

**THE BOOK OF REVELATION**

Chapter 3

**“Jesus Message to Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea”**

The first “**Crusade**” was launched in 1096. And during the 174 years of the Christian Crusades, more than **40 million people** were killed in the name of Christianity.

There have been more **terrible an inexcusable** things done in the name of “**Religion**” and “**Christianity**”, than there is time enough to mention here.

**Jesus often condemned the Pharisees for making their religion and their “Traditions” more important than the Word of God.**

**Mark 7:5-8**

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Jesus, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders?...”

6 Jesus answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you...”

7 ...in vain *you* worship Me, **Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**’

8 For **laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men...Higher than the Word of God...**

- ☞ **Religion** is the creation of man.
- ☞ **The Lord of Heaven hates religion**, because it is based on mans traditions and mans ideas of what he needs to do to be acceptable to God.
- ☞ **The truth is**, the Lord is not interested in your Religious activities, what He really wants is a close and personal relationship with you.
- ☞ **He wants your relationship with Him** to be based on what His Word says **as it is written in the Bible Only**, not on what the church says.
- ☞ **If the “Church”** had been teaching the people the Word of God from the Beginning, the horrible events like the Crusades would never have happened.

**As we continue in chapter 3 of the Book of Revelation, Jesus is going to tell us what He considers important to HIS CHURCH.**

Jesus dictated this letter to John, to be given to 7 specific churches that were in existence in the area of Asia 2,000 years ago.

**But we discovered last Sunday, that these 7 churches, also represented 7 periods of Church history over the last 2,000 years.**

1. **Ephesus:** The First Church, founded on the 12 Apostles. **30 A.D.**
2. **Smyrna:** The Church that 5 million Believers were killed. **100 A.D.**
3. **Pergamos:** The Compromising church **313 A.D.**
4. **Thyatira:** The Catholic Church **600 A.D.**
5. **Sardis:** The Protestant Church **1517 A.D.**
6. **Philadelphia:** The True Church. **1649 A.D.**
7. **Laodicea:** The Lukewarm Church **1900 A.D.**

Everything that Jesus says to each of the seven church, He also applies to us today...

### **Revelation 3:1**

#### **The Message to the Church in Sardis**

1 "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Sardis

**Sardis:** this is referred to "**The Protestant Reformation Period church**". 1517 ad to 1700 ad. They did not complete the reformation. They brought in some pagan practices from Babylon.

If we hold to the idea that each of these 7 churches also represent 7 periods of Church History, and that The church of Thyatira is the "Catholic Church", then the Church at Sardis is the "Protestant Reformation Church"

By the term "**Protestant Reformation**", we mean that period of time when Martin Luther broke from the Catholic Church in order to bring to the people the teaching of the Bible.

- ☞ **Before Martin Luther**, the people did not even have their own copy of the Bible.
  - ☞ **It was considered** the responsibility of the Church to teach the people.
  - ☞ **The problem was** that the Church was not teaching the people the Bible, they were teaching the "*Traditions of the Church*".
  - ☞ **These began** with the church of Pergamos, the Compromising Church.
- 1) **Salvation by works**, A person must themselves, earn their salvation by obedience to church doctrine and rules, not what the bible teaches, by Grace, through faith in Jesus Sacrifice.
  - 2) **Worship of Statues** of Mary, Joseph and the saints.
  - 3) **Salvation by Baptism:** Any person, even children are saved by being water Baptized. The Bible teaches that only a personal faith in what Jesus did on the Cross saves a person. **Baptism does not save anyone**, it is an "*Outward sign of the Salvation that has already happened on the inside*"
  - 4) **Celibacy:** Forbidding the priests to marry. This began with **Thyatira**. It is a doctrines that is not taught in the Bible.
  - 5) **Confessionalism:** A person confessed their sins to a priest, who can declare "*Absolution*" (**Forgiveness**) of those sins. The Bible teaches that only Jesus can forgive sins, each person must come directly to Jesus.
  - 6) **Purgatory:** A holding place for the person who has died but is not ready for heaven. Their Sanctification is completed here, then they are admitted to heaven. The Bible teaches that the moment anyone who has accepted Jesus Sacrifice, dies, they are immediately in the presence of Jesus.
  - 7) **Transubstantiation:** The concept in the church where the mass is the continual sacrifice of Jesus over and over. The Bible teaches that Jesus made One Sacrifice forever. **In Transubstantiation, the bread becomes the literal body of Jesus, and the wine becomes the literal Blood of Jesus, the Bible does not teach this.**

- 8) **Indulgences:** The doctrine of giving money to the church whereby a persons time in Purgatory is reduced. The Bible teaches that eternal life cannot be purchased with Gold or Silver, only the Blood of Jesus Sacrifice on the Cross fully paid for Salvation. It is freely given to any person who asks for it.
- 9) **Penance:** is the punishing of a persons body in order to reduce the time they will spend in Purgatory for their sins. Jesus sacrifice completely removes every sin, no good work by any person can add to Jesus sacrifice, nor make them more acceptable.
- 10) **Mariolotry:** The Worship of the Virgin Mary, her elevation as “The Mother of God”, Making Mary “Co-Redeemer with Jesus”.

