

Revelation 3

Sunday 9/24/2006

We understand that, as the brother said this morning, none of us can just take what we learn and just keep it. You have to keep giving it out. I have always likened a Christian to a sponge. You put a sponge in a bucket of water, it absorbs it all up, but if you do not wring it out, after a while the sponge becomes useless and all you do is push the water around; it does not have the ability to soak it up anymore. That is the way God's people are. I can give you so much, but you have to wring yourself out and give what I give you to somebody else.

In fact, Paul said that to young Timothy when he said, "The things that I have committed unto you, commit unto faithful men." That is our job. That is the job of this church, the job of pastors, the job of every Christian. What you take, you give out to others.

As a young church, we have been here three years, and we have been focusing on training up men and women who really want to be leaders as far as the Word of God is concerned, having the ability not just to know some things about the Bible, but to know the Bible itself. To be able to find yourself in any situation where you can rightly divide the word of truth, that you can really grasp it in the way that God wanted you to have it.

So we have been coming through a basic systematic theology of the Bible. A couple of weeks ago, we started the seven judgments in the Bible. I showed you how the first three judgments really fit into your life and into my life as a child of God and the church. The week after next, we will get into the judgments that do not directly affect you, but affect you indirectly, and directly affect everybody else that is out there in the family of God.

We talked about the three judgments. We put it into a little acronym called Sinner, Son, and Servant. We started out showing you that at the cross of Calvary, when Christ died, He judged every man and woman as a guilty sinner. Once you get saved, God no longer judges you as a sinner. God now judges you as His son, and the whole perspective changes. God no longer looks at you as a sinner. He no longer deals with your sin the same way. You are now His child, and He now deals with you on the basis of you being His son and He being your Father.

Last week, if you remember, we got into the third judgment, and we talked about the Judgment Seat of Christ. I told you that at the Judgment Seat of Christ, you are not judged for your sins. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, you are not judged as a son, but at the Judgment Seat of Christ, you are judged as a servant: Sinner, Son, and Servant. That is how you remember it.

You remember I told you last week that there is absolutely no reason for any Christian to not have everything that God has for him or her at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We talked about how God has a difference between rewards and a difference between your inheritance. We are going to talk about the differences of that today. I did not want to just move on to another judgment without you fully understanding this, because as I have already said, there is no greater doctrine that you as a child of God, especially in the day and age that we are living in, need to fully understand more than the doctrine of the Judgment Seat of Christ and how it affects you. It is the

thing that is going to make you or break you as far as you being successful with what God wants you to do in your life.

We already know from our past studies that God, what He has done, is He came down and He was on this earth for 33 years. Thirty of those years, He was growing up and coming to the place where He was getting ready for His three-year ministry. When He gets baptized by John the Baptist, it kicks off three years of His public ministry. In those three years, He gave us a model of everything that He wanted us to do and the way that He wanted us to do it.

Then what did He do? He went back to heaven in Acts 1. But before He went back to heaven, while He was training the disciples and His followers, He said this: He said, "Greater things will you do than I have done." I talked about how that for me, that was a very puzzling statement for many, many years of my life until I really understood the full context of what He was saying there. God, when He gave Jesus Christ to this earth, never intended Him to stay down here any longer than He did. What He intended for Him to do is to put in action a movement called Christianity, which is an ongoing spiritual relationship with God through a new birth, that men and women would be saved, called into a church, and then structured and trained. Then you and I would finish for Christ what He started to do. That is how we look at our church, and that is how you want to look at your individual life.

Today I want to lay out the rewards and show you the difference between the rewards that God has for you and your inheritance. We will not get into the inheritance this week. We will get into it next week because it is going to take enough time to figure all this out, and we want to do it justice. So we are in no hurry here. We want to give you everything that you need to have, and certainly this is what you need to have.

I. The Purpose of the Judgment Seat of Christ

The reason you should not lose any rewards or your inheritance, the reason why every Christian that ever walked on the face of this planet should get to the Judgment Seat of Christ and have everything that God has for them. Now I say that, but I am also saying this: they will not. Most of God's people will lose their rewards and they will lose their inheritance. The devil will see to that.

If you have not learned it by now, you know that the devil has to keep every back door in every house in Kansas City and around the world. He does his best; his whole job, once he cannot get your soul in hell anymore because you are saved, his whole function, his whole being, his whole job, his whole design is to take from you and to keep you from ever fulfilling what God wants you to fulfill. In doing that, you not only lose your rewards, but you lose your inheritance.

The reason why you should not, think of it this way: If the Judgment Seat of Christ was a test that God is going to give us in the future, and you get your millennial rewards or your inheritance based on that test, think of it like that. If the Judgment Seat of Christ was the great test where you and I have to come up before God and give an account and have the right answers and have the right motive and have everything that needs to be done just exactly the way for us to get the rewards and inheritance. If it was a test, then God has given you not only a copy of the

test, but He has also given you the answers to the test long before you have to go there. That is why there is no reason.

You have heard me say this many, many times: The Judgment Seat of Christ is not about what you know or what you do not know about God or the Bible. People get this weird idea that that is what it is about. No, not at all. The Judgment Seat of Christ is not about what you know or what you do not know about God or the Word of God, but rather the Judgment Seat of Christ is about what you could have found out about God and the Word of God, but chose not to. That is what it is about. There is absolutely no reason why every child of God on the face of this planet should not just get everything at the Judgment Seat of Christ that God has for them. God has not only given you a copy of the test, He has given you the answers to the test, and He has given everything that you need before you have to take it.

II. Biblical Scholarship Versus Personal Study

This is one of the greatest arguments against what biblical scholarship says today. Biblical scholarship wants you to believe that you as an individual cannot understand the Bible. They want you to fall into the mindset that you get duped into thinking that you are not smart enough, you do not have enough education, that you have got to spend years of your life learning some language, Hebrew in the Old Testament or Greek in the New Testament, that are both languages nobody speaks anymore. You spend all of your life to really find out the nuggets of God.

Brother was talking about his little missionary kids in his orphanage, how they have a bad self-image about themselves. He told you why many of them did. Many of their parents told them they were no good. Many of their parents told them they were stupid. They did not want anything to do with them. You tell a little child that over and over and over again, and in time that child begins to believe that, and it affects their ability then to look at everything around it because they look at themselves as a failure.

I was listening to him when he said that, and I was thinking about my message of what I wanted to say. That is exactly what higher education, biblical education, does. It wants to get you and I to think that without them, we are so stupid that we could never find a relationship with God without them, without spending all of your life going to some seminary, spending all your life going through some language course where you, and there alone, lies the answers to finding God.

