For those of you who weren’t here last week, we’ve been going over the book of Revelation, specifically Revelation 3:14–22. This is the last message of Jesus to the final church in the series of seven churches in Revelation. It’s not a good message. In fact, it’s a very difficult one.

Jesus knows our works, and they are not great. In His love, He exposes us and points out our need for His grace. He describes us as lukewarm, repulsive in His sight—wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. But He doesn’t leave us there. This is where we will focus today—the good news.

I hope that, after reflecting on last week’s message, you’ve been able to meditate on just how diluted we are. We think we’re rich, that we have everything we need. We claim to be in Christ, yet so often, we remain in sin. We claim to have the truth, but we don’t apply it. We claim to have the true message to share with the world, but frequently, we only share it among ourselves. This is the first step: we need to be honest with ourselves. We are not where we need to be. We need revival, reformation, and repentance.

But that’s where this message begins. After revealing all that’s wrong with us, Jesus says in verse 18, “I counsel you to buy from Me.” This is significant. Jesus is saying, “You think you’re rich, that you have everything you need. You who have no need, why don’t you come to Me? I have something you might need.”

This is important. So often when we hear God’s diagnosis of our lives, we think, “I need to fix my works. I need to make them acceptable to God.” We might think, “I’ll try discipline, structure, this, or that.” But none of these things will solve the problem. Jesus doesn’t say, “I know your works, now go to the world to buy a remedy.” He doesn’t say, “Look within yourself for the solution.” He says, “Come to Me.”

This reminds me of what we read in Matthew 11:28–30, where Jesus says, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” The first step toward healing is to come to Jesus—not to try to fix things ourselves, not to seek solutions in the world, but to go to Him. He will give us rest.

In Hebrews 4, Paul expands on this concept of rest, saying that those who enter God’s rest have ceased from their works, just as God ceased from His work of creation. The rest Jesus offers is symbolic of surrender. It’s letting go of the idea that we can earn our salvation or fix ourselves. We can’t.

The Bible teaches us again and again that our works will not save us. In Romans 3:20, it says, “By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” It’s the law that shows us our sin, but it’s not the law that saves us. Galatians 2:16 says, “A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.”

You see, we are justified not by our works, but by faith in Jesus. This is crucial to understand. Even though the law is good—it reflects the character of God and His love—it cannot save us. As Paul explains in Galatians 3, we are justified by faith, not by works. And that faith, that ability to believe, even comes from God. It’s not something we muster up on our own.

The moment we start thinking that we can do something to earn God’s favor, we miss the point. Nothing we do entitles us to anything from God. Everything good in us comes from God. Our faith, our character, our ability to repent—all come from God. If we took every good thing that any human has ever done, except for Jesus, and laid it before God, it would be rejected as treason. Nothing good dwells in our flesh. We all fall short of God’s glory. Our righteousness is like filthy rags.

But there’s hope! Jesus offers us rest, the rest of knowing that salvation is not based on how good we are. We can’t do anything to earn it. None of us would be saved if it were based on our performance. But Jesus also says, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:29–30).

What does it mean to take up the yoke? A yoke is a wooden device that binds two oxen together so they can work as a team. When Jesus says, “Take My yoke upon you,” He’s inviting us to be bound to Him. We are to yield our will to His will, follow His lead, and work alongside Him. A yoke is not something we bear alone—it’s a shared work. When we are yoked with Jesus, we follow His steps and do His works, not by our own power, but by His. He bears the burden, and the yoke becomes easy.

As Jesus said in John 15, “I am the vine, and you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit. For without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

Your job as a Christian is not to bear fruit so that you can prove you’re a part of the vine, or to earn your place in the vine. Yet, often we act as if that’s the case, thinking, *“I must do this so that God will accept me, so that I can be in the church, so that I can go to heaven.”* But this is backwards.

