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Revelation

Chapter 3 - Revealing the Secrets to Overcoming Darkness

Faithful is the Key to Light (vs. 7-13)

Revelation 3:7-13: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: ‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ‘Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. ‘Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ‘I

am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and 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 My God, and My new name. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Well, God is calling the church to be a light. (Matthew 5) You're the light of the world. "Let your light so shine before men, that they might see your good works and glorify God in heaven." "Let your light shine," He says. So, obviously that is the command that God gives to the church. Of course, as Paul writes to us in Ephesians 5, "You once were darkness, but now you are light, walk as children of light." Demonstrate the wonderful Gospel of Christ, which gives light to the world. If you think about it, hope to the world. Light is a wonderful picture of hope,

isn't it? That's one of the reasons why it says that great is His faithfulness; new every morning. That sun rises, it's like, ok, hope again, and it's the promise of good things to come. We have that in that wonderful declaration of the love of God. God loves you so much that He gave His Son for you and He has washed away all of your sins. That's good news, isn't it? That's light. That's light in a dark world because the oppression and the guilt and all those things, that sin so easily besets you can be eradicated instantly by virtue of that wonderful light. We are to proclaim that light, and we not only are to proclaim it with our lips, but interestingly enough, shine it, which demonstrates the love of God and demonstrates the peace that passes all understanding, that we have a relationship with God. People should be able to recognize that there is something different about us, and even specifically when Jesus says, "The way the world will actually know that you're My disciples is because you love one another." And that is really a demonstration of the validity of the light that we say that we have. The evidence of that light is you can see it among us. Come to church, see our love for one another, and you begin to

understand that it's far more than just a proclamation. It is, well, the living word within us. So, as He talks about the church, He talks clearly about the fact that we're to be that light.

As we go through and as we look at the seven churches, in each way He demonstrates the way that that light can somehow be subverted or be overshadowed. One of the things Christ states in Matthew is, "Don't hide your light under a bushel." So, it's telling us that the light can easily be obscured. How is it obscured? Well, of course the first thing that He does is reveal to us the church in Ephesus, and it's easy to understand that the church could be dissuaded away from the proclamation, or more specifically, the radiating of that glorious light by trying to maintain a sense of righteousness or justice and things like that. Before long, I think we can find ourselves so involved in trying to keep people from sin and punishing sin, which by the way God has not called the church to be a policeman, but God has obviously called the church to be men that take care of the lighthouse. So, it's a very different kind of work that God has called us to do, but it's

easy to go into the realm of policeman or judge or lawyer. So, in that realm, we began to try to oppress the evil, because there's a lot of evil out there. But it's very clear that we can't win by fighting through the Law, that the Law can only maintain decorum. It cannot change a life. The light of God does literally change the life.

We've been going through a study on Saturday morning in the Book of Jude. As you read the Book of Jude, it's very clear that you're going to have those that creep in unnoticed and they come into your love feast, He says. They're like hidden reefs. He says, "But you can't get them out." First of all, because they're hidden. But secondly, it's not in my ability to eradicate this. In fact, I can't get rid of evil by being mad or by demonstrating forms of evil against them. How do we win? Well, of course, as Romans 12 tells us, we defeat evil by doing good, and Jude really carries this out. That by keeping ourselves in our most holy faith and by walking in the love of Christ, we win. There's a power that goes beyond.

I'm not saying today I'm an expert on lawns, but a number of years ago, I talked with a guy, and I said, "I just can't

seem to keep the weeds out of my yard. I'm pulling them. I'm spraying my yard all the time.” He goes, “Well, there is a secret to that.” And I said, “Ok, what is it?” He goes, “Don't fight the weeds. Grow the grass.” I go, “What do you mean?” He goes, “Just make the grass healthy.” He says, “If you concentrate on making the grass healthy, you won't have to kill the weeds. The grass will actually take care of itself.” And I go, “Really?” And he goes, “Yeah.” He says, “The problem is people go out with the weed killer.” And he says, “Even when it says it doesn't kill the grass, it doesn't strengthen the grass. So, the weeds somehow seem to be able to combat it and come back. But if you'll strengthen the grass, then the weeds will go away.” And it's pretty much worked for me. Basically, what Christ is saying is, “Strengthen the church, build the body of Christ, focus on discipling the body.” It will persevere. It will get the weeds out. But if you focus on getting the weeds out, you're just going to find yourself mad, upset, angry, and it's going to be divisive.

