

Christ's Message to His Church 2

Revelation 3:1-22

Big Idea: Christ walks among His churches, knowing us intimately. Are we shining His light or fading embers? He calls us to repent, persevere, and overcome—not in our strength, but His. We're His lampstand, forged as one to illuminate darkness with the Gospel. Let your light shine!

Main Points

1. Jesus walks among the lampstands (churches), intimately knowing each one
2. Each message follows a pattern: identification, "I know," commendation/rebuke, call to action, promises
3. These messages were for specific churches but apply to all churches throughout history
4. The church is called to be a lampstand - illuminating darkness with the Gospel

Scriptures:

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| <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 11:2 | <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 65:16 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 John 2:3-6 | <input type="radio"/> John 8:12 |
| <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 40:25 | <input type="radio"/> John 16:33 |
| <input type="radio"/> Philippians 4:13 | <input type="radio"/> Matthew 5:14-16 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 | <input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 1:10 |

Opening Question:

The sermon described repentance as a gift, not just a duty. Can you think of a time when God's correction or discipline ended up being a kindness to you?

Discussion Questions:

The Church at Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6)

What does it mean to have a reputation for being alive but actually be spiritually dead? How can a church (or individual) appear active but lack genuine spiritual life?

What are the "things that remain" in your spiritual life that need strengthening?

The sermon used the image of a dying ember that needs bellows. What practical steps can we take to fan the flames of our faith?

The sermon emphasized that "we are not saved by works, but true faith produces good works." How do you explain this distinction to someone?

What fruit should be evident in a believer's life?

The Church at Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)

Philadelphia received commendation with no rebuke. What specifically did they do right? They had "little power" but kept God's word and didn't deny His name. How does this encourage us when we feel weak or inadequate?

What is the "open door" that Christ has set before us? How do we maintain access to the Father through Christ in our daily lives?

The Philadelphian Christians faced Caesar cults and trade union exclusion. What modern pressures tempt us to compromise our faith? Share a time when standing firm in your faith cost you something. What helped you persevere?

The Church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)

Explain the context of hot/cold water in Laodicea. Why is lukewarm worse than cold? How can a church or believer become "lukewarm" - neither distinctly useful nor refreshing? In what areas might we be blending in with society rather than standing out for Christ?

Laodicea thought they were "rich and in need of nothing" but were actually "wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked." How can material wealth or comfort blind us to spiritual poverty? What does it mean to buy "gold refined by fire" and "white garments" from Christ?

The sermon emphasized this message is to believers, not unbelievers. What does it mean that Christ stands at the door knocking? How do we "open the door" to deeper intimacy with Christ?

Application to Our Church

What would it look like for us to "illuminate the darkness" more effectively in our community?

The word "overcome" appears repeatedly. What does it mean to be an overcomer?

Jesus said "I have overcome" before asking us to overcome. How does His example encourage us?

Practical Applications:

1. Wake Up (Sardis): Identify one area where you've been "going through the motions" spiritually. What specific action will you take this week to strengthen it?
2. Hold Fast (Philadelphia): Name one truth or practice you need to hold onto despite external pressure. How will you do this?
3. Be Zealous (Laodicea): Where have you become complacent or self-sufficient? What would passionate repentance look like in that area?
4. Group/Church Commitments: How can we as a small group "illuminate the darkness" together? What can we do to maintain unity in the body (1 Corinthians 1:10)? How can we encourage one another to persevere and overcome?

Closing Thought/Prayer:

The sermon reminded us that the church is a lampstand made from one piece of gold, with seven branches representing completion in Christ. How are you contributing to the light of this lampstand?