

Day 241, Revelation 3

by David Servant

Jesus addresses seven churches in Asia, warning them of their spiritual condition and promising salvation to those who overcome.

Scripture: Revelation 3:1-20

Topics: "Spiritual Repentance", "Heavenly Rewards"

Description

David Servant delves into the significance of Jesus addressing seven specific churches in Asia, emphasizing the spiritual dangers faced by these churches and the need for repentance and overcoming. He highlights the importance of deeds in reflecting the true condition of our hearts, stressing that God judges us based on our deeds. While most churches were in spiritual trouble, the church in Philadelphia stood out as the only one without fault, yet still urged to 'hold fast' to avoid losing their crown. Jesus' message to the lukewarm Laodiceans underscores the danger of spiritual blindness and the need for repentance and using wealth for heavenly treasures.

Transcript

Why did Jesus address just seven specific churches in Asia, among hundreds that could have been addressed at that time in the ancient world? Some speculate that these seven churches represent seven consecutive ages in church history, and that we are now in the "Laodicean" or "lukewarm" age of the church. That is, of course, pure speculation, and the truth is that there have always been lukewarm churches since John's day (obviously) and there have always been on-fire churches as well. I think it is obvious, however, that at least six of the seven churches addressed by Jesus in these two chapters were in significant spiritual danger and needed warned.

Except for a small remnant, the majority of professing Christians in Sardis were certainly in deep spiritual trouble. Jesus described most of them as being dead, having incomplete deeds, being unready for His return, unworthy, in need of repentance, and wearing, not white, but soiled garments. They were in danger of having their names erased from the book of life and finding themselves denied by Jesus before His Father and His angels (3:1-5). But there was still hope---if they would repent. Overcomers, and only overcomers, have assurance of salvation (3:5).

Incidentally, isn't it amazing that anyone would cling to the theory of once-saved-always-saved in light of verses like 3:5? If Jesus promises not to erase the names of overcomers from the book of life, then the possibility of having one's name erased from that book exists for non-overcomers. That means people

whose names are currently in the book of life are not guaranteed that their names will be found there when they stand before Christ. They must overcome. We are told at the end of Revelation that those whose names are not found in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire (20:15).

Take note that within chapters 2 and 3, Jesus uses the word deeds 17 times. To five of the seven churches He says, "I know your deeds" (2:2, 19; 3:1, 8, 15). God knows our deeds as well, and we ought not justify bad deeds with the excuse, "God knows my heart." Our deeds reveal what is in our hearts, and God promises to give to each one of us according to our deeds, not according to what is in our hearts.

Of the seven churches, the only one that Jesus did not find fault with was the church in Philadelphia (3:7-13). Still He admonished them to "hold fast" to what they had lest they forfeit their crown (3:11).

Did Jesus' promise come to pass quickly to make the antagonistic Jews from "the synagogue of Satan" (3:9) come and bow down at the feet of the Philadelphian believers? I suspect that was a promise that would be fulfilled in the afterlife. Can you imagine being released from hell for just a short time in order to bow before the feet of those whom you once persecuted?

The lukewarm Laodiceans were entirely blind to their spiritual condition. Jesus' view of them was the exact opposite of their view of themselves. They considered themselves rich---and they likely were materially rich---but He considered them "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (3:17). He thus advised them to repent and spend their wealth to buy gold from Him that had been refined by fire. I can only think that He was referring to laying up treasure in heaven rather than on earth. He also advised them to use their wealth in such a way that it would result in their being holy and spiritually perceptive. Wealth can be wonderful when it is used for what brings glory to God, but it can become a terrible snare otherwise. Let all buyers beware!

The very well-known painting of Jesus knocking at the door illustrates Revelation 3:20 beautifully. The artist did not paint a door handle on Christ's side of the door. It can only be opened by the person inside. I suppose that if the artist had been a Calvinist, he would have painted Jesus breaking down the door with a sledgehammer, illustrating His "irresistible grace!" (Couldn't resist!)

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-servant/day-241-revelation-3/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net