So, to the Church of Ephesus, He says, “Don't focus on this because you're going to lose love. Focus on your love for

one another and the church will grow and the light of God will be demonstrated throughout.”

He turns to the Church of Smyrna, and He says, “The one thing that will hide light faster than anything else is fear.” If in fact you say that you care for somebody; if in fact you say that you'll love them for better, for worse, and sickness and health, and you run at the first sign of problems, that's not love, and there is no light of hope that somebody is going to actually stay with you. So, there is no sense of “real” in your midst. But the evidence of “real” is that you're not afraid. You're bold. You stand firm, even to the end. So, when He turns to the Church of Smyrna, He says, “Just don't be afraid, because by being fearless in the midst of this tribulation, you're going to demonstrate the greatest light to these people that are saying, ‘Oh, I think we got them. I think we got them.’ They don't have you.” When they see the boldness that you have and your willingness to die for your faith, there is no greater light that I can think of than the light that says, “Though you slay me, yet I will trust You.” It is a powerful, powerful light that the church has. So many

times, we run at the first sign of trouble. Where is the light? So, the Church of Smyrna, He makes reference to specifically, “Don't be afraid.”

When He talks to the Church of Pergamum, He deals with a church that is acquiescing in some way to greed, and He used the example of Balaam and Balaam in specific was a prophet for hire.

One of the passages that I oftentimes think about in the New Testament dealing with greed in particular is 2 Corinthians, and when you go to the end of Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and you go into particular those chapters, he makes mention of the fact that we can't hide this light. At the end of Chapter 2, he says, “We are not like many peddling the word of God.” Now, he'll go on to say, “The god of this world is trying to blind the minds of the hearts of the people.” Because he is revealing that, well, there are a lot of people that are in church for money or for fame or for whatever. So, they have a connection there for a personal benefit. He says, “The church can't do that.” It's no wonder the world is confused. They go, “When I look at that church, they

seem to be so involved and so drawn to the things of the world. Why is that?" And I'm going, "I don't know." Because it clearly isn't the light of the gospel which proclaims, "He is enough. I love Him more than anything." But it's being obscured by the god of this world, and there are people that, as Paul will say, are peddling the word of God for their own vain glory or for their own desires. So, he warns against this. If the church gets into that realm, you cannot see the clarity of the gospel.

It's in 2 Corinthians 8 in particular where Paul makes mention of Christ and he makes mention of Him this way, a very interesting way of making mention of Him, "Though He were rich, He became poor, that you might have the riches of Him." So, it's that picture of the church that says, "We don't seek what is yours; we seek you and we care for you." That's the light of God's love, and if the church in some way doesn't demonstrate that, then the light of God is obscured.

The Church of Thyatira is an interesting church in which it seems as if pragmatism had kind of infiltrated the church. I mean, bottom line, we have our livelihood, we have our

security, we have our safety that we have to be concerned about, right? No. Because Matthew tells us that if we seek first the kingdom of God, all these things will be taken care of. The church is proclaiming, "God has my back." If in fact we're having to compromise our integrity at the workplace, if in fact we're having to compromise the scruples of what we know is right and wrong at the workplace, then where's the light? Where's the evidence that God will take care of me? We proclaim the love of God. The love of God is what? Well, He'll never leave me nor forsake me. That's the love of God. So, what are you worried about? This is why Jesus says over and over again in Matthew 6. What are you anxious about? What are you anxious about? Why are you anxious? Talk about darkness. The world can't see the light of Christ because there are so many people that are worried, and they're calling themselves Christians. What are you worried about? If God who is for us, who could be against us? What could separate us from the love of God? I mean, there's nothing to be worried about. So, an interesting point within the Church of Thyatira because the pragmatism, pursuing their own security, brought about a

kind of compromising attitude. “Look, if we have to in some way let down our integrity and our scruples to save ourselves, we'll do that.” So, it's a good warning to the church because God has called us to be clear, unadulterated light.