Let me show you what a fallacy this is. This is what happens: Just as you tell a young child how stupid they are and they wind up believing it, you tell a young Christian that they do not have the ability to get to God, and they are going to grow up believing that. Then you make them dependent on the other person. I do not ever, now I know that some of you right now are dependent on me or maybe the person disciplining you, and that is okay in a limited sense, but I do not ever want anybody being dependent on me when it comes to growing up spiritually. I want you to wean yourself off of me and be able to stand alone with the Word of God, knowing what you believe, and then line up beside me and let us do the work together.

I am not interested in having a bunch of clones. God knows enough Bible examiners on planet Earth. I do not need any more of those. What I need are men and women who will learn the

Bible, who will think for themselves, who will identify with this New Testament local work, stand up beside me and say, "Hey, until Jesus comes back, let us do the work of God." That is what I want.

How ridiculous would it be for God to judge you at the Judgment Seat of Christ for what you did or what you did not do, or what you knew or what you did not know, if God did not make it available for you to get it in the first place? Why, that is the most unrealistic requirement. Would you put an unrealistic requirement on your child? If your child was five years old, six years old, and you were going to go out for a while and you were leaving him with a babysitter, would you tell that six-year-old to make sure that the dishes got done and the dog was taken out and the room was vacuumed and all of those things? Then when you come back, and obviously they were not, would you punish that child for that? I do not think you would.

How unrealistic it is for God who would say, "I am going to hold you accountable for finding out what I wanted you to do and getting it done," and then not giving you the ability to find out what that is. Let me tell you something. It has nothing to do with your IQ of learning the Bible. It has nothing to do with your aptitude. It has nothing to do with how much education you have. The bottom line for learning the Bible depends on your attitude of heart toward God, wanting it from God more than anything else on this planet. There is absolutely no reason at the Judgment Seat of Christ for you and I not to have everything that God has for us.

Last week I told you there were about seven passages throughout the New Testament. We did not get through them all. We will get through them in the course of this week and next week and last week. But God gives in those seven passages, He gives you every aspect, every part of what the Judgment Seat of Christ is going to be covered. He is going to tell you what He is looking for. He is going to tell you how He is going to judge you. In Job 26, you are going to find the six questions God is going to ask you at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You even get the questions. They are right there. You get everything about it before you get there.

III. The Prevailing Spirit Against the Church

Last week I told you about a book that I read years and years ago. This week I tried to remember the name of that book, and I just could not. It was written by an old English divine back in the 1700s or 1800s, and it was one of those things, it was not even my book. Somebody gave it to me, and I cannot remember the name of it. But it was one of those things that I told you last week, one of the single things in it, and it was a book about the real issues of the history of the church, and it kind of put aside all the fluff that you get in most history books on church history.

The guy said this, and I told you this last week: He said the job of every Christian, no matter what age and dispensation he lives in in the church age, the job of every Christian is to find out what is the prevailing spirit that is against the church of Jesus Christ of his day, and then take everything that he has, every resource, every part of his being, as he learns the Word of God and as he identifies with the work of God, and that church needs to go against that prevailing spirit of the age that he lives in. That was one of the most profound things I have ever read in my life, and

yet when I come through my Bible, even that has been laid out for me very clearly and plainly without a doubt.

If you come to the book of Revelation, you are going to find in the book of Revelation, I have told you many times about this marvelous book, how the book of Revelation is a recap of everything that God is doing. In fact, I will give you this, and this is worth about \$150,000 in gold bullion right now. You may not grasp this now, but someday it will hit you like a freight train coming home. The book of Revelation, without a doubt, is the key. People think about how hard the Bible is. You look at the Old Testament, and most of you are coming through the books of the Old Testament, one book at a time, or working in little groups with that. When you look at the Old Testament, you see how big it is and how complicated it looks. But I want to say to you, my friend, that the key, the book of Revelation, is the key to unlocking the Old Testament. Once you unlock the Old Testament, the Old Testament is the key to the New Testament. It is just that simple. The book of Revelation is one of the greatest books in your Bible, and that is why God put it at the end as a recap, but yet as the key to laying out your whole Bible. By the way, the key to Revelation is Revelation 11.

In the first three chapters of the book of Revelation, you have seven churches. We are going to study those seven churches in great detail as we come down through our studies here, maybe for four or five months, but we are going to get to that point at some point. I have showed you how the book of Revelation breaks down like this:

- The first three chapters is the church age.
- Chapter 4: a door opens in heaven, somebody goes up, rapture of the church.
- Chapters 5-19: all deal with the tribulation period.
- What happens in Chapter 19? A door opens, somebody comes down, Second Coming of Christ.
- Then you have Chapter 20: the Millennium.
- Chapter 21: New Heavens and New Earth.
- Chapter 22: Eternity.

The whole order of events, the whole order of events from the time of Christ right up through all the major events: the church age, the rapture (Chapter 4), the tribulation (Chapters 5-19), and in Chapter 19, the Second Coming of Christ, and in every event in order after the Second Coming: Chapter 20, the Millennium; Chapter 21, a New Heavens and New Earth; and Chapter 22, off into eternity. The whole Bible broken down in that concept by the book of Revelation.

I said all that to say this: The first three chapters show you that there are seven periods in church history. Seven periods in church history. You will find, if you get any kind of history of the Bible or history of the church, you will find as you read Revelation 1, 2, and 3, you will find the actual events in history corresponding with the events written in the book of Revelation. You have heard me teach it many, many times, and I am not going to belabor the point this morning, but you know that the first church found there is the church at Ephesus, and that brings you up about the first 200 years of Christianity.

The second church period is Smyrna, which brings you from Ephesus up to about 325. Then you have Pergamos. Pergamos brings you up to about 500, to the start of the Dark Ages. Then you have Thyatira, which is the middle of the Dark Ages. Then you have Sardis, which brings you right up to about 1500 with Martin Luther and the Reformation. Then you have Philadelphia, around 1600 to 1900. Then you have Laodicea.

I laid that out because I told you that everything that you need of the Judgment Seat of Christ is related to you in the Word of God. When you come through these seven periods of churches and you read the material and you look at church history and you see the actual events lining up with the actual biblical concepts, you will find in every age the issue they were up against.

In the early church in Ephesus, the issue that came up was the resurrection. No sooner had He come out of that tomb and was walking around, then the devil got the idea going that He really did not come out, and the early church had to go against the teaching that the resurrection really did not happen. You find Paul dealing with it in the church in Corinth. You find it throughout the New Testament that is written, but when you get into history, you will find that that is the number one issue that begins to come up. The devil began to destroy the church, go against the teaching of the church by saying Christ did not come out of the tomb.

