

Week 43

The Spirit Speaking to the Churches, the One Who Has the Key of David, and the One Who Will Dine with the Overcomers

Hymns: E1275

Scripture Reading: Rev. 3:7-22

- Rev. 3:7 And to the messenger of the church in Philadelphia write: These things says the Holy One, the true One, the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no one opens:
- Rev. 3:8 I know your works; behold, I have put before you an opened door which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept My word and have not denied My name.
- Rev. 3:9 Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, those who call themselves Jews and are not, but lie-behold, I will cause them to come and fall prostrate before your feet and to know that I have loved you.
- Rev. 3:10 Because you have kept the word of My endurance, I also will keep you out of the hour of trial, which is about to come on the whole inhabited earth, to try them who dwell on the earth.
- Rev. 3:11 I come quickly; hold fast what you have that no one take your crown.
- Rev. 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev. 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- Rev. 3:14 And to the messenger of the church in Laodicea write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God:
- Rev. 3:15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.
- Rev. 3:16 So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth.
- Rev. 3:17 Because you say, I am wealthy and have become rich and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,
- Rev. 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.
- Rev. 3:19 As many as I love I rebuke and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent.
- Rev. 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will

come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.

Rev. 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

Rev. 3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

§ Day 1

I. In Revelation 2 and 3 Christ is the Spirit who speaks to all the churches:

- A. In Revelation 2 and 3 the speaking of the unlimited, life-releasing, sevenfold intensified, pneumatic Christ to the seven churches at the beginning of each epistle respectively (2:1, 8,12,18; 3:1, 7,14) becomes the speaking of the sevenfold intensified, all-inclusive life-giving Spirit to all the seven churches at the end of each epistle universally (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
- B. Thus, the speaking Christ becomes the speaking Spirit, the Spirit who speaks to all the churches; Christ speaks to a particular local church, and the Spirit speaks to the universal Body.
- C. This not only indicates that the Spirit is the Lord and that the Lord is the Spirit, but it also emphasizes that in the darkness of the church's degradation the Spirit is vitally important, as indicated by the sevenfold intensified Spirit in 1:4.
- D. The seven epistles in Revelation 2 and 3 are words spoken by the Lord Jesus, but today when we read them, the seven Spirits of God speak these words to us in our spirit for the purpose of God's economy; the Lord's word at the beginning of each epistle is to a certain local church, but when the people from all the ages read it, it becomes the Spirit's speaking to all the churches.

§ Day 2

- E. The speaking of the Spirit always turns us to the infusing of Christ; the

Spirit's speaking is Christ's infusing—cf. 2 Cor. 3:16-18:

1. Whenever we listen to the speaking of the seven Spirits of God to the churches, we are immediately under a precious, sweet, and dear transfusing, an infusing that changes us, transforms us, makes us the proper material, and builds us into God's building.
2. Whatever must go to the lake of fire is burned away by the seven lamps (Rev. 4:5), and now we are under the seven eyes (5:6), being infused with all that Christ is in order that we may become a part of the New Jerusalem.

F. Even though the believers in the churches are in a position to hear the Spirit's speaking and thus can easily have ears to hear, not all of them will closely follow His speaking; hence, there is the call for the overcomers.

G. Those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches should hear, and those who hear will be overcomers:

1. The Lord always wants to open our ears to hear His voice so that we may see things according to His economy—Job 33:14-16; Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6.
2. The heavy ears need to be circumcised—Jer. 6:10; Acts 7:51.
3. The sinners' ears need to be cleansed with the redeeming blood and anointed with the Spirit—Lev. 14:14, 17, 28.
4. To serve the Lord as priests, we must have our ears cleansed with the redeeming blood—Exo. 29:20; Lev. 8:23-24.
5. As the Spirit is speaking to the churches, we all need an opened, circumcised, cleansed, and anointed ear to hear the Spirit's speaking.