**When Martin Luther began his move from the Catholic Church, is called “The Protestant Reformation Period”.**

- ⊕ **The purpose of this “Reformation”,** was to get rid of the doctrines that the Bible doesn’t teach, of praying to Idols and the saints and the worship of Mary.

The problem was that this church did not go far enough, they didn’t complete the removal of idols and the worship of saints.

- ⊕ **Jesus had some wonderful things** to say to the **Thyatira Church**, know to us as the Catholic Church.
- ⊕ **Jesus condemned** them for their introduction of Idol worship, but he Praised them for the Works, Love and Service.
- ⊕ **On the other hand**, this church here in Revelation Chapter 3, **The Church of Sardis**, the Protestant Reformation Church, **JESUS DOES NOT HAVE ANYTHING GOOD TO SAY!**

### **Jesus Description of Himself to Sardis**

#### **Revelation 3**

1 “These things says He who has **the seven Spirits** of God and the seven stars: ‘I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, **but you are dead.**”

- ⊕ **These things** says He who has the **Seven Spirits** of God and the seven stars.

#### **Isaiah 11:2**

**1.** The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, **2.** The Spirit of wisdom and **3.** understanding, **4.** The Spirit of counsel and **5.** might, **6.** The Spirit of knowledge and of **7.** the fear of the LORD.

- ⊕ **Jesus is the only One** that has all 7 of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
- ⊕ **You and I** may have a few of these, but never all.
- ⊕ **The Seven Stars:** are the 7 Messenger, Angels, or Pastors of each of these 7 Churches.

**There are no things that Jesus says to Sardis they are doing well!**

## Jesus Words of Correction For Sardis

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.

**Be watchful and strengthen what remains, things that are ready to die.**

I have not found your works perfect before God. “Perfect” is from the Greek Word meaning “Complete”

- ⊕ **Although this might be the Protestant Reformation**, they did not complete the reformation.
- ⊕ **Martin Luther** broke away from the Catholic Church in 1517.
- ⊕ **The Reformation Church** corrected most of the Doctrinal problems that the Catholic Church had.
- ⊕ **The problem with this church** is that it did not have any Spiritual Joy or wholehearted energy. **THEY WERE DEAD!**
- ⊕ **After the church broke from the Catholic Church**, they did not complete their Reformation by trying to bring Unity back to the Church.
- ⊕ **\*They allowed the states to again control the Church**. The Church of England, The Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in Switzerland.
- ⊕ **There were Calvinists** (All God), Arminians, (All Man) lots of Denominations but no unity.

## **Revelation 3**

3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

- ⊕ **A warning** to the Denominational Church that if they are not watching for the Return of Jesus, it will catch them unaware.
- ⊕ **One of the first signs of falling away** from the Lord, is a loss of excitement of the soon return of Jesus for His Church, waiting, Watching, Anticipating.

4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

- ⊕ **There are some** that are a part of the Denominational Church that do not hold to the weird Doctrines and Dis-unity, these Jesus says “**Shall walk with Him in White**”
- ⊕ **The White Garments** is only given to those who are Cleansed By the Blood of Jesus.

## **Revelation 3:5**

He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

## **Revelation 4:4**

Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

### **Jesus Promise to the Church of Sardis**

5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’

- ⊕ **The White Garments** are Given to the “**Over comer**”, the one who falls and gets up over and over again, but keeps trying, eventually overcomes.
- ⊕ **Not Blot his name out of the Book of Life**” The idea here is that the name has already been in the Book of Life since Birth, but if at the end of their physical life, they have not accepted Jesus, the Name is “Blotted Out”.

### **Exodus 32:32**

Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me **out of Your book** which You have written.”

### **The Message to the Church in Philadelphia**

7 "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Philadelphia.

**Philadelphia:** this is called "The missionary church", the church of **The true believers in Jesus**, it is the only church of the 7 that is still there in Asia today. 1700 ad to present.

### **Jesus Description of Himself to Philadelphia**

“These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”:

- ⊕ **This is the church “Of The Open Door”**
- ⊕ **More people were saved** during this period of time than at any other time in history.
- ⊕ **This is the church that beginning** about 1700, found that every place the church went, they were open to bring the Gospel.
- ⊕ **This door has now closed**, there are many places we cannot go today.

### **Jesus Description of Philadelphia’s Good Works:**

#### **Revelation 3**

8 “I know your works. See, **I have set before you an open door**, and no one can shut it; for **you have a little strength**, have **kept My word**, and have **not denied My name**.