When it came to the Church of Sardis, it is also clear that we live in a day and age in which the way things look seems to be more important than the way things are. So much is about show and so much is about a name. “If we can just get our name out there, if we can get our name in lights, if we can just get our name recognizable to everybody then we've actually accomplished something.” It's an interesting example because God is literally saying to the church, “It matters not how many people know you. It matters not how popular you are, or the fame or the name that you have out there. What does matter is that I know you.” The fact that a church could actually feel very successful by virtue of being known is just totally wiped out in this particular text. God is saying, “That's not success. Success is that I know you” and what a great, great passage. Because within that church as well they

were very busy accomplishing great works. So once again, it goes back to Matthew again, “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Didn't we prophecy in Your name? Didn't we do all these works in Your name?’” He goes, “I never knew you. You never had a relationship with Me. You weren't doing it for Me. You were doing it to be seen by men.” Of course, Matthew 6 opens with that, Pharisees do all their works to be seen by men, so they have the reward in full. See, the evidence that you actually believe God exists is not demonstrated on the stage, it's demonstrated on the daily life, when nobody's watching. You say, “Well, if nobody sees me, how can I proclaim the light?” Believe me, God will put somebody in your path, even though you don't even think they're watching you. God will have them watch you. I can just picture God just taking somebody's head and going, “Hey.” I can just picture Him doing that, and I've heard people say, “I know this person doesn't think I'm watching them, but they have spoken to my heart.” And that's when real change takes place. I mean, most people have at least enough savvy to realize that people do stuff on the stage, and it's not necessarily

true. So, when He talks to the Church of Sardis, He goes, "You need to be real in this."

We come to the Church of Philadelphia and automatically we would think, "Well, this is a very close and wonderful church." Well, it is, but it's not because of the word Philadelphia. The city itself was named this about 200 years before this was written. So, about 200 years before that there were two brothers that were involved and one of the brothers was actually the king of this particular city. His name, if I pronounce it right, would be Eumenes. Unfortunately, at this time, it was when the Roman government was moving in, and he had offended the Roman government. So, in his offending the Roman government, they wanted to kind of push him out of this position. Their thought was that without causing too much brouhaha, they could actually move in Attalus, which was his brother, and his brother could take on the kingship so that they wouldn't have to mess with him. So, they came to Attalus, and they said, "We would like for you to be king. We'd like to install you as king, and we'll give you all the extras and we'll give you great benefits if

you do that.” And Attalus says, “No. I'm not going to do it. He's my brother.” And because of that, they named him Philadelphos, which was “the man who loved his brother”. So, the city actually was named in regard to that. I mentioned that because what we're going to see within the passage is a pressure to cave into large groups and associations and peoples of importance and people that have clout, much like as the Book of Galatians is written seemingly specifically in regard to that in which Paul will actually make a statement interestingly enough, in Galatians 2, “That they are of reputation makes no difference to me.” But it is a good text to remind the church that it's not about association. It's not about affiliation. It's not about clubs. It's not about esoteric works. It's not about belonging to the good old boys. You say, “Well, the church doesn't have trouble with that. Oh, yes, it does. It's a vast movement; it's a powerful movement’ it's an ecumenical movement. “If we can belong to something bigger and greater than us then obviously, we're doing something bigger and greater than us.” And that's not true. It's not the greatness of the work that accomplishes, it's the greatness of God that

accomplishes great things through oftentimes, well, (1 Corinthians 1) God chooses the weak and the foolish things to confound the wise, the things that are not to nullify the things that are, that no man should boast. So, it is that which God chooses. I mean, you look at Micah 5, Bethlehem too small to be called even a clan. Why would God choose that? Why would it say in Matthew 11, when Jesus says, "Father, thanks for giving Me these infants"? Why wouldn't you give Him sages? Why wouldn't you give Him the wise men? He gives Him these fishermen that really don't know all the rules of the game. I mean, oftentimes the Pharisees go, "Ok. So, they don't know they're supposed to be washing their hands? They don't know they're supposed to be cleaning?" I mean, you understand that these fishermen were not really privy to a lot of what they needed to know in order to survive in the important world. But Christ says, "I'm so glad You gave Me these."

You look at Zechariah, and Zechariah goes, "Who has despised the beginning of small things?" That God is the One that uses the small things that He might be made and

manifest great. Paul will say that “The strength of God is made perfect in my weakness.” So, you're going to see that within the passage and that there is a tendency to feel like, “Well, I’ve got to belong. In order for us to really accomplish something really great, we need to belong to this affiliation or association.” And this particular text is really saying, “Church, don't focus on that, because that's not where it is.” And oftentimes that will also lead you astray from where the true focus is because you get yourself so involved in things that really are not important. Before long, the thing that is important, well, like the whole concept of Mary and Martha is you're leaving the foot of Christ.

So, as you look at the passage, it will start off this way, (Revelation 3:7) “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true...”

