

Study Notes For Revelation

(Chapter Three)

Revelation 3:1 *“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.”*

- As a reminder, at the conclusion of chapter one, we addressed the angels of the seven churches (**Revelation 1:20**). The term “angel” [messenger] here is the same Greek word as we saw there (Strong’s # 32). Jesus, through the pen of John, is addressing the messenger of the church.
- The phrase, “He that hath the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars,” directs the reader to the fact that the Father and the Son are behind this message (**Revelation 1:4-5**).
- As we have seen with Ephesus (**Revelation 2:2**), Smyrna (**Revelation 2:9**), Pergamos (**Revelation 2:13**), and Thyatira (**Revelation 2:19**); the Lord knows their works. He judges accordingly (**Revelation 2:23**).
- They had a name. This simply means what it says. Such as when a child is named (**Matthew 1:21**) or a person is identified by name (**Mark 5:22**).
- Being referred to as “dead” is not good (**Luke 15:11-32**, **Ephesians 2:1-3**, and **I Timothy 5:6**).
- Think about faith without works (**James 2:14-26**).
- The message will be to repent (**Revelation 3:3**).

Revelation 3:2 *“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”*

- The process of correction for them started with “be watchful” (**Matthew 24:42-25:13**, **Matthew 26:41**, **Mark 13:37**, **I Corinthians 16:13**, and **I Thessalonians 5:6**).
- If they will not watch... (**Revelation 3:3**). Remember, immediate judgment is the threatened consequence (**Revelation 2:20-23**; cf. **Acts 5:1-11**).
- The instruction “strengthen the things which remain” is a great instruction. You cannot fix what is broken and neglect what you have going in the right direction. If you’re an athlete rehabbing a broken leg you still need to keep the rest of your body in some shape. To strengthen is like what Jesus told Peter to do to the brethren AFTER he was converted (**Luke 22:31-32**). The words “established” or “stablish” (**Romans 1:11** and **Romans 16:25**) are also fitting translations of the Greek word “στηρίζω” (Strong’s # 4741).
- The good was ready to die, meaning weakened. Think about someone who is near to death (cf. **Luke 7:2**).
- Their works were not full; complete; perfect (cf. **Colossians 4:12**).
- Think about how saints must grow (**II Peter 1:3-11**) and be properly productive (**Matthew 7:18-19** and **John 15:1-11**).
- The measuring stick - “before God” (**Luke 16:15**). They may have looked good to man, but God sees deeper than man (**I Samuel 16:7** and **Proverbs 16:2**).

Revelation 3:3 *“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.”*

- A similar admonishment was given to the church in Ephesus to go back to the beginning (**Revelation 2:5**).
- To hold fast as instructed here is to “keep” [or “keepeth”] (**Revelation 1:3**, **Revelation 2:26**, and **Revelation 22:7**).
- With the instruction to repent we know the Lord has given some space (**Revelation 2:21**). However, with the instruction to repent there is a sure consequence for those who do not (**Luke 13:1-5**).
- Their judgment was going to come and an unknown time to them. Remember what that looked like from what we learned in the previous chapter (**Revelation 2:5**).

Revelation 3:4 *“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”*

- Some get confused on this verse. Don’t assume that the few faithful were aware of the spiritual death of the others (**I Timothy 5:24-25**).
- There were a few members who had not defiled their garments, but what happens if they remain among the spiritually dead? If you are among the spiritually dead, and nothing changes, you will die with them (**I Corinthians 5:1-13**, **Galatians 5:7-9**, **Ephesians 5:6-11**, **II John 1:6-11**, etc.).
- Remember the principle of the remnant in times of apostasy (**Isaiah 1:9** and **Romans 11:1-6**).
- Not defiling their garments (**Revelation 16:15**). Just remember that we are not talking about washed clothing, but what saints clothe themselves with (**Romans 13:12**, **Galatians 3:27**, **Ephesians 4:24**, **Ephesians 6:11**, **Colossians 3:10-14**, **I Peter 5:5**, etc.).
- To be deemed worthy (**II Thessalonians 1:4-5**).

