

66-Revelation – 03-Transcript

well welcome back to Wednesday night Bible study and happy Feast of Trumpets for those of you who are in the Eastern time zone and maybe other time zones but for those of you who are and have not yet come into the Feast of Trumpets happy Feast of Trumpets to you when it comes in and for those of you who don't know what I'm talking about certainly these are the feast days of God that the Church of God celebrates and if you're not aware of that I would direct you to our website CGI'd org and on our website on the homepage what you'll see there is a web chat by pastors bill Watson and Wayne Hendricks and it's entitled what holy days did Jesus observe what holy days that Jesus observed so if you're watching this live you'll see that if you're watching the replay and maybe it's no longer on the homepage you can certainly just go to the menu and look for the armor of God and look for the the webchat on the armor of God and armor of God webchat and you'll find it that way also there's a search engine on our home page and certainly feel free to make use of our search engine on the web webpage and just type in Holy Days God's holy days and you'll find out all about God's holy days so we are continuing in the book of Revelation very appropriate for us to be studying this book on the Feast of Trumpets as we begin our observance of trumpets because trumpets is all about the fulfillment of revelations that have been or prophecies that have been outstanding for hundreds and thousands of years and they all culminate and we see how they culminate in the book of Revelation without further ado let's get started I'll open with a word of Prayer Heavenly Father we

just thank you so much that we are
blessed to be able to study this book of
Revelation we thank you God for being
with us and guiding our study and
helping us to understand what is in the
text and pray father that tonight will
be no exception

you'll bless us and give us further
understanding so that we can do the
things that are in the words of this
prophecy we want to be faithful
Christians and we want to respond to
your word and we pray father that as we
study it you put it in our hearts to
respond to it and to do your will we
praise you when we thank you we ask for
you to bless our study now in Jesus Holy
Name Amen

so we allow begin and I just want to
back up a little bit and and just for
context sake before we get into the
epistles of Christ to the church I'll go
back to where we were last week in
Revelation 1 beginning in verse 10 where
John writes I was in the spirit on the
Lord's Day and I heard behind me a loud
voice as of a trumpet saying I am the
Alpha and the Omega the first and the
last what you see right in a book and
send it to seven churches which are in
Asia to Ephesus to Smyrna to Pergamus to
Fiat IRA to Sardis to Philadelphia and
to Laodicea and so this was a mail route
that the churches were on and there were
multiple churches in Asia Minor but
these were the major cities and for some
reason God to chose seven the number
seven and chose these churches for John
to write to and we are benefitting from
his personal epistles we have the
epistles of Paul and Peter and the
epistles that we we are familiar with
but here we have the epistles of Jesus
Christ himself to these seven churches

and seven we know is a picture of completion and so God in His wisdom has chosen these seven churches as a complete picture of his church through time and so we are going to benefit from his personal messages to these congregations then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me and having turned I saw seven golden lampstands and in the midst of the seven lampstands one like the Son of Man clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band so here we have Jesus Christ our high priest in the middle of these lampstands aren't gonna learn that these lampstands represent order are symbolic of the church his head and hair were white like wool as white as snow and his eyes like a flame of fire his feet were like fine brass as if we find in a furnace and his voice is the sound of many waters he had in his right hand seven stars and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword and his countenance was his countenance was like the sun shining in its strength and when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead but he laid his right hand on me saying do not be afraid I am the first and the last I am he who lives and was dead and behold I am Alive for evermore amen and I have the keys of Hades and death so now he's going to write to these churches and you know we need to ask ourselves why is it so first of all we recognize the symbolism in this book this book is highly symbolic and we have to sort of our default position as we're looking at symbols unless it's very clear that we should be taking the text literally but these are symbols and throughout that the text we're going to see lots of symbols but why does he begin with the church you know instead

of just getting right into the things
that are going to take shortly take
place he begins with these personal
letters to the church and then this is a
question we need to grapple with and and
I what I'm seeing is God wants the
church to be right before he explains to
the church what is going to be happening
on the world scene and and and all of
this drama that's going to be taking
place on the world scene
the church has a role to play and the
church has to get its act together
before it can be effective for Christ so
the church is really the the body of
Christ and we see this high priest in
the middle of these seven lampstands
which really represents the head and his
body and and he was doing a work as we
read through the Gospel of Luke he was
doing the work while he was here on
earth then he was lifted up but we read
in acts as we went through the book of
Acts together that the body of Christ
continued to do the work of Christ and
and Luke made that very clear that you
know things that Christ began in the
Gospel according to Luke we see them
continued by the church in the book of
Acts and God expects for us to continue
to do his work right through until he
returns but we're not gonna do his work
properly if we are disabled if we
disable the body of Christ and so these
epistles are really to his body
basically saying to us get your act
together
I have work for you to do you need to be
effective you need to clean yourselves
up and be effective to do this work so
he goes on to say or so let me just go
back to Matthew just because so many
people I'll find the book of Revelation
fearful because we get to see you know