#### **You have a “Little Strength”,**

- ⊕ **The church that Jesus uses** is one that is not rich, large and powerful, they just have “A Little Strength”.
- ⊕ **You might feel like** you don’t have much strength or power or abilities, you are perfect for Jesus. He only used people who don’t have much strength.

#### **Have Kept My Word:**

- ☞ This church is Teaching and Living The Word of God.

### **Psalms 138:2**

...For You have magnified **Your word above all Your name**

- ☞ **What has always been the priority** for the Church since Acts 2, was the church was to be the One that was teaching the people the Word of God, all of it.

The church stopped teaching the Bible within the first 100 years, pastors stopped learning it themselves.

- ☞ **The results**, we see today, when they “**Sanctify**” an openly Homosexual man as a minister in the Episcopal church.
- ☞ **This never would have happened** in the early church because they were teaching all of the Word of God.

### **Not Denied My Name:**

- ☞ **This church has not diminished** Jesus from Who the Bible says that He is.
- ☞ **There is a tremendous problem today** in the church in that they are denying the Historical Jesus of the Bible.

1. They make Jesus just a man. Jesus is not God.
2. Jesus is seen as a created being.
3. The Brother of Lucifer. The Brother of Michael the Angel.
4. Just a great teacher.

### **Revelation 3**

9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed **I will make them come and worship before your feet**, and to know that I have loved you.

**Literally in the Greek language:** “*I will make them come and “**Proskuneo**”, “**Submit**” before your feet*”.

- ☞ **The world** doesn’t think too much of you right now because you follow Jesus.
- ☞ **But there is a day coming** when all the world will sit up and take notice, because those who love and follow Jesus now, will reign with Jesus during his 1,000 year kingdom that Jesus will set up right after the 7 year Tribulation period.

**Right now, most of the world thinks that because you follow Jesus, you are pretty weird.** They call us:

- ☞ **“Jesus Freaks and Fanatics”** because we Love Jesus with all out heart.
- ☞ **“Fundamentalist”**, because we hold to the age old fundamentals of the Bible and haven’t changed with the modern times.

☞ **“Right Wing Extremist”** (Because we believe in the Literal interpretation of the Bible)

### **1 John 3:2**

Beloved, now we are children of God; and **it has not yet been revealed what we shall be**, but we know that **when He is revealed, we shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.

### **Revelation 3:21**

To him who overcomes **I will grant to sit with Me** on My throne,

### **Revelation 5:10**

And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”

**Jesus continues His promises to those who follow Him with all of their heart:**

### **Revelation 3**

10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, **I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world**, to test those who dwell on the earth.

- ☞ **Because you have kept my command...** *“I will keep you from the hour of trial...”*  
Clearly a promise from Jesus to keep this church from the Great Tribulation.
- ☞ **This is A Clear teaching by Jesus** that His Church **will not** go Through the Tribulation, but will be Raptured Before.

### **Matthew 24:21-22**

21 For **then there will be great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And unless those days were shortened, **no flesh would be saved**

### **1 Thessalonians 5:9**

For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**During the last 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation, more than 2/3rds of the people of the world will die by the plagues that Jesus will send on the earth.**

- ☞ **This is called by the Bible:** *“The Wrath of the Lamb”*.
- ☞ **It is not a Tribulation from the world** like we go through now as believers, this is a Tribulation from Jesus Himself.
- ☞ **Jesus has Saved us by the Cross**, because we have believed that He died for us, and so, when Jesus pours out His wrath on the world for rejecting His Cross as the Only way to Heaven, **YOU WON'T BE HERE, BECAUSE YOU BELONG TO HIM...**

**Jesus has no words of Correction for Philadelphia**

**Jesus promises to the Church at Philadelphia:**

11 Behold, **I am coming quickly!** **Hold fast what you have**, that no one may take your crown.

12 He who overcomes, **I will make him a pillar** in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.  
13 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

- ☞ **Jesus is coming Quickly**, the doctrine of the eminent return, taught to every church age, but most applicable to today, because Israel back in the land.
- ☞ **Hold Fast what you have:** *A Little Strength, Teaching the Word, Not Denying Jesus Name, Persevering, not giving up.*
- ☞ **That no one will take your Crown.** Just hang in there and the Crowns are yours!
- ☞ **He who overcomes** I will make a Pillar in the Temple: There were 2 Pillars in the Temple,

### **1 Kings 7:21**

Then he set up the pillars by the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the right and called its name **Jachin**, and he set up the pillar on the left and called its name Boaz.

