy of living understanding touching my spirit. I can be alone or I can be in a crowd, and I can close my eyes or open my Bible, talk to God, and feel it. “Oh man, this is awesome! I love this!” I do not mean that I am walking away in some euphoric state. That is not what I mean, although there are those moments where that might happen to somebody spiritually. I mean my heart feels full and the Word is making more sense to me. Even like going through this passage, I stopped today and I said, “Jesus, I love You! I love who You are! This feels so right! This feels so good!” and you know His whisper would be, “Stay with it, and I will give you much more than you have now. Stay with it. I will feed you at My table. Just do not back away. Do not be satisfied for anything less than this.”*

* 1. ***If anyone opens the door***: Jesus invites all individuals who hear. You have not gone too far. There is still hope and opportunity for any believer to recover the sensitivity and tenderness that was lost.

*If anyone opens the door: I love the word “anyone.” I have been focusing on you having to open the door because He will not force it open. I like the “anyone.” Beloved, you have not gone too far. Nobody has. Do not give up and settle for less. I mean how many believers have I talked to over the years who have said, “You know, this just does not work for me. I am ADD.” You know, in the last ten years, that is the main reason everybody gives to why they do not read the word. “I am ADD, so I cannot read the Word.”*

*I say, “Yes, you can. Just read the same sentence a thousand times! Talk to Jesus. Do not buy into that.”*

*I mean, for millions, that is the new thing: “I am ADD, so I cannot do it; I do social media, so I cannot read the Bible.” No, no, no! Do not throw away your inheritance that quickly!*

*Again, read the same verse over and over and over and over and the anointing of the Spirit will touch you. Then say, “Jesus, thank You for showing me this truth. Show me more! Jesus, I want to obey this truth. Help me!” Just talk to Him in simple ways. Read three verses at a time for over two hours, and daydream in between, but come back to the same three verses. I promise you, it will work. This is human-friendly. This is not for every generation except for Generations X, Y, Z or whatever it is. It is not for every generation but the one. This is for everyone. These are human-friendly promises. Everyone can do this. Everyone can do this!*

*And He would say, “You have not gone too far. You are not too broken. You are not too wounded. You are not too wounded.”*

*“I am wounded. I am broken. I am addicted.”*

*He would say, “I know, I know, but you have not gone too far. If you will open that door, the process may be slow, but you will start enjoying Me feasting and feeding the Word to you. Yes, even you can feast on the Word if you will open that door and stay with it.”*

* 1. ***I dine with him, and he with Me***: To eat together speaks of deep fellowship as the Spirit tenderizes our heart. Jesus promises to manifest Himself in a greater way to those who love and obey Him.

21He who…keeps them [God’s commands], it is he who loves Me…I will love him and manifest Myself to him…23If anyone loves Me… We will come to him and make Our home with him.
(Jn. 14:21-23)

*He continues and said, “You will dine with Me.” That is the most remarkable reality. Can you imagine having dinner with the most powerful man or woman in a nation? Having a dinner with the most powerful man or woman in the economic industry in the earth? The most powerful political man or woman? This is Jesus and having a meal with Him. Spiritually we do that now, but in the age to come, while it will still be spiritual, it will be physical too. There are plenty of verses that say that we are going to eat with Him. It is going to be so exciting!*

*I mean, we will be saying for years, “Wait! Sliker, we are going to be eating with Jesus! I told you we would.”*

*He will say, “I told you we would, too, but none of us really got it, did we?”*

*That is what we are going to do. This is Him, the Beautiful Man! We will be like, “Hey, Jesus, would you pass me the bread over here?”*

*“Aw, sure, Mike. Hey, I know you like this kind of bread,” then He will change it to what I like.*

*“How did you know”*

*“Oh, I watched you”*

*“Sliker, give me my bread back! You ask for your own bread!” No, I am just kidding! He and I tease each other a bit. We have a lot of fun. Oh, how beautiful, the marriage supper of the Lamb!*

* + 1. The eternal application of this refers to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 3:20; 19:9; cf. Lk. 22:16, 29, 30; Mt. 26:29; Mk. 14:25).
		2. He longs for His people to feast with Him as He makes them lovesick at His banqueting table (Song 2:4-5).

4He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love. 5Sustain me with cakes of raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am lovesick. (Song 2:4-5)

*“He brought me to the banqueting table. His banner”—His leadership over my life—“is the love of God.” He is leading you to awakened love. That is what that means “His banner over me is love.” His leadership over your life is to awaken love so that you discover His love and He imparts love in you for God and it overflows to people. Everything He does, the banner of His leadership, is to awaken love.*

*And the Bride here, the Shulamite, is being touched by this banqueting, enjoying the Word of God and His presence, and fellowshipping around the Word, and she cries out “Sustain me! Refresh me! Give me more! I am lovesick! I never knew it could be this way! I was so broken, so wounded, so confused, so uneducated, so this, so that, but I am at the banqueting table!”*

*Beloved, it is human-friendly, it works for everyone, and it is like the rich get richer. When we get a little bit of this, and we say “Give me more! Sustain me! Refresh me! I want more!” Then He gives us more. “Oh!” He gives us more. “Oh!!” because the more we get it our capacity increases and the more our capacity increases, the more we want, and then we cry out, “I am lovesick! I just do not want this to ever end!”*

*He says, “It will not! It will never end!” That does not mean that every minute is unbroken ecstasy. I don’t want to exaggerate, but I mean that for billions of years it is going to increase and increase and increase.*

* 1. ***I will grant to sit with Me on My throne***: All believers are offered the opportunity to rule with Jesus in the Millennium (Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 20:4).

*He said, “You will sit with Me on thrones. I do not want to rule without you. I want to rule with My people.” Beloved, this is so amazing! This is our life vision. It is my vision. It is your vision. This is where we are going! Let’s sell out to this! Let’s burn every bridge! Let’s have no escape hatch! Let’s have no regrets as we pursue this. And this is what the Lord is saying: “Let him that has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.”*

10“And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” (Rev. 5:10)

6…they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.
(Rev. 20:6)

* + 1. Jesus promised the apostles that they would eat and drink with Him and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt. 19:28; Lk. 22:29-30).

28“…when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Mt. 19:28)

9I bestow upon you a kingdom…30that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Lk. 22:29-30)

* + 1. Eating and ruling with Jesus are regularly brought together and express intimacy with Him.

*Amen and amen. Let’s stand! In the weeks to come, we are going to stay on these two chapters, and we are going to unpack them and compare different rewards, different affirmations and revelations of Jesus, and different facets of His character. What a fantastic passage of scripture!*