this is the unveiling this is the
apocalypse we get to see the full brunt
of evil we get to see evil in its climax
when it comes to the fall the time of
the Gentiles coming to the fall before
it happens we get to see it and then
it's kind of natural for us to become
fearful about what is going to take
place on the earth and we start to see
these things happening around us it's
possible for us to panic but here Christ
when he was on earth he gave us
instructions he said and do not fear
those who kill the body but cannot kill
the soul and we're going to see as we go
through the book of Revelation these
evil men
who have no regard for human beings made
in the image and likeness of God they
have no regard in fact they hate they
hate they be they've inherited the
hatred of their father the devil and so
they hate human beings made in God's
image and all they want to do is
slaughter human being the human being
has no value to them but the church has
a work to do we we have a testimony to
declare and it's easy for us when we see
the naked face of evil for us to want to
back down and Christ is telling us do
not back down be faithful be faithful
unto death if that's what's required be
faithful witnesses Christ is the
faithful witness he has the keys to the
grave so he says here when he was on
earth do not fear those who kill the
body but cannot kill the soul but rather
fear Him who is able to destroy both
soul and body in in Hades are not two
sparrows sold for a copper coin and not
one of them falls to the ground apart
from your father's will so we have to
have this great trust in our father's
will and go forward boldly go forward

confidently and do the work of God but
the very hairs of your head are all
numbered

do not fear therefore you are of more
value than many sparrows so the sparrows
are looked after by God we have a very
special role in God's economy in God's
agenda and so we should just go forward
confidently and that's why these I I
believe that's why these epistles from
personal epistles from Christ to the
church precede any revelation or
apocalypse of what's happening on the
world scene and the other players that
are going to come into focus he says
therefore in verse 32 of Matthew 10
whoever confesses me before men him I
will also confess

for my father who is in heaven the
implication here being it's gonna be
difficult it's gonna be challenging it's
going to be fearful it's going to be
full of anxiety to do this and many
unfortunately are going to back down
many are not going to have the courage
to face what's ahead and God makes it
very clear to us at the end of the book
that all criminals will be thrown into
the lake of fire but cowards before
criminals cowards will read it carefully
yourself in revelation 22 that cowards
will be thrown into the lake of fire or
21 I should say before criminals so God
really it's like fearfulness of men is a
form of idolatry we should only fear God
in verse 38 he who does not take his
cross and follow after me is not worthy
of me so we have to lay down our lives
at baptism and take up our cross as we
come up out of this watery grave and
just follow Christ wherever he asks us
to go wherever he goes we go and we just
have such a big vision and a clear
vision of the future that death this the

first death does not frighten us the
second death is what frightens us and
and we know that if we obtain that first
resurrection we have nothing to fear the
the second death has no power over us
and that's what drives our motivation
now he says he who finds his life will
lose it and he who loses his life for my
sake will find it and this is the the or
the perspective that we have to have as
we open up the apocalypse as we all
kind of open up the revelation the
revealing the unveiling he says here on
our through inspires Peter
in first Peter 2:17 honor all people
this is this is the Christian walk we
need to honor all people love the
Brotherhood and I think this is an area
where many of us fail we grumble we
don't extend ourselves we criticize
we really don't have the holy spirit
empowered love of the Brotherhood if
you're not part of my specific
organization I have no respect for you
we should be people who really
understand the working of the Holy
Spirit the fact that there are different
administration's we should be honoring
all people nevermind
those who are in the Brotherhood we
should absolutely have a gap a love for
them and again the prophecy shows us
that over time
agape grows cold in most of God's people
in the majority of God's people fear God
honor the king so so this is the same
instruction that God is giving us
himself personally as we open up these
epistles that we need to really be true
Christians and the focus needs to be on
loving the Brotherhood and fearing God
in Titus he says for the grace of God
that brings salvation has appeared to
all men teaching us that denying

ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly righteously and godly in this present age so this is how we this is this is really how we ought to ought to live and the the whole perspective we have as we open up the apocalypsis as we as we understand this unveiling it motivates us to clean ourselves up to get out of this spiritual drunkenness and to be sober to just really walk this very straight line looking for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ denying ungodliness and worldly lusts which are just they're out of control it's it's all over the world and it's increasing in intensity as the evil men work their agenda

we need to deny all of this and turn away from it and so we should live soberly righteously and godly in the present age looking for the Blessed hope and glorious appearing of our Lord of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ that's what we're about

looking for this blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself his own special people zealous for good works so we should be zealous for good works we should be as we as we move into the unveiling and understanding what's what's happening we should not be fearful we should be zealous for good works because we know Jesus Christ is returning very soon you know we don't know exactly when but we know this is happening and it's accelerating and it's driving us toward the return of Christ and so as we have opportunity let's do good let's do good unto all men but especially those of the household of faith so with that backdrop let's

continue reading then in this apocalypsis he says to John write the things you have seen and the things which are and the things which will take place after this and a lot of people miss this that Revelation is not a hundred percent prophecy that part of it is going to be history part of it was what was going on in John's time and these letters to these personal letters of Christ to the churches are part of they fall into the category of the things which are these are very specific letters there were very specific conditions taking place in Asia Minor at the time and Christ was writing to these people through John specifically about what was above all the things which are now he chose these seven congregations deliberately so that they would be they would represent the advice that he has for them would be relevant to us through all time right up until he returns but they do fall into the category of the things which are and then also he's going to write the things which will take place after this and not necessarily as I said in the very first chapter that it's not all about the caboose the end of the Train it's all about the engine as well and all the cars in between so the things which must shortly take place after this yes you know within a matter of a few decades they all started to begin to occur so John was absolutely accurate when he said or where Christ was absolutely accurate when he said to John things which must shortly take place a lot of people I call where where it where's the caboose that was coming but the Train is on track the mystery of the Seven Stars which you saw in my right hand in the seven golden lampstands the seven stars