- ☞ **“Jachin”**: “God Will Establish.
- ☞ **“Boaz”**: God Will Strengthen

Those who overcome, hang in there with Jesus, will Be **“Pillars in His Temple”**. **“Established”** by Jesus and **‘Strengthened’** by Jesus

### **The Church at Laodicea**

**Laodicea**: The name means **“People Ruling”** This is a church totally controlled by men and not controlled by Jesus at all. Laodicea is commonly called **“The lukewarm church”**, they considered themselves rich. **1900 ad to the present time.**

**Notice that all that is left of the Church of Laodicea, is a Sign!**

- ☞ **There are no believers** there anymore.
- ☞ **No building**, Just a sign that says they used to be here.
- ☞ **When the Rapture comes**, that is all that will be left of the people that went to this church that is Luke warm, not really serving Jesus or following Him.
- ☞ **Just a sign** that says their church used to be here, because no one will want to go there anymore once the antichrist comes, they will all leave and go and follow him.

### **2 Thessalonians 2:9-11**

9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with **all power, signs, and lying wonders**,

10 and with all **unrighteous deception** among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And **for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie**

After Jesus removes all those who love Him, from the earth, there will appear a man who will be introduced by a guy called “**The False Prophet**”, who has every indication that this false prophet will be the next elected Pope.

- ☞ **The False Prophet** will introduce the world to the “**Coming World Ruler**”, who we know, will be the “Antichrist”.
- ☞ **When the true believers in Jesus are gone**, and the Church of Laodicea sees the World ruler introduced, they will go and follow him.

*“...because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie (**That the Antichrist is their god**)*

### **Revelation 3:14-22**

14 “And 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:

- ☞ **Jesus is the Faithful witness**, but this church is not a faithful witness of Jesus.

15 “I know your works, that **you are neither cold nor hot**. I could wish you were cold or hot.

**The area where the church at Laodicea existed, was fed by a series of aqueducts raised up off of the ground.**

- ☞ **By the time that the water reached Laodicea**, it had reached a “Lukewarm” temperature.
- ☞ **Any liquid**, Water, Milk, a Soft drink, that is neither Hot or Cold but just kind of Lukewarm or Room temperature, is very hard to drink.
- ☞ **Some beverages like milk**, if they are neither Hot or Cold, actually can make you a little Nauseous.

### **Uncommitted Friendships**

- ☞ **There is nothing worse** than trying to have a friendship with someone who is “**Wishy washy**” about the friendship.
- ☞ **You don’t know** if they are really a friend or not because they never reveal their true feelings.

**The people of this church are neither Cold nor Hot.**

**Cold:** Those that are not believers in Jesus at all.

**Hot:** Those who are sincerely believing and Following Jesus.

**Lukewarm:** Those who profess to be true believers but really are not.

### **Revelation 3**

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Jesus is saying to this church: “Your love is neither Hot and on fire nor Cold and non-existent, **it is uncommitted, and Nauseating.**”

17 **Because 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—

**This is the state of the church as it exists today.**

- ⊖ **There are thousands** of Mega churches with Coffee shops, Beauty salons, bowling alleys, shopping malls in them, but they are neither hot nor cold towards Jesus.
- ⊖ **They have huge choirs**, huge budgets, but they do not focus on the teaching of the Word of God, nor do they exalt the name of Jesus.
- ⊖ **They are centered** around their leader and the wonderful programs that are provided.
- ⊖ **They are places of entertainment** but not learning and growing in the Grace and Knowledge of the Lord.

**Contrast this to what Jesus said to the TRUE church of Philadelphia in chapter 3:**

### **Revelation 3:8**

“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; **for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name**

### **Revelation 3 The Church at Laodicea**

18 I counsel you to buy from Me **gold** refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and **white garments**, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and **anoint your eyes with eye salve**, that you may see.

**Gold**: The element representing God. Jesus is saying Take from me the Salvation I provided, not the fake programs and worthless prosperity, health and wealth doctrines of this church.

**White Garments**: The garments that are worn only by those redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb Jesus Himself.

**Eye Salve**: Laodicea is the center of the world's supply of Eye salve. People sent for this wonderful healing eye salve from all over the world. Jesus says that in the town where they sell ointment to heal the eyes, You who are supposed to be my church, cannot even see how wretched and blind you really are.

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

20 **Behold, I stand at the door and knock.** If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

**The amazing thing about this church is that their savior is on the outside of the church asking for permission to come back in.**

- ⊖ **Jesus** still loves them.

📖 **He is trying** to rebuke and correct them

21 **To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne**, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ”

If you will truly surrender your life to Jesus as the Lord of your life, and you will accept His offer to forgive all of your sins by His death on the Cross, then God will accept you and give you eternal Life.

**Equally as great, those who continue with Jesus till He comes for us at the Rapture, which we will cover next Sunday, Jesus will make you a “Co-Ruler” with Him during the 1,000 years that he reigns over the earth...Pretty Cool!**