

## 6 – WHAT IS NOW – PART 4 (REVELATION 3:7-22)

### Review:

#### A. The key verse (1:19)

- The key to understanding the book is found in Revelation 1:19

#### B. A basic outline

1. What You Have Seen (Chapter 1)
2. What is Now (Chapters 2-3)
3. What will take place later (Chapters 4-22)

#### I. The Letter to the Church of Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)



#### A. The Recipient (3:7a)

- Christ addressed the pastor of the church in Philadelphia.

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**Historical Note:** Philadelphia

Philadelphia was an ancient Greek city that was established in 187 B.C. It was in the administrative district of Sardis. In A.D. 17, the city suffered badly in an earthquake, and the Roman emperor Tiberius relieved it of having to pay taxes. In response, the city granted honors to Tiberius. The city experienced an additional twenty years of earthquakes. It was located in an area noted for its agricultural products such as vine growing and wine production. Because of the vine production, Philadelphia became the center of the worship of Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility.

**B. The Author (3:7b)****1. Holy and True**

- Christ affirms His deity as Holy and True.

**2. Holds the Key of David**

- Christ proclaims His authority as the Son of David.

**Biblical Note:** The Key of David

The phrase “The key of David” seems to refer to the key of the house of David that was given to Eliakim. It was the highest position in the royal court. The key allowed Eliakim to have access to all the wealth of the king.

See: Isaiah 22:22

**3. He who opens and shuts**

- Christ describes his actions as firm which no one can interfere.

**C. Commendation (3:8)****1. Christ’s Knowledge of the church (3:8a)**

- Christ has an intimate knowledge of the church.

**2. Their opportunity (3:8b)**

- Christ has set before them an opportunity for service.

**3. Their condition (3:8c)**

- Christ notes that they had little power and resources.

**4. Their obedience (3:8d)**

- Christ commends them for their consistent obedience

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## 5. Their endurance (3:8e)

- Christ commends them for not giving in to the pressure to deny Christ.

## D. Rebuke

- Notably is the fact that Christ did not rebuke them.

## E. Exhortation (3:9-11)

### 1. The acknowledgement of their enemies (3:9)

- Their enemies will acknowledge them and Christ's love for them.

Scripture Isaiah 49:22-23

<sup>22</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD:

“Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations,  
And set up My standard for the peoples;  
They shall bring your sons in their arms,  
And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders;

<sup>23</sup> Kings shall be your foster fathers,  
And their queens your nursing mothers;  
They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth,  
And lick up the dust of your feet.  
Then you will know that I am the LORD,  
For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.”

### 2. The promise of the rapture (3:10)

- Christ promises that they will not have to endure the coming tribulation.

**Biblical Note:** The Hour of Trial

The "hour of trial" refers to the future time of great tribulation that believers will be spared from.

**Biblical Note:** Keep You from the Hour of Trial

While believers may face difficulty and suffering at the present time, they will certainly be protected from God's wrath in the Great Tribulation. This is the promise of the rapture of the church.

See: 1 Thessalonians 4:13

### 3. The encouragement to endure (3:11)

- Christ encourages them to persevere to the end.

## F. Promise (3:12-13)

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## 1. A Pillar (3:12a)

- They will have a permanent place in Heaven.

## 2. Names of God and the New Jerusalem (3:12b)

- They will belong to God.

## 3. Christ's New Name (3:12c)

- They will belong to Christ.

## 4. The exhortation (3:13)

- We are called to acknowledge what the Holy Spirit reveals to us.

## II. The Letter to the Church of Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)

### A. The Recipient (3:14a)

- Christ addressed the pastor of the church in Laodicea.

#### **Historical Note:** Laodicea

Laodicea was an ancient Greek city built on the river Lycus. It was located in the Roman province of Phrygia. The wealthy city of Laodicea was located on the road to Colosse about 64 kilometers southeast of Philadelphia. Laodicea, benefiting from its advantageous position on a trade route, became one of the most important and flourishing commercial cities of Asia Minor. Large money transactions and the extensive trade of black wool took place in the city. About 35 years before this letter was written, Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake, but it had the wealth and ability to rebuild. It received from Rome the title of free city. Many of the inhabitants of Laodicea were Jews

See: Colossians 2:1; 4:13,15,16

### B. The Author (3:14b)

#### 1. Amen

- The word "amen" means "so be it."
- Christ affirms His sovereignty over human affairs.

#### **Biblical Note:** The Amen

The title "the Amen" is used for Jesus Christ. The title is an acknowledgement of something true and binding. It refers to the sovereignty of God which is behind human events.

#### 2. The Faithful and True Witness

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- Christ affirms His testimony is trustworthy and fully comprehensive.

### 3. The Beginning of the Creation of God

- Christ existed before God's Creation and is sovereign over it.

**Biblical Note:** The Beginning of the Creation of God  
The title "The Beginning of the Creation of God" refers to the fact that Jesus Christ existed before God's Creation and is sovereign over it.  
See: Colossians 1:16-17

Scripture Colossians 1:16-17

<sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

### C. Commendation

- It is noteworthy that Christ did not commend them for anything.

### D. Rebuke (3:15-17)

#### 1. Christ's Knowledge of the church (3:15a)

- Christ has an intimate knowledge of the church.

#### 2. They were lukewarm (3:15b-16)

- They were abhorrent to Christ because of their complacency in spiritual matters.

**Biblical Note:** Lukewarm

The word "lukewarm" would be known to the Laodiceans. The city of Laodicea did not have a natural source of water. The city always had a problem with their water supply. The city to the northwest of Laodicea was famous for its hot mineral springs. To aid the city with its water problem, an aqueduct was built to bring water from the hot springs to the city. When the water reached the city, it was neither hot nor refreshingly cold. It was lukewarm and filled with minerals making it impure resulting in a terrible taste.

#### 3. Blind to their true condition (3:17)

- They were blind to their true condition because of their wealth.

### E. Exhortation (3:18-19)

#### 1. Seek spiritual riches (3:18a)

- Christ calls them to seek riches in heaven.

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2. Seek righteousness (3:18b)

- Christ calls them to be clothed in righteousness.

3. Seek spiritual sight (3:18c)

- Christ calls them to seek healing for their spiritual blindness.

**Biblical Note:** Eye Salve

Laodicea prided itself on the precious eye salve that the city produced. The eye salve healed many common eye problems. Jesus counsels the Laodicean church to buy from him spiritual eye salve to heal their spiritual blindness.

4. Repent (3:19)

- Christ calls them to acknowledge and turn from their sin.

F. Promise (3:20-22)

1. Fellowship (3:20)

- Christ promises to fellowship with those who come to Him.

2. Share Christ's throne (3:21)

- Those who persevere will share Christ's throne with Him.

3. The exhortation (3:22)

- We are called to acknowledge what the Holy Spirit reveals to us.