Revelation 3:5 *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”*

- We see the focus on overcoming as we have with the previous churches too (**Revelation 2:7**, **Revelation 2:11**, **Revelation 2:17**, and **Revelation 2:26**). We will see the same emphasis with the next two congregations as well (**Revelation 3:12** and **Revelation 3:21**).
- The inheritance comes upon those who overcome (**Revelation 21:7**).
- One of the points of verse 4 [walk with me in white] is extended further here with being clothed in white linen. Later we will see language of being clothed in white (**Revelation 3:18**).
- We see various references to the book of life in the Scriptures as well as names being blotted out (**Exodus 32:32-33**, **Psalms 69:28**, **Philippians 4:3**, **Revelation 12:8**, **Revelation 17:8**, **Revelation 20:12**, **Revelation 20:15**, **Revelation 21:27**, and **Revelation 22:18-19**).

- Jesus is clear whom He will confess in Heaven (**Matthew 10:32-33**).

Revelation 3:6 *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”*

- As we have seen with the previous churches and will see going forward, this statement is all about telling them to hear (**Revelation 2:7, Revelation 2:11, Revelation 2:17, Revelation 2:23, Revelation 2:29, Revelation 3:13, and Revelation 3:22**).
- Remember what was said in the first chapter: *“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand”* (**Revelation 1:3**).

Revelation 3:7 *“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;”*

- As a reminder, at the conclusion of chapter one, we addressed the angels of the seven churches (**Revelation 1:20**). The term “angel” [messenger] here is the same Greek word as we saw there (Strong’s # 32). Jesus, through the pen of John, is addressing the messenger of the church.
- God the Father, Son, and Spirit are involved in this letter being written (**Revelation 1:1-2; 2:7**).
- God is Holy (**I Samuel 2:2, Psalms 99:5, and I Peter 1:13-16**).
- God is true (**John 6:32-35, John 17:3, and I John 5:20**).
- The key of David represents the right to the throne (**Isaiah 22:20-23**). Jesus is the obvious one referenced here to the saints in Philadelphia (**Luke 1:26-33**).
- The authority belongs to Christ (**Matthew 11:27, Matthew 28:18, Acts 2:36, Colossians 1:12-19, and I Peter 3:18-22**). Man cannot shut what He has opened or open what He has shut.
- Whose house are the saints (**Hebrews 3:1-6**)?

Revelation 3:8 *“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.”*

- Jesus knows their works as with all the other congregations addressed (**Revelation 2:2, Revelation 2:9, Revelation 2:13, Revelation 2:19, Revelation 3:1, and Revelation 3:14**).
- Doors in the Scriptures have various meanings. Opportunity is one of those meanings (**I Corinthians 16:5-9**). A means by which something is obtained is another (**John 10:9**). Jesus is the way (**John 14:6**), opportunities and ways He opens up cannot be closed by man.
- There is reason for concern when there is little strength (**Proverbs 24:10**).
- Yet, there can be great strength in weakness too (**II Corinthians 12:9-10**).
- They have kept the Lord’s word (**Luke 11:27-28 and John 14:21-24**).
- They have not denied Him (**Luke 12:8-9**).

Revelation 3:9 *“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”*

- The Lord told the congregation in Smyrna: *“I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan”* (**Revelation 2:9**).
- When we discussed what was said to Smyrna, we looked at these points which also apply to this verse: Some of the Jews stood in the way of the Gospel (**I Thessalonians 2:14-16**; cf. **Acts 14:2** and **Acts 17:13**). When one stands against Jesus, they are standing for Satan (**John 8:30-44**, **Acts 13:6-12**, and **I John 3:1-10**). Jesus draws clear lines (**Matthew 12:30** and **Luke 11:23**).
- The turning of the tables will be that those who are against these saints will come before them in a certainly different manner. There are multiple ways in which this could come to fruition (i.e. **Exodus 12:29-36**, **Zechariah 8:20-23**, and **Acts 16:19-39**).
- Another way in which this can be is the promise to reign with Christ if we suffer with Him (**II Timothy 2:12**) and what that looks like in one scene of Judgment (**Luke 19:11-27**; cf. **I Corinthians 6:1-3**).
- Remember where the enemies of the Lord will be before He surrenders the throne back to the Father (**I Corinthians 15:24-25**).
- The hope those whom the Lord loves have (**II Thessalonians 2:16**) will be surely known in the end when that hope is realized (**I Peter 1:3-9**).
- On the other hand, think about how the rich man was able to see Lazarus in comfort while he was in torment even before the end of the world (**Luke 16:19-31**).