The truth is that our job is not to bear fruit; it’s to abide in the vine. If we do this, the fruit will take care of itself. This principle is illustrated clearly in John 15:5, where Jesus says, *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”* It would be absurd for me to take a severed branch from an apple tree and say, *“Wait, guys, in a couple of months, we’re going to have apples.”* The branch is severed from the vine, the root, and therefore cannot bear fruit.

Similarly, we cannot produce holiness, kindness, or love on our own if we are not spending time with the Vine, Jesus. Abiding in Him is the key.

Isaiah 26:12 says, *“Lord, You will establish peace for us, for You have also done all our works in us.”* This reveals a powerful truth: God works in us, enabling us to live according to His will. Titus 3:3-7 echoes this sentiment: *“For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*

This passage underscores that our salvation is not based on works but on God’s mercy and grace. We can never claim that we deserved it, nor can we work our way into God’s favor. This truth is vital, both on our best days and our worst. Whether we're riding high on the mountaintop, thinking we’ve earned God's blessings, or we're in the midst of our darkest days, feeling unworthy of His grace, we must never fall into the trap of thinking our actions can either entitle or disqualify us from His grace.

It is not about what we have earned, but about what Jesus has already received on our behalf. His righteousness is the foundation of everything we need from God.

So, what do we need from Jesus? He says we need to buy from Him gold refined by fire. This gold is symbolic of the precious attributes that characterize God—faith and love. These are not attributes we naturally possess; they are the very things that Jesus offers to us. Gold, in this context, represents these traits—faith and love—that are essential for a rich, fruitful life in Christ.

This faith and love are what characterized the life of Jesus. They are the attributes that made His life a success, and we need to cultivate them. Jesus offers these precious qualities to us, not because we deserve them, but because He is willing to give them freely.

Next, Jesus tells us to buy white garments so that the shame of our nakedness may not be revealed. This refers to the righteousness of Christ, which covers our sinfulness. Just as Adam and Eve attempted to cover themselves with fig leaves, we often try to cover our faults with our own efforts, but these efforts are insufficient.

Christ's righteousness is not just a legal standing that excuses transgression. It is not something we can use to justify sin. His righteousness is not just imputed to us; it is imparted. As one of my favorite authors wisely says, *“If you do not have faith to believe that God can keep you from sinning, you do not have the sufficient faith for God to forgive you of your sins.”* Christ’s righteousness is both imputed and imparted. It covers us and transforms us.

When we wear Christ’s righteousness, our shame does not appear, not only to God but also to others. This righteousness does more than simply justify us—it changes the way we live. Christ’s righteousness is not merely a declaration that we are not guilty; it is the power to live a holy life. Through His perfect obedience, He has made it possible for us to live in obedience to God. But how?

The key is surrender. We must die to self and live for God. Galatians 2:20 says, *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”* The more we die to our own desires and surrender to God’s will, the more His life becomes our life. His righteousness is not just about a declaration that we are forgiven; it’s about a transformation of our character. We begin to reflect His mind and His heart.

Jesus also tells us to buy from Him eye salve so that we may see. Our spiritual eyesight is crucial because what we behold shapes who we become. What we choose to focus on influences our actions, habits, and ultimately our character.

The eye salve Jesus offers is His Word. The Bible, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is the source of our spiritual sight. As Psalm 119:11 says, *“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”* It is through the Word of God that we gain clear discernment between right and wrong, and we are equipped to live in righteousness.

So, what must we do to receive these gifts from Jesus? We don’t have anything to offer Him, but we must still give Him something: our hearts. We must give up our self-sufficiency, letting go of anything that hinders our allegiance to God. Jesus calls us to *“be zealous and repent.”* Repentance means turning away from our sins and turning toward God. It is a conscious decision to forsake what is wrong in our lives and embrace what is right.

Anything we cherish more than God will hinder our walk with Him. We need to give up these things and surrender completely to His will. Only when we give ourselves fully to God can we receive the transformation He offers.

