

02-11-03b Revelation

Our challenges are not far away. And sometimes we think, well, I'm sort of stoking, I'm laying in supplies for the big test that's going to come down the road. I'm fortifying myself for a great future calling, where here come the Amalekites over the hill, or here comes the Hittites, or here are the Hivites, and the Arkites, and the Amorites, and the Philistines, coming over to slay me where I stand.

And here's Goliath looming up over the hillside. And what we forget is that the test and the battle is now. Now is the time to be fervent.

Now is the time to be hot. Now is also the time to be cold. There is refreshment.

There is mutual ministry. Every single one of us, if you have claimed Christ as your Savior, you have a gifting from God the Holy Spirit. And it builds up, and edifies, and blesses other believers.

Any other believer that gets near you, it's like getting close to radiation. If God put a giant lump of U-235 inside your heart, anybody that gets close to you, their little Geiger counter would start ticking. Their little meter, you know when you get on a submarine, or work in a naval plant, they have this little thing, it looks like, have you ever seen those holiday poppers that they sell at the Fourth of July, it looks like a little plastic thing, and you pull the string and confetti pops out? The ones I've seen look just like that.

But they clip to your belt, or they clip to your person in some place, and it records how much radiation you've been exposed to. When you get near radiation, and even if they try to shield it behind lead and stuff, over the course of time, you get a certain amount of exposure, and that's as much as you're supposed to have. Well, your spiritual gift is like radiation.

It's power comes from God. It's purpose is from God. It creates and emanates blessing.

And if you are not in the throes of sin and evil, if you're anywhere near the narrow road, if you're oriented, even generally, in the right direction toward the straight gate, your spiritual gift is going to function. God the Holy Spirit is going to energize that thing. There is electricity flowing through the burner.

There is fire under the kettle. And if there are any signs of life, one of the radiant things that happens is you become a blessing to others. You may have no earthly idea how you bless, and when you bless, and where you bless, but you do, because it is all of God.

You're just a little chunk of radiant energy that induces a glow and a response in those around you. It is something God gives to the church. He has given us the privilege of blessing each other.

Every spiritual gift. In our background and tradition, there has been a lot of emphasis on the gift of

pastor and teacher. It is no more important a gift, it is no better a gift than any other gift.

The gift that you have is every bit as valuable and important and necessary as mine. And you have just as much obligation to make sure that you are in a condition that your gift will function. You're not allowed to be depressed.

You're not allowed to be discouraged for long. All of us get depressed. I came off those ships depressed.

But we've got to recover. Not just because, well, what difference does it make if it's just me. My daughter was working trying to understand the story of David eating the consecrated bread at Nob when he was fleeing from Saul.

And she asked me, Dad, what's really going on in this story? Was it right or wrong for him to eat the bread? And I said, well, there's a lot you can learn from that story. But one of the main things is, was it right or wrong for the priests to give the bread? And the answer is, especially when you look at Jesus referring back to that, it was right. Because you have to understand that those rituals were like the pages of scripture.

Now, if you had a plane crash in the Arctic and someone was injured and you needed to get them warm and all you had that was flammable to start a fire was your Bible, would you rip a few pages out and start your fire and maybe burn the whole Bible to get a fire going and stay warm? You would. Now, we don't typically burn Bibles, and that's not a good thing. But there are times when there is a distinction to be made between what is necessary for human life and to sustain life and to promote life and the rituals that teach us how to live that life and the materials that enable us.

And Jesus had his disciples pulling the heads off the grain. The Pharisees said, oh, you're breaking the law. You're harvesting on the Sabbath.

And he said, look, put things in perspective. There is a spirit of the law that gives life. There is a letter of the law that snuffs out that life.

But you have this episode of David running away in fear, and he was the man that faced Goliath, the boy who slew the lion and the bear in defense of the sheep. And yet Saul threatens him, and he's running away. And we do not live to ourselves.

His fear and his fleeing. He might have said, well, it's just me. Maybe I'm not hitting on all eight cylinders with the Lord right now.

But as he passes through Nob, 80 priests die because David is unfaithful. Eighty priests die because David is operating in fear. We do not live unto ourselves, and we do not die unto ourselves.

We are members of a body. And if we allow ourselves to languish, if we allow ourselves to wallow

in self-pity or in apathy or indifference, of course, if we become faithless, like these who dropped into the wilderness, we take a lot of people with us when we go. By the same token, when we are faithful, there is blessing by association with us.