§ Day 3

H. The Spirit's speaking is regarding the seven kinds of churches in church history: the initial church (Ephesus), the suffering church (Smyrna), the worldly church (Pergamos), the apostate church (Thyatira), the reformed

church (Sardis), the recovered church (Philadelphia), and the degraded recovered church (Laodicea):

1. The last four kinds of churches will all remain until the Lord comes back.
2. Undoubtedly, only the recovered church can fulfill God's eternal purpose, and only she is what the Lord is after; we must take the Lord's choice.
3. Laodicea is a distorted Philadelphia, having lukewarmness and spiritual pride—Rev. 3:14-17:
 - a. Laodicea means to know everything but in reality to be fervent about nothing; in name it has everything, but it cannot sacrifice its life for anything; it remembers its former glory but forgets its present condition before God.
 - b. If we want to continue in the way of Philadelphia, we must remember to humble ourselves before God—cf. vv. 7-22; Isa. 57:15; 66:1-2.

§ Day 4

II. In the recovered church (Philadelphia), Christ is seen as the One upon whose shoulder the key of (the treasury of) the house of God (typified by the house of David for the building up of the kingdom of God) is set—22:22; Rev. 3:7:

- A. To the recovered church, Christ is the One who has the key of David, the key of the kingdom, with authority to open and to shut; the Lord has given the recovered church in the one accord an opened door that no one can shut—v. 8; cf. Ps. 133.
- B. The key of David opens the door for us to be transformed into a white stone and built into the house of God as a pillar with the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the new name of the Lord—Rev. 2:17; 3:12:
 1. For us to be built into God, become a constituent of the New Jerusalem, and

become a part of the new Christ is humanly impossible, but the law of the Spirit of life within us contains an element that deals with impossibility—Rom. 8:2; Rev. 3:7-13; cf. Gen. 28:12-19; John 1:51.

2. Christ has the key to control the door of God's treasury, in which are the riches of God in Christ for our enjoyment; we have experienced both His opening and His shutting up of these riches to us—Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:17; 1 John 1:7, 9:
 - a. In order to enjoy His riches as the treasure, we need to remain in the touch with the Lord, staying in contact with the Lord according to the sense of life, to be poor in spirit and pure in heart—2 Cor. 2:10; Rom. 8:6; 10:12-13; Col. 3:16; Matt. 5:3, 8.
 - b. In order to enjoy His riches as the treasure, we need to learn to exercise the keys of denying the self, taking up the cross, and losing the soul-life; all of us are "Shebnas," who should be removed and replaced by Christ for Him to be everything in us and to us and do everything through us and for us—Isa. 22:15-19; Matt. 16:24-25.

§ Day 5

III. In the degraded recovered church, Christ is seen as the One who will dine with the overcomers and give the overcomers to sit with Him on His throne, as He overcame and sat with His Father on His throne—Rev. 3:20-21:

- A. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me"—v. 20:
 1. The door is not the door of the hearts of individuals but the door of the church; the Lord as the Head of the church is standing outside the degraded church, knocking at her door.

2. The door is the door of the church, but the door is opened by individual believers; the church in Laodicea has knowledge but does not have the Lord's presence.
3. In the eyes of the Lord the degraded recovered church is (1) wretched because she is proud of being rich in the vain knowledge of doctrine but in reality is sorely poor in the experience of the riches of Christ; (2) miserable because she is naked, blind, and full of shame and darkness; (3) poor because she is poor in the experience of Christ and in the spiritual reality of God's economy; (4) blind because she lacks true spiritual insight in the genuine spiritual things; and (5) naked because she does not live by Christ or live Christ as her subjective righteousness, as the second garment in her daily walk—vv. 15-17; cf. Psa. 45:1, 9-14.
4. The Lord is dealing with the whole church, but the acceptance of the Lord's dealing must be a personal and subjective matter.
5. To dine with the Lord is not merely to eat one item of food but to partake of the riches of a meal, a feast; this may imply the fulfillment of the type of the children of Israel eating the rich produce of the good land of Canaan—Josh. 5:10-12.
6. Through our enjoyment of Christ as the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the feast, we will be mingled with Him in our constitution as one entity in order to express Him as the New Jerusalem—Rev. 2:7, 17; 3:20.