In the next church period, Smyrna, the issue became the virgin birth. The virgin birth became the issue. Not that the resurrection bad teaching was not still floating around, but now a new thing came up, and this church had to go up against the teaching that Christ was not virgin born. Men were coming up and saying about all the other virgin born people down through history, and they were denying the fact that Christ... This is where you get the idea that Christ was born an illegitimate son of a German soldier. This is where you get the idea of The Da Vinci Code. This is where it all starts, that Mary had other children and that Christ was married to her. This is where it all comes from because they want to deny the virgin birth of Christ. It all fits in during this period of time.

The third church in Pergamos, we now see with this the rise of the Roman Catholic Church. When the Roman Catholic Church rose, even though this doctrine had been floating around for a number of years, now it becomes an issue, and it is the issue of baptismal regeneration, being baptized to be saved, and the church went against that.

In Thyatira, when the Roman Catholic Church came to flourish, and she was really at the zenith of her power, she had taken over the known world, and she was teaching that God was finished with the nation of Israel, that Christ was not coming back literally, and that it was a spiritual kingdom, and that church, the Roman Catholic Church, was going to bring in that kingdom through the popes and through the church itself. Of course, that gave rise to the teaching of amillennialism and postmillennialism right during that period of time.

In the Sardis church period, the Roman Catholic Church was teaching the fact that they had taken the place of the nation of Israel. So we find the teachings coming up with John Calvin, of predestination and Calvinism, and this is where this church period goes against that issue.

In the Philadelphia church, the great Philadelphia church age, the greatest period in church history, the issue was eternal security. We find that men were now teaching that you could lose your salvation.

Then in the last period of church history, called Laodicea. By the way, that is the one we are living in. Philadelphia runs from about 1600 to 1900. Laodicea begins around 1900 and runs right up to the rapture of the church. We are living now in 2006. You look around you and you see the absolute asinine, unbelievable stuff that God's men and churches are doing and God's people believe and what they do not believe. You can mark it down in one big broad paint stroke: it is because we are living in a time called Laodicea. Laodicea means "rights of the people." It is a time when God's rights are out the door, and people's rights, Christians' rights, become the main deal. That is what you are seeing today.

The issue in the last church, the issue in the last church, was the authority of the Word of God. Did God really mean what He said when He said it? That is our issue. That is our battle. The battle today is for your mind, and the battle today is for your mind being trampled with the ungodliness of all this Laodicean mess out there that has nothing to do with God, nothing to do with the Word of God, that takes the Word of God from you. Think I am making it up? By the time I am done this morning, you will understand exactly where I am coming from.

IV. The Laodicean Church

Now, Revelation 3, and I want you to turn there. This begins to detail this church of Laodicea. We have got to see some things, and I know some of you have been through this before, but that is all right. The price of learning is repetition.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Ask You to take the Word of God now, give us wisdom and insight into all that we see and do today, and we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

All right, now here it comes.

Revelation 3:14-17

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;

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

This church is a lukewarm church. It still gets people saved, but it is not on fire for God, right in the middle. Sometimes the church is called the church that makes God sick.

Verse 17: "Because thou sayest..." Now I want you to see the perspective of this church versus God's perspective, and tell me if this does not fit in Christianity today. Tell me, tell me if it does not. "Because thou sayest," the church, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," including God's Holy Spirit. See, that is the mindset. We are not building churches today. We are building monuments to men. We are building crystal cathedrals. We are building our millennial inheritance down here. We are building everything that man looks at, and the standard teaching is today, if you want to build a church, you build some beautiful fiasco out there that looks like the Taj Mahal, and because people are so sophisticated that they would not dare go to a "mutt-hole" hand place like this, they will be drawn to that place because of the beauty of it.

Now I am going to tell you right up front, if this is a "mutt-hole" place, all you "mutt-holes" are welcome, because that is not going to get any better than this probably, because the beauty of the church is not on the outside. The beauty of the church is what is on the inside, and what is on the inside is God's people who have the... Well, let us finish reading it down here, I am getting ahead of myself.

Revelation 3:17-18

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:

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.

You want to underline the word "naked." 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, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. Now you want to mark the words "the shame of thy nakedness do not appear," because that word "appear" is going to line up with 2 Corinthians 5:10, which says, "We all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ." This church is going to wind up naked before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ because it has a different set of values than God has. A blind man could see this in a heartbeat, the parallels between this church and the time that you and I live in. This church has totally lost its way.

Verse 17 says, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, have need of nothing." It has lost the power of God, the presence of God, the knowledge of God, and the Word of God, and they are more concerned about their own personal rights than they are the rights of God.

I want to draw your attention to verse 18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." Now there is the fire of the Judgment Seat of Christ. You see, you are either going to go through the fire now for Him, or you are going to go through the fire over there for you. You are going through the fire. You either go through it here as you suffer for Him, or you go through it over there as you suffer for you, but you are going through it. Like I used to tell my kids when you were growing up, "You know, that is not what you just did, was not a good career move. Now you are going to get it." It does not matter whether you are or whether you are not, it is just when

you are. We are going through the fire. Mark it down, nobody escapes the fire if you are saved. You escape the fire of hell, but that is not your judgment, but you are not going to escape the fire of the Judgment Seat of Christ. In that Judgment Seat of Christ, every man's work is going to be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, and God is going to work it out, sort it out, and we are going to find out the motive behind what I did all of my life, what you did all of your life.

Look what He says in verse 18: "He said, I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Now I am getting ready to set you up here with the things on rewards. When Christ comes back at the rapture, what is going to happen? Any minute. When Christ comes back at the rapture, while the tribulation is going on down here on Earth, this is where you and I go to the Judgment Seat of Christ. You remember a while back on Thursday night, still available on tape back there, I brought you through every major event so you would define it, understand it. I showed you where the context was of it and gave you all the verses on it. Most of you should have that down, so you know what I am talking about. If you do not, you can get the tape, come over and see me, love to have you. I will walk you through it because I need to go over it again anyhow, and we might do it together.

But when Christ comes back at the rapture, while the tribulation is taking place on Earth, that is when we go to the Judgment Seat of Christ. There the church, which is called the bride in the Bible, is made ready for the marriage. We talked about the marriage of God's Son to the bride, the church. Now this is what you find. You are already in Revelation, just flip back to Revelation 19, and let me show you this again.