We don't plan it. We don't energize it. We don't cause it.

It is a property that we possess, because the power of God is active within us. We are like a burning coal, and a burning coal radiates heat. Have you ever used one of these radiant heaters? You can feel the case, and it's cool to the touch, but things that get near it become stirred up with heat.

The radiant heat transfers, and things begin to glow with warmth. That's what we are when the power of God causes us to be fervent. When the presence of God, the Word of God, the Spirit of God, when we recognize that and live within it, we become fervent, and things around us begin to bubble and boil.

So, give preference to one another. Don't lag in diligence. Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

And I don't think there ought to be a comment there. Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Continuing steadfastly in prayer.

Patient in tribulation. Rejoicing in hope. Distributing to the needs of the saints.

Giving to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse.

Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. All of the characteristics of faith, hope, and love are manifest here, and right at the center, in its fervency of spirit.

We recognize that we have a need that only God can fill. And once we recognize that, as we look around us, we see needs that others have that we have the opportunity to fill. And we take on the attitude and the optimism and the blessing nature of God himself.

The mercy of God and the love of God is shed abroad in us and through us because we are looking outward and not inward. We recognize our own need and how it is filled, and we can see clearly the needs of others and how those can be filled, and we exploit the opportunities that God gives us. That is the refreshing of the cold water.

That is the boiling of the hot water. Either one is equally vivid and full of life. It is the lukewarmness that is vulnerability and failure.

Self-sufficiency. I have need of nothing. I'll rebuild my city myself.

Let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're going to move forward in this letter and see what counsel Jesus gives the believers at Laodicea. We're ready to resume now our study of the letter to the Laodicean church, the angel of the church at Laodicea recorded in

Revelation, chapter 3, beginning in verse 14.

During the break we were just now discussing how important it is for us to be aware. We did an entire study once on watch and pray and looked at the passages that encourage us to be watchful, be alert, to be aware that we're on. People rehearse and practice and say, well, I'm getting ready for the big performance.

I saw a whole story about the idea of rehearsing and someone mistook the rehearsal of a play about killing the prince for an actual plot to kill the prince and they were carted off and executed. But we think that sometimes we think, well, this is a rehearsal. This is my charge of the mosquito getting me ready for the charge of the elephant.

This is my practice run. These are my daily things getting me ready for something future. We don't realize that now is the appointed time.

Now is the day of deliverance. That's not just a gospel salvation word to the lost. Our day of deliverance, Christ died to deliver us out of this present evil age and it is now that we want to be found faithful.

It is now that we want to be fervent. We want to have the cold, refreshing quality in our lives that allows our spiritual gift and our spiritual opportunities to be seized upon and exploited and have the power of God active within us and flow through us to the benefit of others and to the praise of the glory of God. And we want to be on fire.

We want to have some fire in the boilers. There's nothing more distasteful than apathy. To be for something.

Be after something. Be in pursuit of something. To dog paddle.

Nobody says, let's all go to the lake and dog paddle. Or let's all just sort of float. You want to go somewhere.

You want to get something done. We should have a fervency. The Lord Jesus Christ didn't waste a minute of his life here on earth.

Even in his childhood, he was preparing. By the age of 12, he was able to confound the scribes in the temple because he was about his father's business. And even in the secular world, the mark that is left in history by someone's life is left by those who are pursuing accomplishment.

There was a wonderful program on PBS about the life of Thomas Jefferson that I saw this past week. What an incredible individual. You can see the way God blessed our nation by giving us the Washingtons and the Jeffersons and the Hamiltons and the Franklins, the Thomas Paines and the other great founders at the inception of our nation.

Men who were erudite, men who were scholars, but also men who lived fervent lives. They could see what needed to be, and they went after it with their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. And we want to be the patriots of the faith.

We want to be those who regret that we have but one life to live for the Savior. That's what is lacking in Laodicea. Because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth.

Who is speaking these words? If you offer a criticism, what's our standard human reaction? You can answer this question. If there's a pretty stinging criticism that comes your way, someone says, well, this really isn't as it should be, and you did not do this well. What's our natural, corrupt nature, human instinct response? Well, says who? Who are you to be passing judgment on me? Let me tell you a few things about you.

And we go back on the perpetrator, on the speaker, and say, well, you ain't no great sheiks yourself. And we go into ad hominem. We don't want to deal with the substance of the rebuke, or the correction of the instruction.