are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches or concretions so we don't have to wonder what these symbols are Christ decodes them for us now again I'm emphasizing the purpose of these epistles is for us to clean up our act it's giving us an opportunity to get ourselves right with God so that we can perform for him so that we can do the things that he's asking us to do and and to do them in a way that as a congregation or as congregations we will be effective Paul says here that he disciplined his body and brought it under subjection lest when he has preached to others he himself should become disqualified and and I think these are these letters these epistles from Christ really destroy the doctrine of once saved always saved a lot of people think you know hey once I'm baptized I'm good I can never lose salvation I'm just I'm set for life I'm set for eternal life and clearly I mean just just this one letter that we just read from Paul into the Corinthians that he was concerned that after all the preaching that he did and he certainly was a man filled with the Holy Spirit that he himself could become disqualified and unless we read these letters with the same concern that Paul has we are not going to take the words of our Lord seriously you know too many of us when we read these letters we just give ourselves a pass we go straight to the letter to Philadelphia and we say oh that that's us but as we read these letters we're gonna see that Christ is very concerned that we listen to all the letters to all the churches and it really is you know this this this is the unn

failing this is the the apocalypse the
apocalypse is the unveiling and and here
a Christ begin with the unveiling with
the church that we should not be under
an illusion that we might think we're
this mighty elephant marching for the
Lord or this powerful horse racing for
the Lord when in fact we're a dog
returning to its vomit
you know we might think we're this
wonderful feline going forward when in
fact were frightened mice we think we're
we have the strength of a gorilla and
we're as weak as mice so as we read
these epistles try to see this contrast
between you know the way the church
thinks of itself and the way Christ
thinks of the church and then let's be
humble enough to say you know what we
may not be as wonderful as we think we
are and and maybe we ought not to just
so be so focused on the one letter to
Philadelphia cuz that's the good letter
and kind of look at all the letters and
really evaluate ourselves humbly before
God and see what needs fixing because
God really wants us to understand that
if we're going to be successful we've
got to judge ourselves first
once we judge ourselves then we can be
effective witnesses for Christ and then
we will endure to the end and the Satan
will not be able to take us out of play
and then when he returns he will
certainly gather us to himself so this
is really kicking off with a very clear
evaluation of ourselves and so as we get
into the epistles now I just want to
mention that next week we won't have
Bible study and it's back for the next
couple of weeks as we get into these
fall holy days we won't have the
Wednesday night Bible study will resume
on October 18th so October 18th is when

we'll resume the Wednesday night Bible study and certainly wishing everybody a great fall festival season as
as it as we are now kicking it off so here in Revelation 2 in verse 1 he begins these letters these personal letters from the Lord to these seven congregations he says to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus and so we know who these angels of the churches are they're the Seven Stars there are seven lampstands and seven stars and so it appears that over each church there is a messenger there is an angel that's responsible for that church and John is to direct the letter to that angel to that messenger these things says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands so as he writes to the churches he identifies himself and he identifies himself and associates the church with that initial visit vision or a symbolism that John saw of this high priest in the midst of these seven golden lampstands oh and with him that merits further study but for each congregation he calls out specific elements of his of the symbolism surrounding him for them to connect with and notice for every congregation the focus is on their works and that that needs to be our focus as we get into this unveiling God is concerned with our works it's not good enough to say I'm baptized I observe Sabbath I go to services I have a nice sermon I have a nice coffee and a biscuit and then I go home each congregation must be a working congregation and and Christ when he looks at us he doesn't just look at us individually he looked at us congregationally so the question is as we read these letters what are we doing

to contribute to the health of our congregation because the culture of the of the congregation shapes the individuals in the congregation and individuals will come and go individuals were born and individuals will die but the culture tends to be more permanent and as people come in they get shaped by the culture they get to understand how to comply to the culture and how to behave accordingly so the culture that we build really matters and what are we doing to build that positive hard-working culture that will survive us and shape future generations and so the emphasis here notice on every congregation is on their work I know your works your labor your patience and that you cannot bear those who are evil I couldn't stand them and you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not and have found them liars now when Paul was leaving Ephesus he warned them he said into two acts 20 which we read we were studying acts for I know this that after my departure savage wolves will come in not sparing the flock so he understood that that savage wolves would come in and not spare the flock will come in among you not sparing the flock and and then in John he warned them here in first John for beloved do not believe every spirit but test the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets have gone out into the world so they were Ephesus was taught and mentored by Paul and also by John and they were constantly warned about these wolves that would come in and these false teachers and they took that teaching seriously and they were able to test these apostles who said you know I'm an apostle I speak for God and they were

fun and they found them wanting so he says and you have persevered and have patience and have labored for my namesake and have not become weary this is quite amazing a wonderful this is really a wonderful testimony for this congregation and I mean as I read this you sort of think like wow this is a wonderful congregation but Christ he wants a and the thing is we can be blinded by the light you know when we look at the good things that we are doing as a congregation we tend to focus on that we don't want to be criticized we tend to turn away from criticism and so we can we can think that everything is wonderful but Christ because he loves us so much he just gives us the truth here's what you're doing well here's what needs improvement and so despite all of these wonderful attributes he says to the Ephesians nevertheless I have this against you you have left your first love and so there was this wonderful wonderful passion that the church had for the truth for God for each other and even though they were still very sound doctrinally you know the sermons that were being given here were probably very very sound sermons the Brethren had a very sound understanding of the scriptures and yet they were becoming Lovelace which is a warning that we have for the end time that the agape love will will run cold so this is a letter that will become more and more relevant as we move forward into the future and then John says in terms of love he says if someone says I love God and hates his brother he is a liar for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen how can he love God whom he has not seen so this this is really something that's quite revealing