Revelation 19:6-9

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

See that thing? Now watch this: "And his wife," the church, "hath made herself ready." Now where did she make herself ready at? She made herself ready at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You see, while the tribulation is going on down here on planet Earth, you and I are at the Judgment Seat of Christ. At the end of that period of time, when the Judgment Seat of Christ comes to an end, the marriage takes place somewhere around the Second Coming of Christ. Then we come back with Christ.

Look at verse 8: "And to her the church was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." Now look at verse 9: "And

he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Now there are all those people groups of this family of God. I talked to you back a couple weeks ago. I told you that the whole Bible, the whole Bible, if you wanted it in its most simplistic, easiest form to understand, the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation is God, through the Old Testament and through the New Testament, inviting people to come to a wedding. That wedding contains the Old Testament saints, it contains the tribulation saints, it contains the tribulation Gentiles, and it contains the church, and it contains the bride, which is the church, and the bridegroom, which is Christ. They are getting married, and God invites everybody down through the history of the Bible to go to this wedding to watch the church be married to Christ.

This is why Ephesians 5, the great chapter on marriage, by the way, when you come down Ephesians 5, when the bride is brought to the husband, when it talks about the husband and wife relationship, when it talks about the church, it says she is without spot or without wrinkle. You ought to study that little phrase "without spot, without wrinkle" in your Bible sometime. You know where she gets spotless and she gets the wrinkles pressed out? The Judgment Seat of Christ. That is what it means in Revelation 19:7 when it says, "She hath made herself ready." She got the spots out and she got the wrinkles out. She is made herself ready.

When our works get tried by fire, 1 Corinthians 3, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, God has rewards for us. Those rewards for us at the Judgment Seat of Christ come in the form of crowns. In your Bible, there are five crowns that are listed, and today I want to talk to you about the five crowns that you can get at the Judgment Seat of Christ that are your reward, not your inheritance. That is something else. We are going to get to that next week. Five crowns that you can have, five crowns that you can have.

V. The Philadelphia Church

One of the ways I remember when we were coming through the different ways to study the Bible, I told you one of the great ways to study the Bible was by contrast. God shows you things by things that are different. The whole book of the first three chapters of Revelation is about seven churches, and that is a great study unto itself. If you really wanted to study church history, you start with that and then you just get some good books on history and line it up with what it says in the Bible. It is incredible, one of the greatest studies you will ever take throughout the Word of God.

But you are going to find that in those seven churches, the real study for you and for me is really by contrast of two churches, and that will be the church of Laodicea, which I already read you about, "rights of the people," and then the church at Philadelphia. The church at Philadelphia, without a doubt, is the greatest period of time in church history. It runs from about 1600 at the Reformation up to about 1900. It is a time literally where the Word of God goes around the world about four or five times. It is a time period where there is probably a time when 75% of the world has been won to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. It is a time when the missionary movement is unparalleled. In fact, if you want to go back and you want to study the great men of the missions movement that motivates you for the missions today, that is the period that you go.

You know why we sing songs out of this hymnal? We sing songs that we do not have a lot of new fancy stuff. We will not have any either, by the way. I mean, every once in a while we may get semi-fancy, but we will never get fancy, fancy for long. The reason why is this: these hymns are called the great hymns of the faith, and they are. They are the standards. You know why they are the standards? Because they were written during a period of time of the Philadelphia church when they knew what they believed. People do not know what they believe today. You give me anywhere you want, go in 10 different churches, get me the head deacon of every church, bring them in a room, sit them down, and I just want to ask them five questions about the Bible, and I will show you how illiterate they are when it comes to the Word of God. Forget the head deacon, get me five pastors. Let us go right to the top enchilada without sour cream. Let us get right to the top. I will show you they have no understanding of the Word of God.

The reason why they do not is because we live in a society today where you do not have a Bible anymore, and when you lost the Bible, everything else goes, including your music. When they had a Bible, the thing I love about these songs is they contain Bible doctrine. In fact, you could preach most of these songs. If you ever lack a place to preach or something to preach in a place to preach, and you just cannot get a message together, there are 500 messages right here. You could preach just by taking the verses of the song. You know why? They are filled with doctrine.

I have told you this before: What is the number one thing this church has to guard above everything else? The number one thing this church has to guard is doctrine. Here is my rule of thought: I never want less doctrine in my music than I have in my preaching. It is that simple. Would you tolerate me getting up here and preaching you a mushy message about the love of God for worm whales in Antarctica and talking about global warming and how we all ought to love each other? Would you put up with that from me if I get up here and I started talking to you about, "You know what, we just all ought to get along and, you know, and boy, we just, the answer to the Middle East is just to love our neighbors and submit ourselves to them, and let us look at Islam because there is probably some great truths in there we can all benefit from them learning from us and us learning from them, and we just all need to go out and hug a rag head today and just, oh, you know"? Would you put up with that? I do not think you would, and you better not. You better not.

The bottom line is this: the book is the truth. I do not care if the Muslim likes it. I do not care who does not like it. It is in my book. I did not write it. Do not get mad at me. I just believe it is the truth. It is the book God gave it to us, and that is the way we have to operate. That is what the church at Philadelphia did. That is why the men of that time period wrote the songs that went along with what they believed, that even though churches do not want them anymore, when they get them in one book, they have got to call it for what it is: great hymns of the faith. It is that simple.

Now look at Revelation 3. I read you about the Laodicean church. Now very quickly, let me read you about the Philadelphia church, and I want you to see the contrast. I want to take the last two churches. This is very important for understanding your crowns. Next week we are going to get into some stuff that is very important for your inheritance.

Revelation 3:7-11

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;

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.

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.

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.

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Let me just say this to you before we get started: I do not know how astute you are looking at things that you read, but if you read this whole passage on the seven churches, you are going to be told right out of the chute that something is special about this church, right out of the chute, before you ever get anywhere. You know why? Because of the seven churches, every one of them He tells the church to repent for something, except this church. He did not tell this church to repent for anything. This is a good church. This is the model period of church history. This is what it is.

I will tell you what, you want to read a great biography about Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Adoniram Judson, David Brainerd, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, Savonarola? You want to read a great biography about some great saint? You know where they all fall? Right into this period here. You want to read about George Müller and his orphanages? It is right in this period right here. You want to read about the Word of God going around the world five or six times, where three quarters of the world population are saved? It is right here. Now something went around the world five or six times in the Laodicean period where three quarters of the world got something. You know what it was? It was communism. In this one, three quarters of the world is saved. In the next one, three quarters of the world goes communistic. That is pretty good, is not it?