Revelation 3:10 *“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”*

- We talked about how this congregation had kept the word (**Revelation 3:8**).
- The phrase, “word of my patience” is interesting. The Parable of the sower talks of those who hear the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience (**Luke 8:15**). John identified himself as a brother and companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus (**Revelation 1:9**). When we think of Jesus’ patience, there is a lot of instruction there to be followed (**Hebrews 12:1-3**).
- So, let’s consider Jesus’ patience. Before Jesus came into this world He knew that He would be despised and rejected (**Isaiah 53:3**). Shame did not weigh down our Lord. He faced contradiction [dispute; disobedience; strife] from sinners (**Matthew 12:22-30**, **Mark 12:13-17**, **Mark 14:65**, **Luke 4:16-30**, **Luke 9:22**, **John 6:60-71**, etc.). The horrible things our Lord faced did not cause Him to quit. He could have chosen not to go through with more suffering. He could have called legions of angels to protect Himself. He chose not to (**Matthew 26:47-56**).

- It is wise to look to Jesus. To see His example (**I John 2:3-6**). To see that we too can be victorious lest we get tired and faint mentally. There is a reward before us if we do not get tired and give up (**Galatians 6:9**). Our labor is not and will not be in vain (**I Corinthians 15:58** and **Hebrews 6:10-12**). Faithfully living in this world is not easy. There are times, like the faithful of the past had to endure, wherein we can be “troubled on every side” (**II Corinthians 4:8**). If you go back and read that context, you see that Paul was able to press through those difficult times he faced by keeping his focus on things eternal (**II Corinthians 4:9-5:11**). Staying goal minded is the key. Jesus stayed focused (**John 4:31-34**). Jesus steadfastly set His face on where He was supposed to go to do our Father’s will (i.e. **Luke 9:51**).
- Jesus promised to keep them from the hour of temptation coming upon the whole world. In the first century there had already been events that came upon all or even upon large areas (**Luke 2:1**, **Mark 13:1-13**, and **Acts 11:27-30**).
- Consider two thoughts of many which could be made. The first, with the work of the Holy Spirit, God guided some from harms way (**Acts 16:1-10**). Secondly, in general without miraculous intervention, there is nothing faced without counter measures in place (**I Corinthians 10:1-13**).
- That hour of temptation was to test those that dwelt upon the earth (**II Thessalonians 2:1-12**). Think back to those in Smyrna being told they would be tried (**Revelation 2:10**).
- Remember, this was in their lifetime, not ours (**Revelation 1:1-3**, **Revelation 22:6**, and **Revelation 22:10**).

Revelation 3:11 *“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”*

- Quickly (**Revelation 22:7**, **Revelation 22:12**, and **Revelation 22:20**).
- This is a sure statement that nothing here is about the end of the world (**Matthew 24:35-36** and **II Peter 3:10** [cf. **Luke 12:39-40**]).
- As with other congregations (**Revelation 2:25** and **Revelation 3:3**), they are to hold fast (**Hebrews 10:23**).
- Man cannot, on his own, take away saints from the Lord (**John 10:27-29**).
- However, if a Christian does not hold fast they can be led astray by the wicked (**Acts 20:28-31**, **Romans 16:17-18**, **Galatians 5:7-9**, **Colossians 2:4-8**, **I Timothy 1:19-20**, **II Timothy 2:14-18**, **Hebrews 13:9**, **II Peter 3:17**, etc.).