that when Christ says that they've lost their first love we might automatically assume it's their love for Christ but clearly they they had a great love for the truth but now what we're seeing as we read John's teaching is that if they say they love God but they hate their brother they're liars and their love really is waxing cold but look as Paul was writing to the Ephesians in chapter one of his epistle to the Ephesians we could all call Paul's efficient first Ephesians and Christ epistles second Ephesians so in first Ephesians 1 he says therefore I also after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints do not cease to give thanks for you making mention of you in my prayers so this was a church that started out on fire and Paul says they have a wonderful love for all the saints and it just inspired him and then John says you know what if you say you love God but you don't love your brother you're a liar and now Christ has taken them to task for leaving their first love so he says Christ says to them therefore remember remember therefore from where you have fallen remember that love for all the things that you had repent and do the first works or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place unless you repent and again this is why we do not support the doctrine once saved always saved it's very very clear that Christ is warning us to be careful that we can be we can get it right we can start out well but it's not how we start it's how we finish and we really have to be very responsive to these warnings and and keep that faith alive and keep those works before

before God but he says even though that they have lost their love and he's warning them to repent lest you remove them as a congregation but this you have you do have this that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans which I also hate and just a little bit of explanation here this is two words that are brought together here Nikko and Lea T we know from Nike Nikkei is this word Greek word for victory and Lea T we know is the people so this was people who have a doctrine of victory over the people these are people who are oppressive to God's people and God hates it and we have many false teachers today even in the Church of God movement that claim they speak for God but their doctrine is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans where they have this oppressive form of control over God's people and they Lord authority over God's people and Jesus says he hates it he hates it these are false apostles false teachers of God they you shall know them by their fruits you'll know them by their fruits here in Matthew 10 remember here he says now this is not the passage that I wanted to show actually a passage I wanted to show was where he says it will not be so among you that when you lord it over one another that's what the Gentiles do but the people of God he that will be greatest among you let him be your servant and that's the exact opposite of this Nicolaitans prophecy this scripture here I do want to come to later will just recall it that it's enough for the disciple that he be like his teacher that were not above our teacher if they've called the master of the house bales about how much more will they call those of his household now notice this

at the end of the Epistle he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches
so again we can't go to our favorite we can't go to our favorite passage and then just think oh I like that one that I like that one epistle to the to the church I'm gonna I'm gonna just focus on that one epistle he says to us who have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to all seven churches so we should be very responsive to the to the warnings and the encouragement to all seven churches as time unfolds and circumstances change the pressures that are exerted on the church will change the church and certain advice will become more relevant as time goes by and if we just turn a blind eye you know I'm only focused on my favorite letter and what it says there we're gonna miss the encouragement we're gonna miss the warning the calls for repentance that may be highly relevant for us but they're just written talk to one of these other seven churches so our behavior is based on what the Spirit says to all seven churches and so what we've read there in Ephesians the focus being on remembering from where they have fallen and that love for God's people that they had initially okay now he says to him who overcomes I will give to each of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God and that of course goes back to Genesis three where Adam was ejected from the garden lest he take hold of the tree of life and eat and live forever and so eternal life was withdrawn from Adam and from mankind in general but here we see the tree of life being offered again and in Revelation 22 as the book ends when when everything is said and done we see the tree of life in

the midst of the garden once again and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is absent because everybody now has made their choice and now we can eat freely from the tree of life and this is the reward that God is holding out not just to the church at ephesus but to all of us again the he who has an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches and so we need to be focused on this tree of life and to the Angel of the Church of Smyrna write these things says the first and the last who was dead and came to life so he wants this church to know that he was dead and he now he lives forever and he has the keys to the grave this is what they need to know in the connection they need to have again the emphasis is on the congregation's works I know your works tribulation and poverty but you are rich does it the opposite of the church at Laodicea that thinks they're rich but they're really poor here these folks are poor they're because of their faith in price they probably cannot get employment they it's very difficult for them they're being taxed there's all kinds of ways that the beast power impoverishes them but Christ is saying because of their faithfulness they are very very rich they are very very rich and so this is part of the apocalypsis the unveiling what's reality what's really happening here and so here this church that's poor is actually very rich and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not but are a synagogue of Satan and certainly the early church who again the early church was very Jewish but there were other Jews that did not accept the Messiah and were in league with the with the Roman powers to