§ Day 6

B. "He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne"—v. 21:

1. To sit with the Lord on His throne will be a prize to the overcomer, that he may participate in the Lord's authority and be a co-king with Him in ruling over the whole earth in the coming millennial kingdom—Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 25:21, 23.
2. God's intention is to work Himself into man and to work on man in order that

man can be on the throne; His desire is to make us people of the throne—Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 22:5; cf. Isa. 14:12-14.

3. Through His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the Lord Jesus was brought to the throne; a real man whose name is Jesus is on the throne (Ezek. 1:26); now today the Lord of heaven and earth, the Lord of the universe, is a man; this is why we declare, "Jesus is Lord," and this is why we call, "O Lord Jesus."
4. The Lord Jesus led the way to the throne; He was the Pioneer, the Forerunner (Heb. 6:20; 2:6-9), cutting the path to the throne; He has cut the path and taken the lead so that we may follow (vv. 10-12).
5. Now we are marching to the throne, for God intends to bring us into glory and to set us on the throne; God desires to manifest Himself through man, and He desires to reign, to administrate, through man; God's intention is to cast Satan down and to redeem many of those taken captive by Satan and bring them to His throne.
6. We have been called to be sons of God, and we are destined to be kings, but we need God to work in us and on us to qualify us for kingship—Rom. 5:17, 21; cf. Ezek. 1:22, 26; Matt. 8:9.

WEEK 43 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 2:1 ...These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.

7 ...To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

In Revelation 2 and 3 Christ is the Spirit who speaks to all the churches... At the beginning of each of the seven epistles recorded in chapters 2 and 3, it is the Lord who speaks to a certain church (2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14). But at the end of each epistle, it is the Spirit who speaks to all the churches (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). In Revelation 2 and 3 the speaking of the unlimited, life-releasing, sevenfold intensified, pneumatic Christ to the seven churches at the beginning of each epistle becomes the speaking of the sevenfold intensified, all-inclusive life-giving Spirit to all the seven churches at the end of each epistle universally. Here we see that the speaking Christ becomes the speaking Spirit, the Spirit who speaks to all the churches. This implies that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one. Christ as the Spirit speaking to the churches is the processed Triune God. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 4220)

Today's Reading

Christ's speaking and the Spirit's speaking are one speaking. Christ speaks to a particular local church, and the Spirit speaks to the universal Body. This proves that the speaking Christ is the Spirit and that He speaks in the Spirit, with the Spirit, and through the Spirit. Whatever Christ speaks, that is the speaking of the Spirit. This not only indicates that the Spirit is the Lord and the Lord is the Spirit, but it also emphasizes that in the darkness of the church's degradation the Spirit is vitally important, as indicated by the sevenfold intensified Spirit (Rev. 1:4).

It is significant that the Lord is speaking as the Spirit not only to a certain church but to all the churches. The Spirit, as the eyes of the Lord, looks into the situation of all the churches (5:6), and He speaks concerning the whole situation. The Lord as the Spirit speaks to the churches without any limitation of time and space. While the church in a certain locality reads the epistle to Ephesus, the Spirit looks into the church in that locality and speaks to the ones there. The seven Spirits of God are sent forth not only to Ephesus but to the whole earth. The seven epistles in Revelation 2 and 3 are words spoken by the Lord Jesus, but today when we read them, the seven Spirits of God speak these words to us in our spirit for the purpose of God's administration. The Lord's word at the beginning is to a certain local church, but later when the people from all the ages read it, it becomes the Spirit's speaking to all the churches. Whatever the Lord speaks is recorded in the Bible, but when we read it, the Spirit still must speak it. First, this matter proves that the Lord's speaking is the Spirit's speaking and that the Spirit's speaking is the Lord's speaking. This indicates that the Spirit is one with the Lord, and the Lord is one with the Spirit. The Lord speaks in the Spirit, through the Spirit, and with the Spirit, because the Lord is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Lord. Furthermore, although the Lord's word was already spoken to a certain local church, today when the churches want to hear His word, there is still the need for the Spirit to speak it. This indicates that the Spirit we have within us is the speaking Spirit.

