

Revelation 3:20-22

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/rev/rev-3/revelation-320-22/>

In the final section of the letter to the church in Laodicea, Jesus asks the believers to come be in community with Him and promises a blessing of authority to faithful witnesses.

The final section of the letter to the church in Laodicea starts with an invitation of community with Jesus: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.*

This admonition ties back to Jesus's admonition in the prior section, where Jesus says to the believers in Laodicea: "I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself" (Revelation 3:18). This verse now tells the Laodiceans how to "buy" gold from Jesus and become truly rich. That is by listening to Jesus.

This offer of "all the gold you want" extends to *anyone who hears My voice and opens the door*. The picture is that Jesus is standing outside the door of our lives calling out "Anyone home?" If we hear His invitation, and invite Him in, Jesus promises He will *come in*. Further, Jesus says we have the opportunity to *dine with Him*.

To *dine with* someone is to engage with them at a more intimate level than a mere conversation. When we *dine with* people we typically have an exchange that has some depth. Dining takes some time. It is not a mere transaction. When we have the opportunity to *dine with* Jesus we can learn of His ways.

This is how to buy all the gold we desire. The "gold" is the true treasure of life, which is to gain wisdom (Proverbs 16:16). It is adopting the perspective/attitude/mindset of Jesus, a perspective that is true (Philippians 2:5). The "gold" is the possession of the greatest fulfillment of life. Jesus said that "eternal life," the greatest fulfillment of life in this instance, is to know God, and to know Jesus (John 17:3). Jesus depicts being invited in to dine with Him as a way of getting to know Him intimately. That is the path to our greatest fulfillment. When we walk in faith through trials, depending upon Jesus, we come to know Jesus by faith. This is our greatest earthly opportunity.

The picture that Jesus gives is *I stand at the door and knock*. Jesus is always ready to be invited in to our lives. Jesus always stands ready to spend time with us, that we may know Him, which is the source of our greatest fulfillment. The question is not whether Jesus is knocking, ready to engage; He always is. The question is whether we will be one who *hears His voice and opens the door* to our "house."

This picture is similar to us being told that the Holy Spirit is always leading us (Romans 8:14). Just as we have the choice to decide whether to hear Jesus's voice and choose to follow Him, we

also decide whether to choose to listen to the Spirit and follow His ways (which lead to life) or choose to listen to the flesh and choose its ways (which lead to death and loss) (Galatians 6:8).

The “white garments” might represent lasting status. If we want true status, then we should buy white garments from Jesus. We gain the cleanliness of our clothing by engaging with Jesus, listening to Him, and following His ways.

The relationship Jesus offers is a two-way relationship. Jesus says, *I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me*. It is not a picture of us at a banquet listening to Jesus as the keynote speaker. This is Jesus saying *I will come in to him and dine with him* just as much as the servant dines with Jesus. We are across the table with Jesus, engaged in intimate conversation.

This passage is often used to encourage unbelievers to invite Jesus into their hearts, that they might become one of His children. Any Bible verse is appropriate to use to make such an invitation to anyone who does not believe. All that is required to become a believer is to have enough faith to look at Jesus on the cross, hoping to be delivered from the poisonous venom of sin (John 3:14-15). However, in the immediate context of this passage, Jesus is speaking to believers.

In this case the Laodicean believers are comfortable with the world, and not useful for Jesus’s kingdom. Therefore He said He would spit them out of His mouth, like He would lukewarm water (Revelation 3:16). Jesus wants His servants to be useful like cold water (to drink) or hot mineral water (to heal) (Revelation 3:15). This is why Jesus chastised them. Jesus makes clear that He chastises those whom He loves (Revelation 3:19). These are His children who He desires to possess the reward of their inheritance, but they are not on a path to do so.

In Luke 19, Jesus dined with a tax collector named Zacchaeus, who climbed a tree in order to see Jesus teach (Luke 19:5-7).

Jesus was criticized for having the intimate fellowship of dining with Zacchaeus. But Jesus *knocked at Zacchaeus’ house*, so to speak, and Zacchaeus *opened the door* and welcomed Jesus into his home and into his life.