We want to go back and say, well, who are you to be telling me what did the Pharisees do when the blind man said, it doesn't look that difficult to me, since the beginning of time, who's been able to cure blindness but God? I'm no scholar, but I would think that the man that can make me see when I'm blind from birth is from God. And the Pharisees say, you were all together born in sin, and are you going to instruct us? And they run him out. You know, you were born in sin.

Who are you to be telling us? They don't deal with the substance of the argument, because it's a little too direct, a little too true. So here, Jesus, in a way, anticipates, because here you are, you're in latency, you're self-sufficient, you're rich, you have everything, you think, boy, we are really cooking on all light cylinders, the Lord is saving the best for last, here comes our letter, and everyone is leaning forward in the pews, as it were, waiting for the, oh, to the church at Laodicea, right. It's like that, was it Gloria Swanson, or somebody says, okay, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up, you know, you're ready for your glory to be revealed, and Jesus says, I know your works, and there is nothing but rebuke, there is nothing but pointing out of failure.

And what's going to be the reaction? Well, who are you to be telling me? That's just our classic instinctive reflex. So he introduces himself as the Amen, the faithful and true witness. We delved into this quite a bit the other night.

But I wanted to point out here something about the firstborn of creation. We talked about the Amen as the affirmation, the so be it, the true. Jesus says, verily, verily, well, this is Amen, Amen, when you look at it in Greek.

Truly, truly, it is emphatic, it is the real deal, it is at the heart and center and core of truth. Then he says, the beginning of the creation of God. And this is a little bit awkward, because the Arche,

and of course, dead seas of ink have been spilled on this, Arche Ktiseos, which is K-T-I-S-E-O-S, that's the word for creation, it's from Ktizo, the Arche of creation, the beginning of creation.

It could also be interpreted as the first, the Archearius was the high priest, the first priest, the highest priest. So he is the highest of creation, or the first of created existence, as some think. But we have some light shed on this from a letter written to a nearby congregation, Paul's letter to the Colossians.

We studied this, Colossians chapter 1, verse 15, when he talks about the beloved son of God, who rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us, God has transferred us into his kingdom by his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, Colossians 1, verse 15, he is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, the protokos of all, and then you have the same word for creation, Ktiseos, and it explains and elaborates in verse 16, for by him, wise be the first of all creation, or the firstborn of all creation, by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through him and for him. So the idea that Jesus was the first super angel, that God created him and then created everything else, that some have drawn from this statement in Revelation and a few other passages is not correct. Paul very clearly states that it is through him and by him and for him that all things were created.

And because he is the head of all things, especially to the church, he is the first, he is the head, everything depends on him. That is the idea. So what does Jesus say? I am the faithful and true witness, I am the martus, the martyr.

What I tell you is true. What do they do in court when someone gives testimony and they want to undermine it? They try to impugn the witness. They try to undermine his credibility in some way.

Jesus says, I am the amen, I am the faithful and true witness. I have been here since the beginning of creation, through him and by him and for him all things were created. Do you really think he does not know what he is talking about when he evaluates you? He does.

And what we bring from this is, when the Lord Jesus Christ speaks and the entire revealed word of God is spoken of as the mind of Christ, what the Holy Spirit communicates to us are the things of Christ. The spiritual food of the Israelites in the wilderness. He says they all drank the same spiritual drink.

They drank from that rock that followed them and that rock was Christ. What does that mean? It means that even Old Testament truths, the prophetic passages, the narrative passages, the promises and principles and doctrines and covenant dealings of God with Israel in the Old Testament and with Old Testament saints in general is all part of Christ who has been made to us wisdom and righteousness and peace and sanctification. So he is the faithful and true witness.

So get over it if it hurts your feelings. Get over it if you feel a sense of reaction. Get over it if the

word of God begins to convict and rebuke and correct and instruct.

And do not slay the messenger. Sometimes I have been guilty of this in the past. There were times when I was sure that a pastor with whom I had an acquaintance elsewhere in the week was aiming his sermon at me.

And well, I think you've kind of crossed a line here Dr. So-and-so. And it's really not true because after the service I would talk and two or three other people would say boy that really hit me in the bread basket. And I thought well, don't begin to impugn the motives of the messenger.

Analyze it and see if it's the word of God. And if it is, then take it as word from God, from the amen, from the faithful and true witness. And don't distract yourself and give yourself a convenient out from the corrective power of the word, the transforming power of the word by saying well, I think there's something fishy about the way it was delivered.