Now, the description in each case of Christ within the particular text is once again giving us that description that pertains more specifically to the church that He's addressing. In this particular case, the Church of Philadelphia. The thing that He was wanting the church to

know is the most important thing to Him, is that sense of distinction and separateness from the world. There are so many things that are in the world that are trying to tell you, "You have to belong." It's interesting about the story of Attalus, in particular as he sticks up for his brother, he literally let go of all the vain glory that was there to be had. This is interesting, if you've ever thought about this, even the world can recognize true character. So, the world goes, "He loved his brother more than he loved that position." God is wanting us to be distinguished in that way. "Holy" is a word that conveys that sense of you're "not common." The world thinks a certain way. Common. They think, "Well, I'm out for myself. I've got to take care of myself." But it's very uncommon. That's why we call these people like "heroes" or these "wow," people in our lives. They go, "He gave up a lot." Well, that's uncommon. So, when Christ begins, He says, "You're a church. You're called to be different than the world." 2 Corinthians 6, right? He goes into 14, "Come out from among them. Be separate. Don't be like them." The thing that distinguishes us is that we love the brethren and we're not looking for the fame, the fortune, the

recognition, the affiliation. It's like we're on a different planet. God is calling us to be holy because He is holy. When Christ comes on the earth, well, what does Isaiah 53 say? "Who has believed our message." Ok, who could believe this? He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him. Who could believe that? This is the Messiah? This is the King of kings and the Lord of lords and He's coming in a diminished state? It just doesn't make any sense. Yeah, but you know what Isaiah would say? He's holy. There's no one like Him.

So, Jesus starts off with holy, and what was the next word to describe Him? True. Right. So, obviously what He's looking for is that which is true. Once again, I just want to emphasize, "true" is not only that which is not false, but is that which is true in nature, or more specifically, real in nature. It has a real quality to it which everything else seems to have a facade to it. The church is called to be real.

(Revelation 3:7) "... He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David..."

Now, the reason why he makes mention of the key of David in the passage, of course, obviously, is He'll be talking about the Jews which are influencing them at this time. The Jews within the city at this time have a tremendous amount of clout, and if you want to belong to anything that looks remotely religious, you've got to come into their camp.

If you go back all the way to Revelation 1, it says, (Revelation 1:17) "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, (Revelation 1:18) and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys..."

The One with the keys. The One with keys to death; the One with keys to life; the One with keys to everything. We perceive that somehow, we're going to get left out. We perceive that we're going to get left behind. We don't belong to this. We don't do this. We don't go to this school. We don't attend this seminar. We're going to get left out. God says, "I have the keys." We're looking at everybody else for the keys. He's the One that has the

keys, and the church that will understand this is the church that will please God. But more than this, it will be the church that demonstrates the true light of God. Because if we're going around playing this game, the world isn't seeing a true light.

So, as He comes and He says,

(Revelation 3:7) “He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this:”

“I'm the one that controls whether you're in or out.”

People are going to be worried about that. It's just the nature of man and it's his tendency to be concerned about clubs, associations, affiliations.

When you look in the Gospels in particular, I oftentimes think of John 9 in which the blind man, who was blind from birth is healed. It's amazing. Then, they're interviewing the parents, “Oh, we're not sure.” I'm going, “Your son can see. Why wouldn't you be rejoicing?” But the passage goes on and says, “For they were afraid that they might be thrown out of the synagogue.” They were

afraid. "I'm not going to be accepted by the group." Who cares? You should be loving God with all of your heart. Don't waste your time belonging to groups. Love God with all your heart. "Oh, we were a part of this group. We did this great thing." Good. Love God with all your heart. Follow Him with all your heart. He rewards the heart. He doesn't reward the external. And it's not the great that God is looking at. It's the humble. The passage talks about this.

It says,

(Revelation 3:8) "I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power..."

Now, the text almost seems to be a critical one if you don't understand what's being said. Christ is not getting after them for having a little power, and it would be misunderstanding and miscomprehension of the passage, if in fact you were perceiving that God in any way was reprimanding them for the fact that their power wasn't strong enough. The focus of the passage is that they have little influence and little resource in the city. That is to say

that if somebody perhaps even mentioned their name, “Do you know the Church of Philadelphia?” Somebody would go, “Church of where? We know the grand synagogue. The Church of where?” If in fact you were to talk about “This place did this great thing and this place did this great thing,” and you were to ask, “What’s the church of Philadelphia?” They would go, “I don't know.”