persecute the sect of the way of God's
people and we know when Christ was here
he told the Jews specific Jews who
rejected him the Pharisees and the
scribes you are of your father the devil
and the desires of your father you want
to do he was a murderer from the
beginning and does not stand in the
truth that there is no truth in him when
he speaks a lie he speaks from his own
resources for he's a liar he's the
father of it so they are a liar they're
there they're false
and Christ is encouraging Smyrna that he
knows that they are the true Jews and
these folks are not then Christ goes on
to say do not fear any of those things
which you are about to suffer indeed the
devil is about to throw some of you into
prison so this is Christ is just telling
them right up front unfortunately some
of you are going to have to be thrown in
prison you're gonna be imprisoned and
that's gonna be a very sorrowful
experience or a painful experience don't
be afraid and you're gonna be today you
may be tested and you will have
tribulation 10 days be faithful until
death and I will give you the crown of
life so he started the letter saying I'm
the one that was dead and I live you be
faithful unto death and I will give you
the crown of life so that's what really
matters again this life we can't hold on
to this life where we're all dying
there's nothing this is not a
composition we have that is eternal
it's temporal now we're all dying price
is saying don't worry just be faithful
unto death and I'll give you the crown
of life
he who has an ear let him hear what the
Spirit says to the churches so this is
something again we have to return to

this constant warning by Christ that we must hear what the Spirit says to the churches

and and it's not you know pick your favorite epistle and just zero in on that one listen to what the Spirit is saying to all the congregation's both in terms of warnings or encouragement calls for repentance but also the rewards the rewards be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life if you have an ear hear what the Spirit says to the churches he who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death and that's what really matters

the first death we could be hurt by don't worry about that Christ has the keys to the grave it's the second death that will not hurt us and he goes on to say unto the church to the Angel of the church in Pergamos write these things says he who has the sharp two-edged sword so again for each congregation he's calling out a specific aspect of the symbolism that describes him as our high priest and he wants them to be connected to him in a very specific way so he has the sharp two-edged sword and we know from Hebrews that the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart so this is certainly as our high priest he's going to be evaluating us in a very specific way he says I know your works and where you dwell where Satan's throne is so this is very interesting that here in Asia Minor what we call Turkey today is certainly at this time is where Satan's throne was established you know is it still there today if it is that's in what we call Turkey today is where

Satan's throne is so what we do see
though for sure is Satan has a throne
and it's established somewhere on the
earth
and his demons and everybody that serves
him is centered on that throne
so here Christ is saying I know your
works again the emphasis on works and
where you dwell where Satan's throne is
and you hold fast to my name and it's
amazing how you know the more intense
the persecution and certainly both
Pergamus of Smyrna as well as
Philadelphia were under intense
persecution
unlike Laodicea and when there's this
kind of persecution Christians tend to
perform better and you hold fast to my
name and did not deny my faith even in
the days in which Antipas was my
faithful martyr who was killed among you
where Satan dwells again Christ repeats
it twice that this is exactly where
Satan's throne is this is where he
dwells however he says but I have a few
things against you because you have
there
those who hold the doctrine of Balaam
who taught Balak to put a stumbling
block before the children of Israel to
eat things sacrificed to idols and to
commit sexual immorality so you know
this church was doing well and yet
Christ has some things against them and
and there's this sexual immorality that
has crept into the church and you know
Rome was a very immoral Society the
society that we live in today is very
immoral it's very immoral and if you
look at the church today often
congregations no longer have the high
standard that the church was once known
for and we have you know young people
canoodling right under the noses of the

ministers yeah and everybody kind of accepts it and this this sexual immorality is creeping into the congregation's and because it's just around us is everywhere we turn we're not offended by it but Christ makes it clear he's offended by it now we have to keep that high morals but here in this time they were influenced by those who hold the doctrine of Balam and and what he did if we remember in numbers with the whole issue of about the or he introduced sexual immorality he couldn't curse Israel but he figured out a way to get the blessings away from Israel by tempting them and getting a ballot to tempt them with sexual immoral women sexually immoral women and they they went a climb and sinker and the whole congregation became corrupted and here is his look these women caused the children of Israel through the counsel of Balaam to trespass against the Lord in the incident of peor and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord and so that's something to go back and read but they they were easily seduced by these foreign women and got caught up in all this sexual immorality and this was the nation of God these were the people of God and the same thing happened with this congregation the people of God were allowing the sexual immorality to creep into their congregation and and you know with your cell you know I'm fine it's just me and the Lord I don't really care what happens in the congregation Christ cares about what happens in the congregation and we see congregations where it kind of creeps in women start wearing plunging necklines they start their skirts and dresses start getting

higher and higher men start to then
engage them in inappropriate ways and it
just it's just they it's the Frog
boiling in the water syndrome or just
sort of creeps in and the water just
warms up warms up we don't really see
what's going on but maybe if a foreign
person comes in or you know somebody is
not part of a new person comes in
they're shocked and horrified is this is
this how the people behave in the Church
of God and we don't recognize it we
still have our sermons we still have our
fellowship and we just don't see this
creeping in Christ wants us to see it
and he wants us to evaluate ourselves
and not allow these immoral doctrines
and and and practices to creep into our
congregations he says thus you also have
those who hold the doctrine of the
Nicolaitans which thing I hate so he
mentioned that already he repeats it
here that he hates this it's the
opposite of his will he does not want
his people lording their authority over
others repent or else I will come to you
quickly and will fight against them with
the sword of my mouth so here we see
where a congregation can actually be in
opposition to Christ and yet you know
because of the good things that we do we
think we're wonderful and I think as we
go into the book of Revelation this is
certainly time for us to reflect and
really ask ourselves how does God see us
not just individually but how does he
see us congregationally how are we doing
what is the culture of our congregation
like how much love do we have for the
Brethren how sober are we how pure how
clean are we how much are we being
influenced by the immoral society around
us as we look for the return of our Lord
Jesus Christ he who has an ear let him