I, for what it's worth, will tell you that I don't think of any individuals during the course of preparing or presenting the word of God. I make it a point not to. I have plenty of grist for the mill just thinking about myself and trying to avoid.

When my mind casts about for an illustration, I think of myself because I know myself the best. And I have a long history of spectacular failures in one area and another from which I could draw. And I think that's really not... In communicating the word of God, we have perfect illustrations.

We have perfect expositions within the word of God and within the scripture. And that is where our application and where our discernment comes from. So, if you ever get suspicious of me, I don't know that that's the case.

But if you ever do, it is never my endeavor or my intent to think, well, I believe I'll slipple so-and-so a word or two. I know some of the people who listen on tape. I obviously know the people who assemble here.

But all of us have a greater responsibility. And Jesus says, I am a faithful and true witness. I am the amen.

This is the so be it. This is the reality. The transcendent reality that goes even beyond what we can see.

And let us not give ourselves a convenient out by deflecting our attention to the messenger. This messenger is Christ. And there is no deflecting from him.

I think that's the point of his introduction here. Because this is the most stinging rebuke of all the seven letters. And it is the most likely to create the response of reaction.

Of, let me find a way to blunt the force of this rebuke. Well, we need this. Just as we need the

insight and the sharp point of the sword to pierce us asunder from the first six letters, we need it here as well.

All of us have areas where we really don't think we have a need. We really think, you know, I've got that covered. I'm sufficient.

That's not one of my problems. Now, if I think I know some people who do have that problem, let me dwell on them a little bit. I'll send them a booklet.

I'll pass along a tape. Oh, so-and-so really needs to hear this. And that's one of the more common deflections.

Oh, you know, I know just the person that needs to hear this. And it gets passed along. If we want to please God, if we want to have treasure in heaven, if we want a place in the kingdom, if we want to walk through the open door, if we want to sit down at the table and partake of the hidden manna, if we want to reflect the glory of God, we have to get in the chair and let the dentist drill.

We have to get on the operating table and let him pull out the scalpel. We have got to endure the discomfort of rebuke, correction, and instruction. Jesus says, this is coming straight from me.

Don't throw rocks at John. Don't get after Paul or any other, you know, Epaphras or Archippus or any of the others. So now, back in Revelation chapter 3, verse 15, I know your deeds.

You are neither cold nor hot. Your water has no benefit. It is stale and lukewarm.

And it is because, in verse 17, you say, I am rich. I have become wealthy. I have need of nothing.

We have a rich background to draw on here. They were so self-sufficient they didn't even need federal aid. And you do not know that you are wretched, you are miserable, you are poor, you are blind, and you are naked.

Now, these are five conditions. Look at the last three. In a city famous for its textile industry and proud of its unique woolen fabric, they are naked.

In a city famous for its medical school and its tablets broken into powder to make eye salve, famous throughout the Roman world, they are blind. In a town famous for its banking industry and its financial self-sufficiency and rebuilding itself out of its own rubble after the earthquake of AD 60, they are poor. And because of this, because they will not acknowledge their nakedness, they will not acknowledge their blindness, they will not acknowledge their poverty, they also refuse to acknowledge that they are miserable and that they are wretched.

Because wretchedness and misery always have a cause. There is a basis. It's always something.

But if you will not acknowledge the cause, then you cannot really acknowledge the symptom. There have been people who delay going to the doctor even though they feel a lump or have a

symptom or have a pain because they know that if they acknowledge and have that lump or that tumor or that symptom documented and explored, it's going to move forward to a diagnosis and a prognosis. And they don't want to hear the diagnosis and they don't want to hear the prognosis.

And so they'll deny the symptom. And that's what's happening in Laodicea. And here is a principle that we can think about in our own walk our own navigation through our day.

One of the symptoms of the Laodicean problem one of the symptoms of being lukewarm is refusal to acknowledge a problem. We gloss it over. We pass it by.

We explain it away. We defer. We sublimate.

We transfer. If you've ever been into discussion with someone and you're trying to point out or you're trying to correct a child a talkative child who's actually willing to come back at you with a reason, you can see the creative ways in which human beings deflect and counter. Back when Bill Maher had his really disgusting program on television called Politically Incorrect it used to amaze me how when they would have somebody who knew what they were talking about on as a guest and it's a panel discussion and he would bring up an issue and whenever a substantive point was made on the conservative side or on the side of right and righteousness and common sense rather than dealing with that there would be a joke made or an ad hominem response or well there would be a flippant response that didn't deal with the substance.