So, the point is that “I know that you have *mikros dynamis*. I know that you have little influence, and I know that you have little clout, and I know that you're not perceived as being great.” But if you read the rest of the passage, what does He say?

“... and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”

Now, the keeping of the word is the issue. Because it's making reference to the fact of fidelity and faithfulness and maintaining. Faithfulness is fundamentally that which demonstrates the greatest brilliance of our light, and faithfulness to the word. Let me just say this, it's impossible for you to have fidelity without having a heart of love towards God. That's impossible. Fidelity only exists

by virtue of love. So, if you love God with all your heart, soul and mind, you can't help but be faithful. If you love your husband, you love your wife, you can't help but be faithful. If you don't love them, it doesn't matter all the rules, all the regulations, you're not going to be faithful. So, as you go through Scripture, this whole concept of fidelity really is the big issue that demonstrates well, true light, because if you believe in the love of God, if it's the love of God that controls you, then faithfulness is a part of that love, right?

(1 Corinthians 4:2) “... it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.”

That's required. It's a requisite. That if in fact God is going to entrust something to you, you have to be somebody that is going to be faithful.

(2 Timothy 2:2) “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

Why would they be able to teach others also? Not because of necessarily the academics but because they are faithful. It's the fidelity that gives you platform to

teach. The maintaining the cause, the staying true to the cause, to the word. We are the pillars and support, as Paul writes, of the truth.

(1 Corinthians 13:8) “Love never fails...”

So, it is that sense of fidelity that we have.

As you go through Hebrews, it just really interjects this over and over and over again. One passage reads this way,

(Hebrews 3:14) “For we have become partakers of Christ...”

Here’s the great word of Scripture,

“... if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.”

What’s that telling you? That fidelity is the one thing that really describes the genuineness of the heart. If you tell somebody, “I love you for two weeks,” then I don't hear the heart in it. But if you say, “I'll love you forever.” See?

(Hebrews 10:22) “let us draw near with a sincere heart...”

(Hebrews 10:23) “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope... for He who promised is faithful.”

That's why it goes on and says,

(Hebrews 10:25) “not forsaking our own assembling together...”

Why? Because fidelity and faithfulness, that's who we are. That's the Spirit of God. When the world says, “Why are you guys so faithful to the body?” “How can we not be? It's the love of God.” And they go, “You must really love.” There's the genuineness of the light and it just revealed itself.

So, Hebrews 13:4 will start off,

“... the marriage bed is to be undefiled...”

What is he talking about? Fidelity.

What do you think the next verse is?

(Hebrews 13:5) “... for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU.””

The whole concept of fidelity is a part of the light. It's who we are. So, it is that proclamation that you see within the passage.

(Revelation 3:8) ““I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door...””

“I'm the One that controls where “in” is and because you've kept My word, you've not denied, you've maintained your fidelity towards Me.

(Revelation 3:9) “Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan...”

“Synagogue” making reference to Jews. “Synagogue of Satan” being an adversary against God.

Now, within the text, it's telling us that they obviously have some sort of clout because the Church of Philadelphia is feeling almost like an outcast.

(Revelation 3:9) “Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie...”

Now, why does He throw that in? You say you love your brother, but then you take the position. You lied. You say, “I don't want the position,” and love your brother; you tell the truth. Of course, “Jew” comes from the fundamental word “Jehuda” or “Yehuda” in the Old Testament, which means to praise Yahweh. They're not praising God. They're praising themselves. They say they're Jews; they

say they want to follow God. Jesus says to many of them, “You say your father is Abraham. Abraham is not your father. If you were sons of Abraham, you would do the deeds of your father. But the way that you're doing it now is you're not loyal to these things. You don't love him.” What is that? It's being untrue. He who was holy and true writes to the church. What do you think He's calling you to be? Holy and true. He's keeping you out of that realm of, “Well, yeah, but how can I get into this club?” “Who cares? Be holy and true to Me.”

(Revelation 3:9) “Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you.”

Well, that's what it's all about, isn't it? That I've been accepted by God. I want to belong to His club, and I'd like the keys to go into His house. See, that's the only thing that's really important. Why are we so concerned with pleasing so many people? That doesn't matter. But that He loves me, that He sees that I love Him, is there anything else that matters? That a church should be

faithful to keeping the word of God. When He's making reference to keeping the word of God, He's not making reference to just the external, but it's from the heart, because God is the One that sees the heart.