hear what the Spirit says to the
churches to him who overcomes this is to
everybody now if you have an ear if we
ever near this is not just to pergamus
this is to everyone to him who overcomes
I will give some of the hidden manna to
eat and I will give him a white stone
and on the stone a new name written
which no one knows except him who
receives that this to me this just
strikes me as so intimate we know that
Christ will have a name that no one
knows except him and now he says he's
gonna give us a name that no one knows
except the one who receives it so
there's a real intimacy between us and
Christ and it's a very personal
connection that he will have with each
of us if we overcome if we overcome and
we can't have this complacent attitude
like oh yeah you know what I couldn't
ever lose my salvation Christ is saying
you better be careful here and hold on
to eternal life and really strive to be
an overcomer as we go through the
apocalypse and see the full unveiling
and what the people of God have to stand
up to and be bold against and many
people who think you know you have
ioniser
when they have to face what's coming
they may not we may not have the courage
and the boldness that we think we have
but the way that we will have that is if
we clean ourselves up and we allow the
Holy Spirit to flow through us then it's
not us doing the work it's not us
speaking the truth it's not us
witnessing it's the Holy Spirit and the
Holy Spirit is more powerful than any
number of human beings so we have to be
overcomers and that's what really you
know our role in all of this is to be
overcomers congregationally be

overcomers and congregationally do the work of God and to the Angel of the church at by in Thyatira write these things says the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire imagine that so you're gonna look at Jesus Christ and his eyes are like a flame of fire and his feet like fine brass and again the emphasis on the works of the congregation I know your works love service faith and your patience and as for your works the last are more than the first so Ephesus fell from their first love and they need to repent and get back to it here via Tyra their last works are more than how they started this is wonderful unfortunately he says nevertheless so this this high priest that has eyes like a flame of fire and he's looking at us and evaluating us here's his evaluation of Tyrel nevertheless I have a few things against you because you allow that woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess you allow her to teach and to seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols so again we see this same issue of the church allowing sexual immorality to creep into it and not standing up to it and and God criticizes the congregation because there's this woman who calls herself a prophetess she's a self-declared prophetess and puts herself in a position of leadership maybe you know she she is she could be married but the the named Jezebel actually means unhand her husband is irrelevant she's she's the driver she's the leader and she his self-proclaimed prophetess and she's introducing doctrine that is causing the church to relax on their standards and they're

committing sexual immorality and eating things sacrificed to idols and we know from the original Jezebel in the time of Jeroboam it came to pass it though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat that here this is a hab took as wife Jezebel the daughter of F Baal king of the sidonians and he went and served Baal and worshipped him so you can see she's the daughter of Hezbollah and these people call themselves out after their gods and he went any served Baal in verse 13 of Kristen's 18 was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord so she declares herself a prophetess she wants to be the leader she hates God's leaders and how I hit a hundred men of the Lord's prophets fifty to a cave and fed them with bread and water so here you see this this conflict between Jezebel and the people of God and then here in 1st Kings 21 then Jezebel his wife said to him you now exercise or G over Israel arise eat food and let your heart be cheerful again Jezebel means unhospitable she actually was married but she's the driver you know it's like she's the husband and he's the wife I will give you the vineyard of naboth the jezreelite so she is just driving her agenda and and really in opposition to God and the people of God now God says Christ says I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality and she did not repent indeed I will cast her into a sick bed notice this this is speaking of the people of God I'm gonna cast her into a sick bed and those who commit adultery with her into Great Tribulation so this this church here at Thyatira they were getting all caught up

in her leadership and getting caught up
in her sexual immorality and God is
saying if they that she gave her time to
repent she didn't so she's gonna be
punished but if they don't repent he's
gonna cast them into Great Tribulation
with her unless they repent of their
deeds once saved always saved I don't
think so I will kill her children with
death and all the churches shall know
that I am he who searches the minds and
hearts so this God with eyes like a
flame of fire when he's evaluating the
congregation he's searching our minds
and our hearts and he knows what's there
and and this is part of the apocalypse'
this is part of the unveiling we have to
be very realistic and see what God sees
and yes there's commendations but where
there's criticism we need to be
sensitive to that criticism and
responsive to the criticisms of our Lord
so here he does not tolerate this sexual
immorality and again you know we've
gotta go out and be witnesses and
faithful witnesses and preaches gospel
but you know whoa unto us if we're
preaching the gospel to others and we
ourselves are lost and here and Thyatira
they're louder works were greater than
their first and yet there are people
among them that are getting caught up in
sexual immorality
and God promises to cast them into Great
Tribulation and kill her children with
death and also that all the churches
will know that this God we don't mess
with he's it's he's a God that searches
the minds and hearts and I will give to
each one of you according to your works
so this is something that God wants us
to be serious and really does call to
mind jeremiah writing that I the LORD
search the heart I test the minds of