If the Speaker were only Christ and not the speaking Spirit, He would not be able to speak words into our spirit, and His speaking would not be very subjective and touching. But as our experience testifies, if when we read these epistles, we are open in our spirit to Him, the Spirit will immediately speak something of Christ into us. Because the Speaker is not the outward, objective Christ but the inward, subjective Spirit, He speaks not only in the black and white letters of the Bible but also in our spirit. Once we hear His speaking, something indelible is wrought into us, and nothing can take it away. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4221-4222)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 414

WEEK 43 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands.

The speaking of the Spirit always turns us to the infusing of Christ...If we listen to His speaking, we will immediately be under Christ's transfusing and infusing, and we will be immersed into Christ. Today the seven Spirits are speaking to the churches, and anyone who has an ear and listens to this speaking will be turned to Christ's infusing. Whenever we listen to the speaking of the seven Spirits of God to the churches, we are immediately under a precious, sweet, and dear transfusing, an infusing that changes us, transforms us, makes us the proper material, and builds us into God's building. Whatever must go to the lake of fire is burned away by the seven lamps, and now we are under the seven eyes, being infused with all that Christ is in order that we may become part of the New Jerusalem. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 4222)

Today's Reading

Because the Spirit today is speaking to the churches, we need to be in the churches in order to be rightly positioned to hear the Spirit's speaking...Even though the believers in the churches are in a position to hear the Spirit's speaking and thus can easily have ears to hear, not all of them will closely follow His speaking. Hence, there is the call for the overcomers...Overcomers are produced by having an ear that can hear, and the ear to hear is produced through the Spirit's speaking to the churches...Those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches should hear, and those who hear will be overcomers.

Each epistle was written to a particular church in a certain locality, yet all the seven epistles conclude in the same way—with the Spirit speaking to all the churches. This means that each epistle was written to all the churches, and it indicates that all the churches should be the same...All the churches should listen to the word that the apostles have received of God, which is the teaching of the New Testament.

In Revelation 1 we see many titles for the wonderful One—Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, the Ruler of the kings of the earth, the Redeemer, the One who made us a kingdom and priests to His God and Father, the One who comes, and the Son of Man appearing as the High Priest. Yet in chapter 2 we see Christ, the all-inclusive Head, and the speaking Spirit. This means that all that Christ is in chapter 1 has been condensed into the all-inclusive Christ and the speaking Spirit in chapter 2. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4222-4223)

In spiritual things, seeing depends on hearing. The writer of Revelation first heard the voice (1:10) and then saw the vision (v. 12). If our ears are dull and cannot hear, then we cannot see (Isa. 6:9-10). The Jews would not hear the word of the Lord, so they could not see what the Lord was doing according to the new testament (Matt. 13:15; Acts 28:27). The Lord always wants to open our ears to hear His voice (Job 33:14-16; Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6) that we may see things according to His economy. The dull ears need to be circumcised (Jer. 6:10; Acts 7:51). The sinners' ears need to be cleansed with the redeeming blood and anointed with the Spirit (Lev. 14:14, 17, 28). To serve the Lord as priests, we must have our ears cleansed with the redeeming blood (Exo. 29:20; Lev. 8:23-24). According to Revelation, as the Spirit is speaking to the churches, we all need an opened, circumcised, cleansed, and anointed ear to hear the Spirit's speaking.

We need to both see and hear. Among our physical senses, which is more important—seeing or hearing?...Hearing is deeper than seeing. Thus, we must tell the Lord, "Lord, I need to both see and hear. Have mercy on me, Lord, and grant me eyes to see and ears to hear." We may have to struggle with the Lord, telling Him that we must be able to both see and hear. (Life-study of Revelation, pp. 116-117)

Further Reading: Life-study of Revelation, msg. 10

WEEK 43 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 2:25 Nevertheless what you have hold fast until I come.

3:11 I come quickly; hold fast what you have that no one take your crown.

[The churches in Revelation 2 and 3] were seven actual churches in Asia Minor...At that time there were many churches in Asia Minor, but God chose only seven for prophetic representation [1:3]...God chose these seven churches as a prophecy to foretell the pathway the church takes on the earth.

The seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 are divided into two groups. The first three have disappeared, but the last four are still with us today...The first three churches did not receive any promise of the Lord's coming, but the last four all received a promise of the Lord's coming. They will surely remain until the Lord Jesus comes again. (CWWN, vol. 50, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (3)," pp. 765, 767)

Today's Reading

The first is Ephesus. The church in Ephesus refers to the period of church history during the end of the first century, when the book of Revelation was written. When John wrote the book of Revelation, the condition of the church was like that of the first church—Ephesus.