(Revelation 3:10) ““Because you have kept the word of My perseverance...””

That's why we've paralleled Hebrews in with this; remember where He says, “You have need of endurance”? It really is one of the great themes of the Book of Hebrews. It really demonstrates love. It never fails. You're going to hang in there.

“You have kept the word of My perseverance. You’ve been real consistently” is basically what He's saying.

“... I also will keep you from the hour of testing..””

Did you read that? You say, “Why is He saying that?” Here's the point. When you already know something's real, you don't have to test it for being real. That's pretty easy, isn't it? God is looking for real. When you demonstrate real consistently is there any reason to test the validity of its realness? No. There's no reason to test it

anymore. He said, “Well, I'll keep you from the testing. You won't need to be tested in this.”

“... that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell...”

Metaphorically, who are influenced, who are governed by the things of the world.

“But you're not.”

(Revelation 3:11) ““I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.””

Victory comes from what? Victory comes from fidelity. It comes from faithfulness. It comes from endurance. It comes from maintaining. It comes from abiding. As you begin to walk in that particular realm, there's victory in faithfulness. We can put it another way, “Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.”

(Revelation 3:11) ““I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.””

“*Stephanos*” is the crown of victory.

(Revelation 3:12) ““He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar...””

An established position that never moves and is eternal. Why? Because you maintained, God will give you the maintained position. That makes sense, doesn't it? You were consistent; you will forever have a consistent place of grandeur in the heavens that will never move, like you never moved. What a great picture.

(Revelation 3:12) “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore...”

The passage meaning that you're not going to lose your position. It's yours. You've got it. It's your home. It's your place.

“... and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God...”

That's a superior position.

“... and the name of the city of My God...”

That's a superior abiding place.

If you look at the passage,

“... the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.”

And what does He mean by that? The superior relationship. So, if you understand, you're going to have a superior position, a superior abiding place, a superior relationship unheard of before. All because why? You were holy and true. You maintained. "You stayed with Me. You stayed true to what I was telling you to do." There are so many noises and so many people that are telling you to do things. Get in the word of God, listen to God, and He's going to tell you, "This is what I want you to do." He's not going to tell you to do everything that everybody else is doing. "It's what I want you to do." But He is going to give you those fundamental principles that you should be living by consistently, and as you begin to maintain them, God says, "I'm not only going to give you victory, but there's also no need to test you." And you begin to realize that God's going to give you wonderful and great ministries throughout this. "I'm going to give you this."

(Revelation 3:13) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

One unbelievable relationship, distinguished above all.
God is giving that to you.

When I come to this passage, it's the realization that God is taking those things that seem diminished and seem small, and He's making them great. If we're too concerned with large groups and belonging to clubs, we're going to lose what God has in store for us. The obedience to Him, the relationship with Him, it's what we're going for because it's He's the one that matters; nothing else. It's unfortunate that the church can oftentimes move off of this wonderful truth. I mean, can you think of a greater light? I've oftentimes thought what a heavy burden it is for people to feel like they have to belong in order for them to be great. What a heavy burden that is. What a wonderful message it is. Listen to the Light. You just please God. You love God with all your heart. It's no wonder that Galatians makes reference to the fact that God has called us as freeing agents rather than oppressive works. The synagogue was very oppressive, religion is very oppressive, but you just come up to somebody and say, "Just get your heart right with God. You don't have to

perform for me; you don't have to do anything fancy. You just love Him with all your heart. God's going to use you greatly. Because of that, He's going to give you the greatest of names and you're going to be with Him.” “You mean I can sit up there with Him?” “You may be above me.” That's the wonderful thing about this. That's light. You understand? That's light. There's no light in religion, but that's light.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today and it's our desire to follow You with all of our hearts. We want to be holy, different than the world, and we want to be true, real in our relationship with You. It really is about us and You. It's not really about us and clubs or belonging or doing some sort of fantastic work that is recognized by all. It's not about fame. It's not about greed. As we go through these different churches, we realize that, wow, how easy it is

for the light to go out. But it is the simplicity, as Paul will write of our devotion to You that this faith is really all about and it is that message that the church should be proclaiming. As we proclaim, we're setting free the souls of men to love You with all their heart, all their soul, and all their might.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. I'm just asking you to focus on the right things. Just get real with God and just get your heart right. How wonderful it is to know that He has such wonderful things in store for you. You. It doesn't matter who you are. God loves you.