We are masters of that. You do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. And this denial of knowledge is basis for conviction.

This is not something that isn't their fault. They are in denial. You remember when Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees and he says if you were blind you would have no sin.

But because you say we see your sin remains. I'll give you that reference if I don't forget a little bit later because I've gotten ahead of myself in my notes. But that's the principle.

The Pharisees were blind and would not admit it. And they said no, we see. And Jesus says because you say we see when you ought to know better.

You ought to acknowledge your blindness. But you will not acknowledge it. You say we see.

That's why your sin remains. That's why the basis of your conviction and your condemnation remains. Because you say I am rich.

Because you say I am wealthy. Now this has antecedents in Old Testament days. You go back to Hosea chapter 12 and verse 8. Ephraim said surely I have become rich.

I have found wealth for myself. In all my labors they will find in me no iniquity which would be sin. Hosea 12:8 Remember what happened to Ephraim.

Ephraim is the northern kingdom. They were the first ones to get hauled off into captivity. Zechariah chapter 11 and verse 5. Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished and each of those who sell them says blessed be the Lord for I have become rich.

And their own shepherds have no pity on them. I have become rich. As long as I have my immediate needs met I don't want to think about the implications.

I don't want to think about the actual righteousness of what I am doing. I have become rich. That is what counts.

I have need of nothing. Matthew chapter 5 and verse 3. Remember Matthew 5. You should have some chapters in the Bible committed to memory knowing their content. 1 Corinthians 13.

The love chapter. Hebrews chapter 11. The faith chapter.

Matthew chapter 5. The Beatitudes. Attitudes that should be. And that is the Sermon on the Mount.

In Matthew chapter 5 and verse 3. What does Jesus say? Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. That statement ought to resonate based on our recent studies. If you recognize that you are needy and have to rely on what God provides that is acknowledgement of poverty in spirit.

Acknowledgement of need because that need is going to drive us to seek. It is going to compel us to go after what God provides. And it is that sense of need and that compulsion that is going to result in laying hold of the kingdom.

Those who are poor in spirit we acknowledge our need. When you have a need what happens when you run out of something? Guests are coming over and you are planning for deviled eggs but you have no eggs. There is a need there.

There is a lack. What do you do? You take steps. You drop what you are doing.

If you have kids you say, Hey kids, I want you to do this and that. I have to run to the store and get some eggs. When you are low on gas and a little light comes on on your dashboard you may be late.

You may have to rearrange your schedule but you go find a gas station and get your tank full. Need creates action. Need shuffles priorities.

When you recognize there is a need I remember one of the first times I ever saw an emergency in the medical sense. I was a child and had some other kids playing. It was shortly after we moved out to the woods in Rogers County.

This is like 1969 or 1970. One of my classmates that lived many miles away came over and was spending the day. We were playing and goofing around out in the yard.

Of course being out in the country our fence was barbed wire. He ran out to catch a football and got tangled up in the barbed wire and sliced his elbow open in a way that obviously required stitches. Well, everything else that was going on my mother's tasks of the day my father's priorities and things he was working on everything got stopped and all of our playing and cavorting got stopped and we packed Randy Chappell into the car drove him to 13 miles into Claremore to the emergency room and got him stitched up.

Need impels, compels causes us to re-evaluate what we're currently doing and put the most important things first. If we ever get complacent and decide we don't have a need we're going to lose our grip on things now and things in the future. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

There is a great amount of freight in that very simple sentence. 1 Corinthians 4 in verse 8 Paul talking to the Corinthians is being sarcastic and he says Oh, you're already filled you have already become rich you have become kings without us and indeed I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you. And in his sarcasm he's saying one of your problems is you don't think you need us you don't think you need the message.

The Corinthian church is the most backward and immature and needy church in the whole New Testament. Of all of Paul's letters they get more rebuke and less condemnation than any other. So, because you say I am rich I have become wealthy I have need of nothing notice they say this is something we tell ourselves we affirm to ourselves the Pharisees said we see we're not blind we don't have a problem of perception we perceive all we are masters of the scriptures.

So Jesus goes on in verse 18 to say I advise you to obtain from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich. You need a different kind of gold than what you are relying on. You may have a lot of money in the bank you may have a very successful business but there is a different kind of gold and I counsel you to get it.

Where does it come from? It comes from Christ. If someone responds to this message and they say well, maybe there is a kind of gold that I don't have where do they go to get it? Jesus doesn't say I counsel you to talk to John or Epaphras or Archippus or the Apostle Paul or his letters per se what does he say? He says I counsel you to obtain it from me. This is gold from Christ.