We need to be zealous. We need to wake up and realize the work we have to do. Sadly, the Christian church as a whole, and our denomination is not exempt, has lowered the standard of righteousness. There are two extremes: one side says, "Just believe and everything's okay; God doesn't care how you live as long as you believe." The other side says, "Nope, God's a judge and He’s going to mess you up if you don't get your act together." Both are lies from the devil.

The truth is, God can accept nothing less than perfection. And that perfection He offers to you in Christ as a gift. But it’s going to cost you everything you have—constant, tireless effort—because you have self to subdue, sins to overcome, and you must overcome, but not in your own strength. We must "buy it from Jesus."

How do we overcome? We search our hearts by God's grace in His word, in light of His word. The isalve we receive His righteousness by faith, and we walk like Jesus. We develop faith and love by exercising them. You already have a little bit of faith—that’s why you're here—exercise it. You already have a little bit of love—by God's grace—exercise it, and it will grow.

That's how we receive these gifts from Jesus: by renouncing ourselves and clinging to our Savior, not just once a week, not only in the mornings, but every moment of the day. Jesus imparts all the power, all the grace, all the ability, all the wisdom, everything that you need. But what you must do is cooperate.

Be zealous. It’s a choice. If you don’t feel zealous, pray. We need to be serious about this—really serious. There’s no room for half-hearted Christians anymore. It's do or die at this point. Jesus says, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him." That’s a promise. The word of God is full of promises, and those promises are what make us partakers of the divine nature, enabling us to overcome. Every word of scripture is for us to receive by faith and act upon.

What do we have to do? We have to hear the voice of God. You must listen and respond. The best story that comes to my mind for this is the story of the paralytic. This paralytic man hadn’t walked for years—couldn't exercise his limbs at all. He probably tried, in his own strength, many times. Then his friends hear about Jesus and bring him to the feet of Jesus through the roof. Jesus looks at him and says, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Did the paralytic do anything to deserve forgiveness? No. He just came to Jesus. In the same way, if you have sins, you won’t do anything to make yourself more worthy of being forgiven by staying away from Jesus. Just come to Him as you are, and He will forgive you if you just believe His word. He says, "If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness."

Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven." The man has peace. He believes God’s word, and that he is forgiven. The Pharisees are confused: "Who is this man who has the ability to forgive sins? Only God can do that!" Jesus responds, "Which is easier for me to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’?" But He says, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power to forgive sins..." and then He says to the paralytic, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk."

Think with me for a moment. If it were me, I might have said, "Well, Jesus, if you’ll heal me, then I’ll walk. If you just fix me, then I’ll obey you." But that’s not what the paralytic did. The paralytic heard the word of God and responded in faith. He heard the word of God say, "Walk," and he said, "I’m going to walk." When his will aligned with the will of God, it became omnipotent, and his limbs obeyed the dictate of God, and he walked.

In the same way, you may feel sinful, undone, and weak—and you are. I’m glad you feel that way; we all do. Every time you come face-to-face with your sinfulness in your own strength, you will fail. But in response to the word of God, you can align your will with the divine will, and He who said, "Go and sin no more," can speak to your soul and give you victory if you will walk in faith.

Jesus says, "If any man hears My voice and opens the door..." Listen to God’s word and respond in faith. Many have a lot of rubbish piled up at the door—they can’t open it. That’s our first work: seek out the sins that separate you from God, zealously and religiously. Don’t let anything come between you and God. Don’t get off your knees until everything is right, and you know that, to the best of your ability, you are walking in the light. Open the door and let Jesus in. Don’t let anything take Him out of your heart.

Those who despise the warning of God in the book of Revelation will be left to their blindness, to become self-deceived—to think themselves rich when they’re poor, to think themselves clothed in the righteousness of Christ when they’re naked. But those who heed this message, who zealously go about the work of purifying their souls by obedience to the truth, will find light, joy, and peace in an ever-brightening day of righteousness.