We are all sinners like Zacchaeus, and yet Jesus will sacrifice His reputation to come and dine with us. In His letter to the Laodiceans, Jesus also expresses the desire to come in and dine with His own children, to have intimate fellowship with them. This is, again, the way to gain the greatest riches of life.

Finally, the letter moves to the blessing portion: *He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne*.

This is encouraging. The Laodiceans are useless for Jesus’s kingdom. They think they are rich, because of material prosperity, yet are spiritually poor. They are spiritually clueless and useless. Jesus chastises them thoroughly. Yet they still have the opportunity to repent, to begin listening to Jesus, and to gain true riches. They still have the opportunity to overcome.

In each of the seven letters, there are special rewards for a special class of believers, described as *he who overcomes*. Even though this says *he*, this promise would include any believer who is found worthy, regardless of their station in life (Galatians 3:28). To overcome is to resist temptation by the world, including rejection and death, and continue in faithfulness to Jesus. ([See our article on being an Overcomer](#))

This time, *he who overcomes* is promised access to the *throne* room of God and to *sit down* with Jesus on His *throne*. Jesus shows in this passage how He is also dependent on His Father. Jesus *also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne* when He died on the cross and rose again, overcoming death (Hebrews 1:3). He laid down His life in obedience to God the Father and has been granted blessings because of it.

Jesus was granted all authority over heaven and earth as a result of being a faithful witness (Matthew 28:18). He was rewarded by His Father, because He *also overcame*. If we also act in obedience to what God has called us to do and *overcome* temptation and rejection from the world, living as faithful witnesses, then we will be granted blessings and *sit down with Jesus on His throne*.

To *sit down with Jesus on His throne* is to share reigning over the earth with Him. This is the great blessing of being restored to our original design. Humans were created to tend and keep the earth. To steward the earth (Genesis 1:28, 2:15; Psalm 8:6). However, humans fell from that station, and Satan took back his place as the ruler of this world (John 14:30). To join with the group of servants that *overcomes* will be to gain the great blessing of being restored to our original design, to rule the earth in service and harmony with Jesus, for the benefit of all.

Satan is a would-be tyrant-king, Jesus is a servant-king. Jesus overcame temptation, rejection, and death. He was a faithful witness. As a result He was given the reward of ruling with His Father, as a human. He tells His servants that He will give the same reward of sharing His throne to those who overcome as He overcame.

Revelation 1:3 says that those who read, understand, and heed (or do) the words of this prophecy will gain a great blessing. Revelation makes it clear that the world will have trouble. As we get into subsequent chapters, many terrible things are predicted. But God is always on His throne. Nothing will occur that He did not allow. And His people are always invited to trust Him, and gain the great reward of being overcomers, overcoming as He overcame.

To live as a witness for Jesus will bring us trouble; we will be rejected by the world. Yet Jesus makes it clear that those who overcome the fear of loss or rejection from the world will gain something much greater. If we are faithful over the (comparatively) small things in this life, we will be given great responsibility. We will exercise authority in harmony with our Master in the next life. This will bring us the greatest joy (Matthew 25:21, 23).

The letter to the church in Laodicea ends with a familiar refrain: *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*. Even though Jesus speaks to John, it is the *Spirit* speaking to the *churches*. Jesus, the Spirit, and the Father are One.

It requires a desire to hear the truth in order to actually hear the reality of what is true. The word of God is what is true. Those who hear, believe, and act upon these truths will gain the most from life. This will fulfill the saying of Jesus:

“And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.”
(Matthew 10:38-39)

This call to *hear what the Spirit says to the churches* is echoed throughout the letters to the seven churches and refers back to the instructions in Revelation 1:3 to read, hear, and heed (do) the words of the prophecy. The promise of Revelation 1:3 is that anyone who reads, hears, and heeds (does) the admonitions in Revelation will be “blessed.” This blessing includes the incredible opportunity to be restored to our original design, to reign in harmony with Christ, in service, to bring harmony (righteousness) to the earth.

Biblical Text

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. ²² He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”