This church has nothing to be ashamed of. It has nothing to repent of. This church at the Judgment Seat of Christ is going to shine. You know what my goal is as pastor? I know I am living in the Laodicean church, but you know what my goal is? My goal is very simple. Somebody says, "What is your philosophy of ministry? What is your goal in ministry?" It is real simple: I want to build a Philadelphian church in the Laodicean church period. But you are going to get kicked doing that. You are going to not be popular. That is why I like this place. It has got two doors. You can come in that one and leave that one, and nobody ever knows.

We have had people come here, honest to goodness, we have people come in here one time, more than one time, I am not kidding. I had a lady come in here one time, and I do not know,

somebody invited her, I guess. I will tell you what, all she had to do is hear you guys at the song service, and she is whipping out. I said, "I already met her," and I said, "Hi." I said, "Where are you going?" She said, "Oh, I have got to go to the bathroom." Well, the bathroom is in the parking lot. This woman went to the restroom in her car. She did. She passed the restroom out the door, did not she, Barbara? I was out the door, out those things, and this thing, I know she is in there, and I said, "Barbara, that..." Barbara said, "Where did she go?" I said, "She has got to go to the bathroom." Barbara said, "In her car."

See, I do not worry about those things. I gave up worrying about the results of ministry many, many years ago. I have come to the conclusion many, many years of my life that I am one of those kind of guys that are in no middle ground. You either love me or you hate me. You will never find anybody who just says, "Well, I kind of like you." Never, never. They will say, "Man, boy," or they will say, "Let me tell you something," and that is where it will be. I like that. I like that. That is the way my life is, black and white. That is the way it is. You see our cars, she has got a black one, I have got a white one. That is the way it is. See, her stuff, she has got black, I have got white. That is the way it is. I do not know how to tell you that, that is just the way it is. I like that because too many pastors, you cannot tell where they are at or what they are believing or what they are doing. I do not ever want that problem here. It is black and white. You know what I believe 15 minutes into it, and that is just the way it has to go. I am not interested in the results. I am interested in truth.

You see, I want the truth. I do not care about who has it. Well, if I thought the Muslims had the truth, you would see me in a turban and a thing, and I would be out here shooting them down with everybody else. I might even be a martyr if I thought they had it. If I thought the Jehovah's Witnesses had the truth, I would be knocking on all your doors on Saturday. See, I do not care who has it. People look at me and they say, "Well, he is just biased." No, I am the most open-minded person you ever met in your life. You show me what is true, I am with you. No argument, no argument, I am with you. People say, "Well, you think you are right, nobody else is wrong." Hey, I know it is a nasty job, and somebody has got to do it, but that is not the way I am. I want truth.

Hey, someday I am going to stop, maybe you do not take it seriously, I do not know. Someday I am going to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and I am going to, I have bet my whole rewards and my inheritance on believing God knew what He said when He said it. Now if you have got something better than that, I will be your best friend. I want the truth. My whole life, ever since I got saved, it has been about one thing: the truth, the truth. I am not interested in games. I am not interested in playing around. I am not interested. I am interested in truth. Someday I am going to stand before Almighty God and give an account of what I did with my life once I got saved. I do not trust anybody more than I trust that book. Give me something better. If Hare Krishna, whatever his name is, I will be Hare Bal. I do not care. I will shave my head, go to the airport, wear a toga, get little thimble symbols on my fingers and dance around. I do not care. I want the truth.

This church had the truth. It has always amazed me that the churches today cannot see the contrast. He says in Revelation 3:7, "And unto 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." "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door." You know in the old days when I was being taught by the old Philadelphia guys, you know what they used to call these two churches? Never hear it anymore. I used to hear these guys talk about the church of the open door and the church of the closed door. For a while I did not know what they were talking about. They were talking about this church had an open door. An open door in the Bible is an opportunity. That is why the gospel went around the world five or six times. The church of Laodicea, the Bible says, is the church of the closed door. That is the church where Jesus is locked out of His own church, and He says in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door." That is the only place in the Bible in the scheme of prophecy where the door is a real door. It is not a real door in John 10. It is not a real door over there in Revelation 19 or in Genesis 6. But here it is a literal door, just like this, and Jesus is on the outside of the church. The door is closed, and He is saying, "Hey, can I get back in My own church?"

Now I have never understood why people cannot see the contrast. Those old boys used to tell me, "If you want to build a church, Bob, there is a key to building that church." And I would say, "Where is that key?" And they would say, "It is the key of David, right there in that verse." You know where the key of David is in your Bible? It is Psalms 119:1-176. That is where the key of David is, right there. That key will open up the door that will give you every opportunity to do whatever God wants you to do.

Now look at 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." Look at verse 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." Now here comes verse 11, here comes the warning. They did not get rebuked, but they got warned. Watch it very carefully.

Revelation 3:11

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

The Laodicean church has let somebody take their crown. They will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ naked, lose their rewards, they have lost their crown. Now this is called the church of the open door versus the church of the closed door. Revelation 3:20. The key to the open door was the Word of God, the key of David. You know what the key of David's life was? It is his relationship with God through the Word of God. We do not have time to go into that, but that is where it is.

Somebody, look at verse 10, it says, He says, "I will keep because you have kept My word, I will keep you from the hour of temptation. Hold fast that which thou hast." Well, they only got one thing in the passage found in verse 8 and found in verse 10, it is the Word of God, "that no man take thy crown." You know what the hour of temptation was? You know what ushered in the, well, you know what shut down the greatest Philadelphia church history and brought in and ushered in the Laodicean church period? You know what the hour of temptation was? It was

higher education and scholarship coming to the place that they thought they were smarter than the Word of God and telling every young man out there, "You cannot trust the Bible God gave you."

Let me tell you something, you have got to be educated out of this book. I have never been in my life that got saved, gotten his Bible, did not think it was God's Word until somebody told him it was not. I never met anybody. I have been in the ministry 32 years. I have seen more people saved than I can even remember. I have disciplined more people than I can even think about, and never in all of those years and all of those people have I ever had somebody get saved, got into the Bible and reading it, and said, "Why, I do not think that is a mistake. I think a better reading should be..." Never. I never had anybody come to the place where they said, "You know what, I have had some say, 'I do not like it.'" I have said that a few times myself. But I have never had anybody get saved, get into the book, and not just love it until somebody said, "Are you like your Bible? You are reading your Bible?" "Yeah, I am really." "How long have you been saved?" "Well, I have been saved now about six months, eight months." "You enjoying reading it?" "Oh, what are you reading over here?" "Some." "You like Revelation?" "Yeah, that is good." "Now, you know, you cannot trust everything. You know, you cannot trust everything in that, you know." See where it starts? That is where it starts.