Jesus concludes His message in Revelation chapter 3 to the church of Laodicea: "To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." So, what does Jesus say to him who believes, to him who professes God’s name, to him who says the right prayer, goes to church on the right day, knows the right knowledge? Is that what He says? No. He says, "To him who overcomes, as I also overcame."

Did Jesus overcome temptation as God or as a man? Did Jesus work miracles as God or as a man? Jesus came to live a man’s life, to bring man into harmony with God, and He showed us a perfect example of what humanity can do when united to divinity. His victory is our victory. He overcame how? By faith and utter dependence upon God. He was a man of prayer. You see it all throughout Scripture: early in the morning, when everyone else is still asleep, He’s praying. Why? He didn’t want to be overcome. Early in the morning, Jesus is seeking God. All throughout the day, He says, "Not My will, but Thy will be done." It was a fight. Jesus sweat drops of blood. You think He did that just because it was fun? No, He was seeking to overcome for us.

So, He says, "The one who overcomes, as I overcame, will sit with Me on My throne." The path to freedom is through the crucifixion of self and conflict with the powers of darkness. The path to victory is a path of self-denial, a path in communion with God. It’s a high calling—it’s not one to take lightly—but it’s the only path that leads to life.

There are two paths: one is broad, and easy is the way that leads to destruction, and many go down the broad path. But narrow is the way that leads to eternal life, and few there be that find it.

So, when in the name of Jesus, you ask for power to overcome, it will be given to you. Believe it. When in the name of Jesus, you ask for forgiveness, it will be given to you. Believe it. When in the name of Jesus, you ask for anything you need to become like Jesus, it will be given to you. Believe it.

You might be saying, "This is really difficult. It’s too narrow for me. I can’t walk this path that you’re putting out." But I ask you, is it any more narrow than it is here? I don’t think so. The Bible indicates, person after person, who overcame not by their might nor by their power, but by the Holy Spirit.

I want to encourage you: don’t let any man take your crown. Don’t let anyone deceive you with vain words. Don’t settle into the lies of a crossless religion—a life where you can have the crown without the cross, where you can have the blessings of God without the persecution that Jesus suffered. If they called the master of the house Beelzebub, what will they do to the servants?

So, I encourage each one of you today: We can overcome fully, entirely. Christ was a perfect Overcomer, and we can be too. We must rely upon Him. Don’t let Satan have footholds in your life. By God’s grace, this church will be a light in the darkness. People will see the difference. They won’t see our nakedness like in so many other places. They won’t see the deformity of slander, backbiting, liars, thieves, and murderers. They’ll see the spotless character of Christ exemplified in His children, and they’ll say, "Something’s different here."

If that’s your desire, if you want to overcome as Jesus overcame, if you want to heed the message to the church of Laodicea, and say, "Yes, Lord, I know that I’m wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, but You promised me that You will give me gold, that You will give me white garments, and You will give me eyes," Lord, I take You at Your word. I will be zealous. I will repent. I will overcome, not in my strength but in Yours, not in my name but in Yours, not by my might but by Your Holy Spirit.

If that’s your desire, I ask you to raise your hand as we pray.

Father God, we are sinful, we’re helpless, we’re dependent. But that’s just how You invite us to come to You. I pray that You would give us the rest that comes from having perfect peace with God. Give us the rest that comes from having Christ in our hearts—the hope of glory. Lord, do not allow us to rest satisfied with half-religion. Do not let us be satisfied in our sins. Do not let us slumber on and sleep while the world around us is perishing. Help us each to see that there is work to do—a work of overcoming every defect, every deformity—not by our efforts but by abiding in You, by surrender, by the submission of the soul to our God, and faith in His power.

Lord, help us to have a heart for You and a heart for people, that we may bring as many as we can with us. Keep us in Your love. Help us to be zealous, to repent, and to have the things that we need to be clothed when the Bridegroom comes to invite us to the supper. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.