Revelation 3:12 *“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”*

- The message to overcome is repeated again (**Revelation 2:7**, **Revelation 2:11**, **Revelation 2:17**, **Revelation 2:26**, and **Revelation 3:5**). Such will be said to the Laodiceans as well (**Revelation 3:21**).
- To be a pillar (**Jeremiah 1:18** and **Galatians 2:9**).

- The temple for saints is the saints (**II Corinthians 6:16**) as well as a figure representing what is in Heaven (**Revelation 11:19**).
- Jesus referring to the Father as “my God” (**Matthew 27:46** and **John 20:16-17**).
- For those who overcome until death (**Revelation 2:10**), there is no more going in or out (**Luke 16:19-31**).
- For those who overcome and remain in the flesh, the occasion of stumbling isn't there because of their strength, love, etc. (**Psalms 119:165**, **Romans 5:1-5**, and **James 1:1-4**).
- Within the context of Revelation, the church is going to come back strong from the persecution that had arisen. This is the New Jerusalem coming down from Heaven (**Revelation 21:1-7**).
- The name of God written upon the overcomer (**Revelation 14:1** and **Revelation 22:1-7**).
- The “new” name: “new (especially in freshness; while G3501 is properly so with respect to age): - new” (Strong's # 2537).

Revelation 3:13 *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”*

- As we have seen with the previous churches and will see going forward, this statement is all about telling them to hear (**Revelation 2:7**, **Revelation 2:11**, **Revelation 2:17**, **Revelation 2:23**, **Revelation 2:29**, **Revelation 3:6**, and **Revelation 3:22**).

Revelation 3:14 *“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;”*

- As we have seen with the six other congregations addressed, this message is “unto the angel of the church” (**Revelation 2:1**, **Revelation 2:8**, **Revelation 2:12**, **Revelation 2:18**, **Revelation 3:1**, and **Revelation 3:7**).
- The first time we read of the church in Laodicea is in the letter to Colosse (**Colossians 2:1** and **Colossians 4:13-16**).
- The word “amen” appears about seventy-eight times in the KJV. This is the only time the term is applied to the person of Jesus in this way.
- Jesus is the true, faithful witness (**Revelation 1:5**). Think about how Jesus is the only witness in seeing the Father (**John 1:18**). Jesus revealed the Father (**Matthew 11:27**).
- Jesus is the beginning [origin; leader (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon)] of the Creation (**John 1:1-5**, **John 1:10**, **Ephesians 3:9**, **Colossians 1:12-17**, and **Hebrews 1:1-2**).

Revelation 3:15 *“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.”*

- As with all the other congregations addressed (**Revelation 2:2, Revelation 2:9, Revelation 2:13, Revelation 2:19, Revelation 3:1, and Revelation 3:8**), we see Jesus knows their works.
- With the Lord one is either “all in” or “all out” and that is how He presents the choice to serve Him (**Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Joshua 24:14-15, Matthew 12:33-37, Luke 11:23, II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, and II Timothy 2:19**).

Revelation 3:16 *“So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”*

- The Lord is very clear here that they made Him sick, wanting to vomit. Think about the Lord’s strong reaction to sinners throughout the Scriptures (**Genesis 6:5-7, Psalms 11:5, Proverbs 3:32, Proverbs 6:16-19, Proverbs 12:22, Proverbs 17:15, Isaiah 63:10, Lamentations 2:1-7, Amos 5:18-27, Mark 3:1-6, John 2:13-17, etc.**).

Revelation 3:17 *“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”*

- The problem with wealth is that people trust in it, sin to pursue it, etc. (**Psalms 62:10, Micah 2:1-2, Micah 6:12, and I Timothy 6:6-10**).
- Wealth often provides a false sense of security (**Luke 6:20-24, Luke 12:13-21, and Luke 16:19-31**).
- How can you be rich and poor at the same time (**Proverbs 13:7**)?