The second church is Smyrna. The church in Smyrna is a picture of the condition of the church under ten periods of persecution in the Roman Empire from the second century after John's death to the early part of the fourth century...During this period of time, the church suffered great persecution.

The third church is the church in Pergamos. It began with Constantine's acceptance of Christianity as the state religion at the beginning of the fourth century in A.D. 313.

The fourth church is Thyatira. After the Caesar of Rome accepted Christianity as the state religion, he promoted Christianity and propped it up with his political power. Prior to this, the Roman Empire exercised its political power to suppress Christianity. Then it began to exercise its political power to support Christianity. Consequently, Christianity was not only married to the world but even exalted above the world.

Five of the seven churches were rebuked. One did not receive a rebuke, and one received only praise. The one which received only praise was Philadelphia...Laodicea is a distorted Philadelphia. When brotherly love is gone, Philadelphia immediately turns into the opinions of many. This is the meaning of the word Laodicea...In the eyes of the Lord, the characteristics of Laodicea are lukewarmness and spiritual pride...Brothers and sisters, if you want to continue in the way of Philadelphia, remember to humble yourselves before God.

Those around us may be full of death, but we do not need to be conscious of the fact that we are full of life. Those around us may be poor, but we do not need to be conscious of the fact that we are rich. Those who live before the Lord will not be conscious of their own riches. May the Lord be merciful to us that we may learn to live before Him.

Laodicea means to know everything, but in reality to be fervent about nothing. In name it has everything, but it cannot sacrifice its life for anything. It remembers its former glory but forgets its present condition before God. Formerly, it was Philadelphia; today it is Laodicea.

Today every child of God has to choose the pathway he should take with regard to the church. We must learn to stand on the ground of Philadelphia. Always keep the Lord's word and never deny His name. Hold fast the brotherly stand and never be proud!...Once you are proud, you become Laodicea and are no longer Philadelphia!...Which way do you want to take? May God bless His children and may the brothers take the upright path with regard to the church. (CWWN, vol. 50, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (3)," pp. 765-766, 768, 783-787)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 50, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (3)," ch. 45

WEEK 43 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 3:7 ...These things says the Holy One, the true One, the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no one opens.

Isa. 22:22 And I will set the key of the house of David upon his shoulder—when he opens, no one will shut; when he shuts, no one will open.

To the church in Philadelphia, the Lord is...the One who has “the key of David” (Rev. 3:7), the key of the kingdom, with authority to open and to shut. Here we need to consider the meaning of the term the key of David. According to Genesis 1, when God created man, He gave him dominion over all creatures. This indicates that in God’s intention man is to be the power representing God on earth. Due to the fall, however, man lost this power and has never fully recovered it. Man has not regained dominion on earth to represent God.

The image and dominion revealed in Genesis 1 are...fulfilled in the temple and the city. In the temple we have God’s presence for His expression, and in the city we have God’s dominion. God’s king is in the city representing Him as he rules on earth. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4199-4200)

Today’s Reading

The key held by David is the key of God’s entire dominion. God’s dominion includes the whole universe, particularly mankind...David represents God in establishing God’s kingdom on earth...The real David is Christ, the greater David (Matt. 12:1-8). He is the One who built God’s temple, the church, and established God’s kingdom (16:18-19).

Revelation 3:7 also says that Christ is the One who “opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no one opens.” He opens and shuts because the universal key, the key of God’s economy, is in His hand. The Lord uses this key to deal with the church.