Then the next step is this: "But I know more than you do, so let me show you what it means." See, and the moment that happens, you just traded the crown that the Holy Spirit of God had for you by dumping the Holy Spirit of God and saying, "Come on in, man, sir, Mr. Mr. Educated Man, Mr. Bible Goer Guy, come on in. You be the place in my life instead of the Holy Spirit of God." I will never, I will help you with the Bible. I will teach you the Bible, but I will never be the Holy Spirit of God for you in the Bible, never. The bottom line is, the first time I show you there is a mistake in it, I hope the men in this church and the women and even a little kid drop kick me through the goal post of life because I will tell you what, there are no mistakes in it. It is perfect. It is perfect. It is perfect. It is perfect. And you have got to be educated out of that fact.

I am not against Christian education, not at all. But I am going to tell you something, I am going to tell you, if you think that your education, or if you have one or you do not have one, it makes you any closer to God or better to God, you are wrong. It has to do with your attitude of heart.

VI. The Five Crowns

These five crowns that you can get at the Judgment Seat of Christ. All right, let us take a look at them. Now, before you do that, I know you do not have a, well, you have got one, do we not? Do not turn to it some more, but I am going to show you what I meant a little while ago. That Bible says that no man take thy crown, and that Bible says that somebody can take your crown, and the Bible teaches them about to give them to you five crowns you can get. You know what Revelation says over there in Revelation 14:10? You know what it says? You know what you do with these crowns when you get them? At some point, you take them all into the throne and you cast them down to His feet. But the bottom line is, it all goes back to Him anyhow. See, I mean, that is what you ought to be doing now with everything you have in your life. You have got to get everything God has for you now, and then you have got to give it back to Him. If you want to

keep it, you have got to give it away. See that? Great principles taught at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You get all these crowns, and then you know what do you do with it? Walk around through eternity where, I mean, you can only wear one at a time. You walk around with all these crowns for all eternity. "Wow, look at those crowns!" "Yeah, who are you?" "I cannot see you, but I have got all these crowns here." "But look what I did for the Lord." No, no, no, you did not do anything. You just did what He allowed you to do. So you know what you do? The same thing you have got to be doing now. You take everything He gave you, everything you got, everything that you think is yours, everything you think, everything that you think you could muster up, and in that day, you take those crowns and you just lay them at His feet.

Whoever wrote these hymnals knew that great doctrine because on page 418, great songs, "Must I Go and Empty-Handed?" You know what that song is about? You have got to read it sometime. It is about somebody at the Judgment Seat of Christ, happening, going to the throne room and nothing to lay at His feet. Whoever back then knew that, they knew that doctrine that you were going to have to go in and lay those crowns at His feet. And the song is, "Must I Go and Empty-Handed?" See that is why, that is why compare that song with some of the stuff you hear on the radio today.

All right, now let us look at these five crowns.

1. The Incorruptible Crown This one is found in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. He says there, he says, "So many of God's people run, do not know what they are running for." And he says, "You know, I beat," he says, he says, "uh, but I fight, so fight I the one that beateth the air." You know what he is saying? Somebody who is fighting, fighting somebody, but he is not hitting anybody. All he is doing is swinging and missing. He is just hitting the air. That is where most Christians are. Look what he says: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." You know what the incorruptible crown is? It is keeping your flesh in control. It is keeping your body under control. It is keeping yourself as a Christian from the world. It is keeping yourself from the place that you say one thing and then you do something else, and what you preach gets canceled by what you did. You become a castaway. That is what it is talking about. The incorruptible crown is given out by a young man or young lady who gets saved, who realizes that now you are a Christian, you are no longer part of the world. Those things are gone. No more rock concerts, no more drugs, no more this, no more that, no more this, no more that. It is done. You cannot have it in my life. I have got to make a separation from it. Me as a Christian going to someplace like that where somebody may see me, knows me, I am a Christian, and I have witnessed to them, and they are saying, "They are beside their mind. Well, they are a Christian. Why would they go to a rock concert? Why would they go to a

drug fest? Why would they go to this? Why would they go to that?" And what you preach, you become a castaway. The Bible says you keep yourself, you keep your focus, you realize you are in a race, keep your eyesight on the end prize, and He said, "You know what, I will give you a crown of incorruptible." That is one you can get.

2. The Crown of Righteousness This one is found in 2 Timothy 4:6-8. This one is real easy, or you think it is real easy. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Paul knows he is getting ready to die. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course." By the way, that course is the race that he was running back there in 1 Corinthians 9. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." See that thing? "That day" there is the day of Jesus Christ, rapture of the church, Judgment Seat of Christ. "And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Now there is a crown you get for just loving for the Lord to come back. Who could not get that one? About 99.9% of God's people. You think it is the easiest thing in the world, the love in your heart that you want God to come back more than anything else in the whole wide world. I had to laugh back in 1988 or 1989, I forget where it was, somebody put out the idea that the Lord was coming back in 1988. It shocked all kinds of Christians. I never forget it, in 1988 or 1989, I forget where it was, it was a whole thing across this nation that the Lord was coming back in April, I forget what month it was, but it was a specific month in 1988 or 1989, and everybody believed it. Everybody was scared, everybody was afraid, and all this stuff. So what happened was, it did not happen. Obviously, after the fact, when they went back and looked at it, all the media had a field day with it. You had a thought, you see, if Christ was really coming back, did a thought of Christ was really coming back? Man, you went out beating the bushes, telling everybody that you loved about Christ coming, heaven, going to save, hell, and heaven and hell and all that stuff. You know what happened? What happened was that God's people went out and ran their credit cards up, bought all the things they wanted because they knew if Christ came, they would not have to pay for it. Now how about that? That is what I am talking about. That is where God's people are at today. That is where we are at. The last prayer in that Bible, in Revelation 20:20, is for the Lord to come back, where it says, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The last prayer in your Bible. Boy, I will tell you what, that matches up to Matthew 20 where it says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your mind, and all your soul." Let me tell you something, brother, I mean with all my heart. I have a lot of things planned today. I am looking forward to doing. I have things I want to do next week. I have things I am looking forward to doing with the church and you guys in the future. But I have got to be honest with you, I have nothing on my agenda that I would not cancel just like that. We want to come right now. In fact, you do it to stay away from me. If God came down and said, "Bob, I will give you one prayer, and I will answer that prayer." You know, just like the genie used to rub the lamp, you get three wishes. I do not need three, I only need one. If God came down right

now and said, "Bob, I will give you three wishes," and He will come to pass just like that, I would not worry about the last two because for the first one to be all over, I would say, "Lord, just make the rapture right now. Where is the switch? Where is the button? Throw it. Let us go. Get out of here."