Revelation 3:18 *“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”*

- There is earthly riches and then true riches (**Luke 16:11**).
- The Gospel is a treasure (**II Corinthians 4:1-7**).
- Heavenly investment is a treasure (**Matthew 6:19-21**).
- Godly wisdom is better than gold (**Proverbs 8:1; 8:10; 8:19**).
- The kingdom is likened to treasure (**Matthew 13:44**).
- Think about **Proverbs 23:23**
- Think about the proper clothing of saints in a spiritual way, rather than the carnal (**Romans 13:14, Galatians 3:27, I Peter 5:5, etc.**).
- Having to remedy their sight (**Ezekiel 12:2, Acts 26:18-20, and Ephesians 1:18**).

Revelation 3:19 *“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”*

- The willingness to correct error is a loving action (**Proverbs 27:5-6** and **I Thessalonians 2:1-12**; cf. **Leviticus 19:17**).
- Such correction is likened to a loving parent with a child (**Proverbs 3:12**, **Proverbs 13:24**, and **Hebrews 12:5-13**).
- To rebuke is to: “1) to convict, refute, confute; 1a) generally with a suggestion of shame of the person convicted; 1b) by conviction to bring to the light, to expose; 2) to find fault with, correct; 2a) by word; 2a1) to reprehend severely, chide, admonish, reprove; 2a2) to call to account, show one his fault, demand an explanation; 2b) by deed” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon; Strong’s # 1651). Tell him his fault privately when a personal situation exists of a trespass (**Matthew 18:15**) or to rebuke before all in other situations of a transgression (**I Timothy 5:20**). To reprove (**Ephesians 5:11** and **II Timothy 4:2**). Such is not a dull action (**Titus 1:13**).
- To chasten is so that someone might “learn” (**I Timothy 1:19-20**). The word is translated “instructing” (**II Timothy 2:25**; cf. Strong’s # 3811) or “teaching” (**Titus 2:12**).
- The Lord rebuking them and chastening them was to bring about a zealous [earnest] repentance. For, those whom are in error and do not repent will perish (**Luke 13:1-5**). See notes on previous instructions in our study (**Revelation 2:5; 2:16; 2:21-22; 3:3**).

Revelation 3:20 *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”*

- What a beautiful image. The fact that the Lord stands ready to receive those who had fallen and repent is a clear truth in the Scriptures (**Luke 15:1-32**).
- On the other hand, consider how the wording here is more receptive than what He said to Ephesus, Pergamum, the false prophetess and her followers, and the spiritually dead in Sardis (**Revelation 2:5**, **Revelation 2:14-16**, **Revelation 2:20-23**, and **Revelation 3:3**).
- Later in Revelation we will read of the time wherein the great whore [imperial city known as the mother of harlots; **Revelation 17:5**] falls and the marriage feast is prepared for the Lord and His bride (**Revelation 19:1-10**). The Lord wants those who repent in Laodicea to join Him in that time.

Revelation 3:21 *“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”*

- As we keep seeing, the goal was to overcome (**Revelation 2:7**, **Revelation 2:11**, **Revelation 2:17**, **Revelation 2:26**, **Revelation 3:5**, and **Revelation 3:12**).
- In one way, we talked already about saints reigning (**Revelation 2:26-27**).
- Jesus spoke of overcoming the world even before He ascended into Heaven (**John 16:33**). So, we don’t want to make a declaration that this is talking certainly about Heaven.

- At the same time, there is what was said to those who would die in Smyrna (**Revelation 2:10**).
- Victory is spoken of in at least two ways in the New Testament (**I Corinthians 15:50-57** and **I John 5:1-5**).
- Be cautious, for the main focus of John's Revelation is about the immediate, near future for the seven churches addressed (**Revelation 1:1-4**, **Revelation 22:6-7**, and **Revelation 22:10**).

Revelation 3:22 *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."*

- As we have seen with the previous churches and will see going forward, this statement is all about telling them to hear (**Revelation 2:7**, **Revelation 2:11**, **Revelation 2:17**, **Revelation 2:23**, **Revelation 2:29**, **Revelation 3:6**, and **Revelation 3:13**).