As the One who has the key of David..., the Lord has given the recovered church an opened door, which no one can shut. Through the years, the Lord’s recovery has experienced the Lord as such a One. Since the recovery of the proper church life began in the early part of the nineteenth century, a door has always been opened wide to the Lord’s recovery. From the beginning of the recovery of the proper church life, Satan, the enemy of God, tried his best to shut the door...In spite of much opposition, today the door is open worldwide. The key is in the hand of the Head of the church; it is not in the hand of the opposers. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4200-4201, 4203)

Hymns, #541...speaks of the things that replace Christ, such as the law of letters, philosophy, and religion. All these things are really “Shebnas” that replace Christ. According to Isaiah 22, Shebna was “fired” and replaced by Eliakim as the steward over the king’s house. Darby said that Shebna typifies a false Christ. He should be removed and replaced by Christ. Christ should not be replaced by us. Instead, we should be replaced by Christ. All of us are “Shebnas” who should be removed and replaced by the real Eliakim. Christ, our Eliakim, should replace everything and everyone in God’s economy.

Christ has a big key to open the treasury of all His riches. When He opens the treasury, no one will shut. When He shuts the treasury, no one will open. Christ is the One who can open up to us all the riches of God embodied in Him. He can also shut the door to these riches...His opening and His shutting are all for one thing—the enjoyment of His riches as the treasure.

I believe the direct application of Isaiah 22:22 is this—Christ has the key to control the door of God’s treasury, in which are the riches of God in Christ for our enjoyment. We have experienced both His opening of these riches to us and His shutting up of these riches. When He shuts up these riches, we have the feeling of being dried up or inwardly deprived. Our experience indicates that Christ is the One who has the key to all His riches. (Life-study of Isaiah, 2nd ed., pp. 293-295)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 412; Life-study of Isaiah, msg. 42

WEEK 43 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 3:16 So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth.

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

Christ is the One who will dine with the overcomers and give the overcomers to sit with Him on His throne as He overcame and sat with His Father on His throne. [In Revelation 3:21] to overcome is to overcome the lukewarmness and pride of the degraded recovered church [vv. 16-17], to pay the price to buy the needed items (gold, white garments, and eyesalve) [v. 18], and to open the door so that the Lord can come in and dine with those who open the door [v. 20].

The Lord as the Head of the church is standing outside the degraded church, knocking at her door...The door is the door of the church, but the door is opened by individual believers. The church in Laodicea has knowledge but does not have the Lord's presence. The Lord is dealing with the whole church, but the acceptance of the Lord's dealing must be a personal matter. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4215-4216)

Today's Reading

Although we love the Lord and consistently pray and attend the meetings, we may not be willing to practically pay a price, and in the end we become lukewarm...Even though He is in our spirit, we often shut Him outside the door. For instance, we shut Him outside the door of our emotion. Our spirit is like a prison in which we keep the Lord. Therefore, the Lord has no way to enter into our inner chambers and into our heart. The Lord is standing and knocking in our cold spirit, longing to enter into our heart and our emotion. The Lord desires to have mutual enjoyment with us.

In Revelation 3:20 the Lord also said that, after He comes in to him who opens the door, He will dine with him and he with Him. According to the Greek, the word dine signifies the principal meal of the day at evening. To dine is not merely to eat one item of food but to partake of the riches of a meal. This may imply the fulfillment of the type of the children of Israel eating the rich produce of the good land of Canaan (Josh. 5:10-12). During the yearly feasts the children of Israel feasted with God, and God feasted with them. Whenever the Israelites had a feast, they ate with God, offering what they were eating to God and letting God eat with them. In like manner, the Lord says that He will dine with us and that we will dine with Him.

The dining promised here is not only for the future but also for today. If we are an overcomer, we will have the special privilege of eating with the Lord when He comes in the kingdom. Before that day, however, we may enjoy His dining with us.

In Revelation 2 and 3, we [can] see that the Lord exalts the eating of Himself, the taking in of Himself as our life supply, that we may grow, be transformed, and be the same as He is. In His promises concerning the reward to the overcomers in the seven churches, Christ is considered as the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the feast for us to enjoy with Him. This corresponds to the three stages of eating by God's people in the Old Testament. God's people were destined to eat the tree of life, God's redeemed people were given to eat the manna while wandering in the wilderness, and in the good land they had a feast three times a year on Mount Zion to enjoy the rich produce of the land. These three stages of eating are repeated in Revelation, the concluding book of the Bible, as rewards promised to the overcomers, to whom Christ will be the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the rich produce of the good land. This is altogether for our enjoyment of Christ...Through our enjoyment of Christ, we may be constituted with Him. Eventually, we will be mingled with Him in our constitution as one entity in order to express Him as the New Jerusalem. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4216-4217)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 413

WEEK 43 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

2:26-27...He who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he will shepherd them with an iron rod...

We need to be those who dine, who feast, with the Lord in this age so that we can sit on the throne with the Lord in the kingdom age. To sit with the Lord on His throne will be a prize to the overcomer that he may participate in the Lord's authority in the coming millennial kingdom. This means that the overcomers will be co-kings with Christ ruling over the whole earth. Christ is on the throne, and they also will be on the throne. He has the authority, and they also will have the same authority to rule over the nations. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4217-4218)

Today's Reading

God's intention is to work on man in order that man can be on the throne...His desire is to make us people of the throne. God's kingdom cannot come in full until we are on the throne...God's enemy will not be subdued until we are on the throne.

God desires to bring us to the throne because of the rebellion of Satan against God's throne (Isa. 14). If we read the Bible carefully, we will see that the greatest difficulty God faces in the universe is that His throne has been opposed and attacked by rebel forces.

Through His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the Lord Jesus was brought to the throne. A real man whose name is Jesus is on the throne. This is why we declare, "Jesus is Lord," and this is why we call, "O Lord Jesus."

God has always been the Lord, but now a man is on the throne as the Lord. Through His resurrection and in His ascension, "God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus" (Acts 2:36). God has made Jesus, a Nazarene, the Lord, and now today the Lord of heaven and of earth is a man.

It is not easy for us to realize that a man who could be crucified and buried could be the Lord of the universe. When Judas and the multitude came to arrest Him, He did not run away. He willingly made Himself weak and allowed Himself to be arrested and crucified. In the words of 2 Corinthians 13:4, "He was crucified out of weakness." But after He was crucified and buried, God resurrected Him and set Him at His right hand, making Him the Lord of all the universe. Today the Lord of the universe is a man.

We need to see that the Lord Jesus led the way to the throne. He was the Pioneer, the Forerunner (Heb. 6:20), cutting the path to the throne (2:10)... He was the first one to the throne, and we will come after Him. Now we are marching to the throne, for God intends to bring us into glory and to set us on the throne. When we overcome, we will sit with Christ on His throne and have authority to reign with the Lord and rule over the nations.

God's mind is on man (v. 6), and He wants man to express Him and to exercise His authority. Man has God's image and God's dominion with His authority. God desires to manifest Himself through man, and He desires to reign, to administrate, through man. God's intention is to cast Satan down and to redeem many of those taken captive by Satan and bring them to His throne. God cannot receive the full glory until we are brought to the throne. One day we will be brought to the throne, and then God will be able to boast to Satan. He will triumphantly declare that His chosen ones, who had been taken captive by Satan, have been brought to the throne.

However, we need to realize that in our present condition we may not be qualified to be on the throne...We have been called to be sons of God, and we are destined to be kings, but we need God to work in us and on us to qualify us for kingship. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4218-4220)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msgs. 10—12

Glorious things to thee are spoken
The Church — Philadelphia

Composition for prophecy with main point and sub-points:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2. Hallelujah, Philadelphía,
Thine are works that please the Lord.
Strength thou hast, though just a little
And hast kept His living Word.
Thou His holy name denied not,
But confessed it here below—
Lo, a door is set before thee,
Through which none but thee can go.
 3. Thou, beloved Philadelphía,
Dost His Word of patience keep.
From the hour of trial He'll save thee,
Which o'er all the world shall sweep.
Troublers too shall know He loves thee;
They to thee must then bow down.
“Hold thou fast, for I come quickly,
That no man may take thy crown.”
 4. Hallelujah, overcomers,
“In the temple of My God,
I will build them in as pillars,
Nevermore to go abroad.”
God's own name is written on them
And the new name of the Lord.
With the triune God they're blended;
They're the city of our God.
 5. Hallelujah, out of heaven,
Comes the New Jerusalem:
Gates of pearl and walls of jasper,
Mingled with each precious gem.
Philadelphía, Philadelphía,
Has become His Bride so dear.
Now the Spirit in the churches
Speaks to all who have an ear.