The theme of the book of Romans is appropriating the righteousness of Christ by faith on a daily basis. It is so sad that that book has been relegated to the realm of soteriology and salvation from the lake of fire and its message for day by day life for believers has been missed. Appropriating the righteousness of Christ by faith.

But you have to recognize that you need it. This is why the church thrives so well in times of

persecution because we suddenly become aware of our needs. But in periods such as now we are in a prosperous country the most powerful nation in the world the most commonplace American has access to conveniences and luxuries that King Solomon would have sent hordes of servants off on month-long journeys to bring back.

We have grapes all times of the year we have refrigeration we have air conditioning we have heat we have transportation we have the great orchestras of the world and the great singers and the great artists of the world applying their trade of entertainment for us at the click of a remote. We can comfort ourselves we have the textiles from the world we have the produce of the world we have every conceivable advantage and this can lull us into a Laodicean attitude I really have need of nothing I'm getting along okay my pay is sufficient my accommodations are sufficient my transportation is sufficient my clothing is sufficient I'm not in real need of anything. That is looking at circumstance.

What was the problem in Laodicea? Where was this sense of confidence coming from? Physical circumstances and not looking at spiritual conditions. Physical circumstances and not spiritual conditions. If we would judge ourselves we would not be judged.

If we fail to judge ourselves the Lord Jesus Christ is going to say Here I am, I'm the faithful and true witness I am the Amen and I've got a few things to say. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire otherwise this lukewarm mineral laden water is going to have an emetic effect and there is going to be vomiting to follow. This is advice this is counsel that requires humility to accept it.

If you feel self sufficient and someone says you're not you have to be teachable you have to be willing to change your mind about your assessment of your condition. If we find ways to react if we find ways to deflect this is a symptom of lack of teachability which is another word for humility. We are victims of the first and greatest original sin.

Obtain from me, buy from me gold refined by the fire. This would hearken or call up in the minds of people familiar with the Old Testament, Isaiah. Isaiah chapter 55 and verse 1 Oh everyone who thirsts come to the waters and you who have no money come, buy and eat.

Come buy wine and milk without money and without cost. When he says obtain from me we're not exchanging you don't have to give away your wealth you have to acknowledge your need and you can obtain this without money and without cost. So that you may become rich and this is riches where moth and rust do not corrupt where thieves do not break in and steal.

We have to be willing to accept this sort of rebuke and correction from the Lord. Proverbs 3 verse 11 and 12 My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord. Do not loathe his reproof.

For whom the Lord loves even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights. Obtain from me gold refined by fire a different kind of riches. White garments so that you may clothe yourself not

the black garments from the famous wool the white garments and the Laodicean church knows what these are.

John has taught them their itinerant pastors have taught them about righteousness and the parables of the Lord and the white garment that was necessary to go into the wedding feast. John himself is going to go on in Revelation and talk about the white garments which are the righteous deeds of the saints. White garments so that you may clothe yourself and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed.

Believers like to we like to stick our head in the sand and think everybody will be happy over there. When Jesus comes back and we all go to glory it's just going to be one long feast. It won't be.

There will be regret. There will be weeping. There will be wailing.

There will be gnashing of teeth. There will be residence in the darkness which is outside. The shame of our nakedness will be revealed.

There's nothing more horrifying. There are truisms and jokes and things about people having dreams about being out in public and suddenly finding themselves naked or unclothed. It's a horrifying thing.

Well, there is a reality of spiritual nakedness that will be revealed at the judgment if we do not wake up. And that alone ought to be enough motivation for us to sit down and really analyze ourselves and ask am I fooling myself? Am I comforting myself with a false comfort? Am I giving myself a false view? I don't want to be found naked at the judgment. Not only for my own sake but because this is what Christ died to accomplish.

To give us the ability to reflect the glory of God. Let God clothe us as He's done from the very beginning in the garden. Well, we're going to have to close here before we get to the ISAF.

But it certainly gives us a lot to think about, a lot to contemplate. We do not want to be fools but wise, knowing what the will of the Lord is. And it's very clearly revealed here.

And I trust that all of us will gain thereby. Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, we pray that God the Holy Spirit will enliven our souls with the energy and the power of your word.

We pray that we will be transformed. Our minds will be renewed. We will live in a manner that is pleasing to you and glorifying to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We ask it in His name. Amen.