3. The Crown of Glory This one is found in 1 Peter 5:1-4. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. This ought to be easy for you to get. "The elders which are among you I exhort, whom am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that should be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, God's people, not by constraint, somebody making you do it, but willingly, on your own, not for filthy lucre, not in it for the money, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, the people of God, but being ensamples." Now you will find in your Bible there are two things: there is an example and there is an ensample. An example of something that you do, an ensample of something that you are. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Nobody gets that crown for you. You get that crown for teaching the Word of God. That is not a pastor's crown. That is for anybody teaching the Bible. You are discipling somebody right now? Well, if you are, you have got the right attitude of heart, you have got it. Are you, any time you take, and it is not just sitting down discipleship, if you are telling somebody at work, if you are witnessing, if you are telling the story, if you are laying it out, somebody asking you questions, you see, we will get back to all these things here in a minute.

4. The Crown of Rejoicing This one is found in Philippians 4:1 and 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20. Philippians 4:1

Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. Talking to the church, "my joy and crown." Whoever these people were, they were Paul's crown. Let us see what it says: "So stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

For ye are our glory and joy. He will clear it up for us: "For what is our hope, or our joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, men and women, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." You know what he is saying? He is saying that is a soul winner's crown. That is a crown you get for winning people to Christ. You heard me last week say that you did not get reward, remember I talked about that thing that you did not get, it was over and above, and that is true, it is over and above, but what puts it over and above is your attitude. That is what makes the difference, it is your attitude. I had a couple things this week, and a couple of gals were asking questions about things in the Bible. I had over at Steven and Nicky's Monday, and then last week Nicole, and

Nicole, she is not here tomorrow, I am glad she is not going to, I would not put her on, I am not glad she is not, but I mean, I would not want to put her on the spot, but I illustrate my point. We were talking, and she heard my message on the Judgment Seat of Christ, and I love it when people are like that. She says, "Bob," she says, "I feel so bad, so terrible." And I said, "What is the matter?" She says, "Well," she says, "I was only saved a short time," and she says, "I have just not done anything for the Lord." She says, "I want to get at least something." She says, "I just want to get something." She says, "I just, you know, I just want to get." She says, "I have not, I am just learning my Bible. I am afraid if the Lord comes back, all that I want to do, I will never get to do, and I will not get any rewards." Nicky basically asked me the same question, not the same way, but she asked about, you know, and here is the answer. Let me tell you something, you know the best thing that happened to you, bar none. Let me tell you the best scenario for you. Go ahead and live your life till you are 20 years old. Get it out of your system. That is really not the best scenario, but you do not understand where I am coming from. Then get saved, and when you get on your knees and you ask Christ's plan how to save you, you look back at all the things that you know you did that were wrong and how you were selfish and did your own thing, and then at that instant you say to God, "Now that you are saved, on your still in your knees, you say, 'God, I love you. I will tell you something, I made a mess out of the first 20, but I am telling you, God, I am going to give you everything I have for the next rest of my life. I do not care where it is, what it is, what you want me to do, I am going to do it. I am going to give it to you. I am just, it is Yours, Lord. I mean that with all of my heart. I just mean that with all of my heart.'" And then for you to stand up, and then as you stand up, realize that you just got saved in the middle of the street, and you look up and here comes the big tractor trailer and runs you over and kills you. Best deal you could have. You know why? At that point in your life, God has to give you on the basis of your attitude of heart everything that you would have got if you had lived your life and carried that thing out. You know why? It is not about what you do, gang, it is about your attitude of heart about wanting to get it done. Now, do not you tell him this, but he is not here today either, but I want to say this because there is a great illustration, but if you tell him this and I find out about it, I will make you leave the church. I do not want to rob this kid of this blessing, but this is an example you need to see, and I do not want to take from him what God has done, so I am telling you in secret. If he was here today, I would not say it, but you need to see how this thing works in light of our brother missionary here this morning. You know that guy that told Frank Subtle, we do not even know who he is, but I will tell you this, I do not know that guy's heart, but if that guy's heart was right when he did what he did, and he just wanted God to get the honor and glory out of it, let me tell you something, that one little thing, I am telling Frank Subtle where he could get some bread that he was starving to death, and then Frank told you and told everybody else everything that you, Frank, everybody else has done down through, and the souls have been saved, and the works have been done, that boy gets credit for the Judgment Seat of Christ, and he does not even know who they are. You know why? It is in here. A couple weeks ago, old Kyle, Liz's husband, that is how we recognize him. I love living with all my heart. He comes over to my house. Now Kyle, not speaking out of turn here, because it is a secret, and I am serious, you tell him, you are robbing him of millennial glory, and I, because I am not telling him this, I

am just letting it go, but you have got to learn from it. Some of you young Christians need to see this. It is a great example, and if he was here today, I would not say it. And if you say something to him, God will kill you. Kyle had come to church for a little over a year. He had a struggling business, did what is right in the Word of God, business grew, very successful. Now he comes over to my house about three, four weeks ago. He says, "Bob," he says, "I have got a burden." I said, "What is the burden?" He said, "Well, I am a little embarrassed to ask you." He said, "But," he says, "because I do not think you will do it." And I said, "Well, what is it?" And he said, "I want to take it, my own, we are going to put it together, the whole thing, and I want to take all the material that you have ever done," and he says, "We want to build a website. We want to put it on a website that anybody around the world can go and download anything that you have done." He said, "I will take care of it. I will do it all. You will not have to do a thing." And he says, "If you just give me the permission to do it, I will set it up. I have got the people already working for me. They are already hoping you are going to say yes. They are already working on this stuff. It is already almost ready to go." We met last week. It is all pretty much in the mix. It is going to be ready about another month, that any missionary in this world, like old Frank, anywhere around this world, it is going to be a website called "How to Study Your Bible." All you have got to type in is "How to Study My Bible," and bang, the webpage will come up. Everything we have ever done. I have got another guy in the church doing the outlines. We are putting them in. Everything is going to be there. Now, the bottom line is this: do not you tell him. Let Kyle just go on being as dumb as he is. The dumber Kyle is, the better off he is right now. Do not wise him up because you know what I thought when he did it, and I did not say a word, just let it go, because I am not robbing him of it. I do not want to give him a big head. I do not want it. But you know what? That thing comes to pass, everything down the line that somebody gets out of there are going to go back to one little guy's heart who is struggling. God blessed him, and he said, "What can I give back to God?" And impact it. You want to talk about impacting the world by never leaving your home? Folks, all kinds of things around in your world all day long, just like that, and there are things that nobody ever sees and nobody ever knows. I actually hesitate telling you that because that is something that needs to be kept secret. I did not tell him, and I am trusting you not to tell him, but he was not here today for a reason, and I felt like where I am at, this is a great example for you to learn. Not putting him on any pedestal. He has got as many holes in his armor as we all have. He is a sinner saved by grace, just like we are. But you know what? It is the heart toward God that God looks for. It is not about what you have. It is about what can I do with what I have to get done for God when it needs to get done, costing nothing. The bottom line is, you have got to think through your heart, not through your head. There is no reason, some of you people, I hate to say it, I hate to say it because I am afraid I am going to take from you at the Judgment Seat of Christ, because I am afraid the moment you pat yourself on your back or you get your name tag, "My name is Bible Examiner, I am a spiritual man," you know you are in trouble. Some of you guys at work telling the story, going the extra mile to witness to somebody, you brought people into this church because of your life, or you do this or you do that, or just God just gives you a little open door, and you know what? You could have been a human of mine, could have been, "Oh, I have got to get a Coke," or "I want to eat lunch," or "I want to do this," or "I want to