heart and mind even to give every man according to his ways according to the fruit of his doings so this is nothing new this is the way God has always operated back to Revelation now to you I say and to the rest in Thyatira as many as do not have this doctrine so there were faithful among the people of God there were some that were slipping but there were some that were remaining faithful who have not known the depths of Satan so it looks like this Gnosticism was creeping into the Church of people felt that you know the body doesn't matter and so they can get involved in all kinds of sexual immorality it's just the body it doesn't affect the spirit and so they felt that they really had to go fully know the depths of Satan to be able to overcome Satan and they've just completely soiled themselves but these have not known the depths of Satan as they say I will put on you no other burden but hold fast what you have until I come and so that's what we have to as we go through now the rest of the book we have to hold fast what we have and be faithful witnesses and he who overcomes and keeps my works until the end we have to keep it until the end to him I will give power over the nation's he shall rule them with a rod of iron they shall be dashed to pieces like The Potter's vessels as I also have received from my father and we know from songs that Christ in fact received exactly this in Psalm to ask of me and I will give you the nation's for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your session and you shall break them with a rod of iron you shall dash them to pieces like a Potter's vessel and then Christ continues to Thyatira and to all

of us who have an ear to hear what the Spirit says that he will give us the Morningstar and what exactly that is I don't know but Christ who says he himself is the Morningstar he promises to give us the Morningstar for faithful and we endure to the end he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to all seven churches to all seven congregations let's be very mindful of exactly what Christ is saying these epistles really matter they're from personal epistles from Christ to these seven churches deliberately different conditions that they were facing so that we can benefit from them today and to the Angel of the church in Sardis write these things says he who has the seven spirits of God and the Seven Stars again emphasis on the works I know your works that you have a name that you are alive but you are dead so again you know the allusion and now the apocalypse is the unveiling what is the truth of our situation you know if we were in Sardis yeah hey we've got this great name that we're alive we think we're wonderful well here's what Christ's thinks of us we're dead be watchful and strengthen the things which remain so there's some things that are still there that are ready to die for I have not found your works perfect before God remember therefore how you have received and heard hold fast and repent therefore if you will not watch these are that the people of God if you will not watch you're falling asleep those that sleep sleep in the night you're becoming drunken I will come upon you as a thief and you will not know what hour I will come upon you and we know from first Thessalonians 5 that the people of God should not be asleep we

should be awake and sober and watching
and so that Christ's return does not
come upon us by surprise
but it will come upon the wicked by
surprise
but here the people of God are
considered wicked to God and he will
come upon them as a thief in the night
these are people who these are holy
spirit people these are the people that
have repented they could baptize they've
received the Holy Spirit they've been
doing the work of God but they've died
you have a few names in Sardis who have
not defiled their garments and they
shall walk with me in white for they are
worthy so even though he condemns the
congregation there are still some within
the congregation who are faithful and
it's interesting that God doesn't say to
these people leave this congregation and
go to Smyrna leave this congregation and
go to Philadelphia it's not that far
move over there they really are to
operate in the congregation where Christ
has placed them and just be faithful be
that pillar in the congregation maybe
you can help turn the situation around
he who overcomes shall be clothed in
white garments and I will not notice
this I will not blot out his name from
the book of life so you know again I
just want to emphasize this because this
is sort of going around this you know
once saved always saved once I'm
baptized I'm good here their names are
in the word of life and what Christ is
saying is I will not blot out his name
from the book of life I will not H it
out it's fair if they don't repent I'm
gonna remove it but I will confess his
name before my father and before his
angels and again for us to deed to
repent and do this work we were reading

Luke he taught also I say to you whoever confesses me before men him the son of man also will confess before the angels of God so we have to have this boldness we have to be committed to doing this work we have to confess Jesus Christ before men and he will not blot our names out of the book of life and he will confess us before his father he says now he who has an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches so again we need to be listening to what the Spirit is saying to all the churches if we have an ear to hear and to the Angel of the church in Philadelphia write 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 no one opens I know your works again the emphasis on the works see I have set before you an open door and no one can shut it for you have a little strength so this is maybe a smaller congregation it doesn't have a lot of resources but you've kept my word and you've not denied my name so again the pressure is on Rome is clamping down this is at the time of Domitian and the Domitian persecution is beginning here they have not denied his name they've been through the persecution with Nero indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan' who say they are Jews and are not but lie the children of the devil indeed I will make them common worship before your feet and to know that I have loved you again what did the illusion what's reality here reality is what God says is what God sees and God is giving us this opportunity to see things the way he does and no he says he's gonna have them come and worship before the the members of this congregation he says here that

indeed I will make them come and worship
before your feet in Revelation 19 when
we get there we're gonna see that John
fell at this Angel's feet to worship Him
but he said to me see that you do not do
that

I'm your fellow servant and of your
brethren who have the testimony of Jesus
worship God for the testimony of Jesus
is the spirit of prophecy
and so this this takes a lot of
consideration here what is Christ saying
that these people of the devil are going
to have to come and worship before the
feet of this faithful congregation and
yet that's something that's only
reserved for God we're thinking about
what is the plan of God what does it
mean to be born again 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 and certainly God is faithful
to his promise this congregation did not
see this hour of trial that's going to
come upon the whole world and certainly
you know we have these seven letters
that are available to the whole church
and it doesn't imply that there are
brethren who will not have to face this
but it also implies that there are other
brethren that will have to face this
behold I am coming quickly hold fast
what you have that no one may take your
crown implication being it's possible
that you can lose your crown he who
overcomes I will make him a pillar in
the temple of my god and he shall go no
more out 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 God and I will write
on him my new name so Christ is gonna

get a new name he's gonna write it on
those who overcome he who has an ear let
him hear what the Spirit says to the
churches this is something that all of
us have to really digest and understand
and really take very carefully what
Christ is saying these are his personal
epistles to the church and to the chain
into the Angel of the Church of the
Laodiceans write these things says the
ahmen the faithful and true witness so
he is really emphasizing now that he's
the faithful and true witness
implication being they need to connect
with that because they're not being
faithful and true witnesses the
beginning of the creation of God I know
your works that you are neither cold nor
hot

I could wish you were cold or hot so
then because you are lukewarm and
neither cold nor hot I will vomit you
out of my mouth so this is a really God
has just disgusted with this
congregation and again you know he says
to John to write the things which are
and and as he writes to each
congregation he makes allusions to very
specific things that are going on for
that congregation in that location at
that time and and Laodicea was a
wonderful thriving City but because of
where they were geographically located
they really did not have good water they
didn't have a good water supply so they
had to pipe in water from locations
outside of the city and I believe it was
to the north they would get their their
their cool water from the south they
would get their their hot water but you
know by the time the water reached the
city the cold water wasn't cold and the
hot water wasn't hot the they would come
lukewarm and and people were drinking

they would throw up and Christ is saying that's your condition that you know cold water is useful it's refreshing and hot water is useful can be used for a lot of different purposes but you're neither cold nor hot you are useless to me and sickening and I will spew you out of my mouth this this is these are people are baptized they've received the Holy Spirit they've they're on this journey and God is saying look if you don't repent I will vomit you sort of like a violent vomiting I'm so sick and disgusted I will vomit you out of my mouth because you say I am rich and Laodicea was a very rich City live really thriving city and I've become wealthy and have need of nothing so everything's looked after and this is the opposite of Smyrna where they were poor they were doing they were poor but God says they're rich here these people are rich but God says they're poor you do not know that you are wretched miserable for blind and naked and so it's the exact opposite of the actual appearance of the city and also the city was known for its medical prowess and and having developed an ice elf that could heal people with visual problems Christ says here I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire buy from me go so there are obviously a lot of buying and selling of gold cry sing buy from me gold refined in the fire that you may be rich you think you're rich but you're not buy the gold from me that you may be rich and white garments that you may be clothed so there are you know beautiful clothing lots of you know how people have money dress and crisis and you're naked by white garments from me that you may be clothed that the shame of your

nakedness may not be revealed and again these are people of God they've been baptized and in Christ is saying you're gonna be exposed and I'm giving you a warning ahead of time this is the unveiling so that you can see what you really like and you are poor blind and naked and I'm counseling you to buy from me gold and white garments that you may be clothed that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed and anoint your eyes with eyesalve is very is very interesting how Christ is so specific to the conditions going on within each congregation and he writes to each congregation appealing to what is going on for them in that time and using that as symbolism for all for us through time and he says anoint your eyes with I saw that you may see as many as I love I rebuke and chasten so it's because of his love for the church that he is really rebuking them in this very severe way and the severity of this rebuke shows the danger that these people of God are in and again you cannot read these epistles than think online you know I'm saved salvation is a process and it can be aborted it can be interrupted we can abort the process especially when we see what's coming and Christ makes it clear the love of many will wax cold and so if we really dive into these letters Christ is inoculating us from failure but we have to be responsive to the letters we have to be responsive to his words as many as I love I rebuke and I chase him therefore be zealous and repent 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 so again even though the

congregation can be off that doesn't mean that every individual in the congregation will be off the same way that think it was diet IRA had a few that had not gone with the doctrine of Balaam and they will they will walk with Christ in the same way here at Laodicea individuals cannot can repent and not be a part of all of this he says if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I'll come to him and die with him and he with me 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 and this is the vision that Christ wants us to have as we go into the rest of the apocalypse to be overcomers and again he ends with he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches to all the seven congregations and a lot of people just skip over this you know I'm in Philadelphia I'm fine I don't need to worry about anything really looking forward to be saved from everything and God just thinks the world of me maybe not maybe not and and and you know as we plunge into the future let's do so having evaluated ourselves against these criteria and let's do so with a you know developing this great love for the Brethren and really wanting to build up our congregation and encourage one another and love one another fervently and really look forward to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ and that doesn't mean we come down hard and we condemn people and you know we're shaking wagging our finger in their faces you know telling them how great we are and how spiritual we are and you know they better repent it means we love and we just suggesting we point things L we we don't lower our standards

and when things are happening about
immoral nature right in front of our
eyes in our congregations we point
things out maybe we go to the minister
we go to the Deacons or we say you know
I don't think this is appropriate is
there something that we can be that can
be done here you know maybe one of the
older women can talk to the younger
women in a loving way and we just really
developed this gentleness there's this
this love this compassion for all men
but especially those of the household of
faith and if we develop this and the
Holy Spirit can flow through us we will
be able to do what's required of us as
we go through the rest of the apocalypse
of the unveiling and no matter what we
see happening we can trust in God and so
you know again we've gone through all
seven epistles let's hear what the
Spirit says to the churches
and so these are the words of our Lord
Jesus Christ let's value them let's
treasure them let's soak them up every
single one of them and not be dismissive
of them and let's have that repentant
attitude and looking forward to
continuing now with this very very
special book of Revelation the
apocalypse is we will take the next
couple of weeks off wishing all of you a
wonderful fall festival season have a
wonderful Feast of Trumpets feast of
atonement followed by the Feast of
Tabernacles and then the last great day
praying that you'll be spiritually
enriched and looking forward to
reconnecting after the holy days
good