do that." No, no, in spite of all that, your mind was focused on, you saw that little opportunity, and you just stepped in and you did God's business for Him. See, that is heart. That is heart. I can teach you the Bible all day long, seven days a week, 24 hours, seven days, 30 days a month. I cannot teach you heart. I cannot. I can try to be the best example I can be, but I am even lousy at that. That is something that you have got to get with God. I cannot give you that. You know where you get that? You get that by taking what I give you and go home and pouring over it and pouring over it and pouring over it and getting into the book and asking God for this and showing God this and doing this, and then God takes you and then God uses you. But it is the heart. There is no reason why every child of God should not have everything at the Judgment Seat of Christ as far as these crowns. The Crown of Rejoicing, that is the people you win to Christ. You know what the Bible gives the indication in Malachi 3? It gives the indication that you get a crown, and for every person you win to Christ, there is a jewel in that crown. Now when you start talking like that, you start getting the idea that, I mean, you have got to go out and say, "Hi, your name is Joe? Joe, have you ever been saved?" "No, I have not been saved." "Well, Joe, let me show you how to be saved." And then you win Joe to Christ, and you walk out saying, "Praise the Lord, Joe got saved." That is a crown. That is how you get them. But you know how else you get them? I will tell you what, you can pray for that man right back there. You know what he said his greatest need was? His greatest need was prayer. You can pray for his work down there with the right attitude of heart, and whatever he gets, you get. And if he blows it, he does not get it, you still get it because your heart was right. You cannot lose. You cannot lose. That is why the Bible says, "Pray without ceasing." If your heart is right, you can just pray for the work, for the ministry, for your preacher, for the missionaries, and if your heart is real and it is right and that is what you really want and it is based on truth, no reason, there is no reason other than the fact that we love the things in this world more than we love the things of God.

5. The Crown of Life This one is found in James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10. James 1:12

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Revelation 2:10

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Now this is commonly called the martyr's crown, and it is commonly taught as somebody who lays down their life for the cause of Christ. Bah. Well, when you read the other passage in James 1:2, it is not just about dying. You know, there are some greater things that you can suffer than dying for the Lord. My old father in the Lord, he used to say, he used to set people up all the time. He would get a church going, he would get a crowd going. They would say, "You love Jesus Christ?" And they would say, "Amen." He would say, "Do you love God?" And they would get fired up. And he says, "Do you love God enough to die for Him?" Everybody is saying, "Amen." He got into a frenzy right now. He said, "No, do you love Him enough to die for Him today?" The whole church would just go, "Amen." Then he would say, "Any fool can die for Him. Do you get that excited about living for Him?" I learned a long time ago that old boy, when he asked a question while he is preaching, how he shut my mouth. Never said a thing. Anywhere I go, I

go and get whacked. Anybody can die for Him. I am not taking away the men and women that did die for Him, died horrible deaths. Read Foxe's Book of Martyrs. Read the accounts in church history: the Waldensians, the Albigensians, the Huguenots, the Lollards, the Paulicians. The list is endless. Not taking anything away from it, but it is over, it is over. And sometimes the temptation of living and not dying, when you have got to face the reality of the world, the flesh, and the devil, is a lot tougher than just mustering up the strength in a moment to die for Him. I am going to tell you, and that is why this crown goes both ways. Some of you are going to be tempted. Some of you are going to be tempted to quit. Some of you are going to go through persecution in your businesses, persecution in your families. Some of you are going to go through some tough times. It is all part of the hand of God in the process. We all have things to learn. Sometimes we have got to learn the hard way, but that is how God teaches us. It is about your attitude of heart. It is about your attitude of heart, folks. It is about loving Him and understanding that everything you do, you do on that basis. Everything you do, you do on that basis.

You know what He said in Revelation 3:20? He says this:

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.

I am telling you that is the kind of church this church needs to be. We have the opportunity because of what we believe about the Bible. We believe the Bible stands on its own. We believe there is nothing else you have got to have than that book. We believe the Bible is the absolute infallible, perfect Word of God. We believe that all you need is an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit of God, and God will turn the lights on and show you everything. My job as pastor is not to be your Holy Spirit, but to introduce you to Him and show you how to turn the lights on, because my goal for you, my goal for you, my goal for the Lord in this church has no private agenda. I have no motive. I have no secret agenda. I have nothing that I want out of it. I try every day in my heart, in my life, to do what I do for Him because of what He did for me. I do not always do it, but I try to, and when I do not do it, I could just kick myself.

But I have one goal for every one of you, and I know you all will not make it. I want you to, I want you to more than anything else in this world, but I know you will not because I know where we are at, Laodicean church, and I know the way it will go. The devil has got the key to every back door in the city, but that does not deter me in my goal. My goal is this: my goal is simply that you do not have to go in empty-handed. That is my goal. I told you many, many times, I want to give you the best shot. You people are the greatest people in the world. You love God. God has put us together. We have a Philadelphia church in a Laodicean church, and there will be a price tag to pay for that. That is okay. The real tragedy is to be in that environment, to be in that environment where it is all right within your grasp, and let some man take your crown. No reason for it.

Next week I am going to show you about an inheritance. God has crowns for you. Crowns are always associated with the Judgment Seat of Christ. You need to put that down as the last thing.

Inheritance is associated with something else. We are going to talk about that next week. Lord willing. Let us pray.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus.