

THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA AND LAODICEA

Dan Webster and Peter Hay, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 12 July 2026
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Peter Hay

This morning, I will take a bit of a devotional focus from the Bible school content from last week. Our June Bible school focus was on 'The seven dimensions of Christ's reward'. Today I want to connect our present focus on marriage and family reformation to the particular reward of being made a pillar in the temple of God. This was the reward that was promised to the overcomers in the presbytery and church in Philadelphia. Let us have a look at that Scripture which is Revelation chapter 3 verse 12. It says, 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God... [That reference to the temple there is actually specifically referring to the edifice of the holy place and the most holy place. The holy place was where the furniture was, and the most holy place was where the ark of the covenant was], ...I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more [we are talking about something that is inside rather than outside]. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.'

Jesus made this promise as 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.' That is how He introduces Himself in His letter to the Philadelphian presbytery and church. In the first instance, this reveals that Christ is the one who opens or shuts the door to the Father's house. He has the key to the door, and He is the one who opens, and no one shuts, and He shuts and no one opens. He has the key. But Christ is also the door Himself. That is what He said when He was referring to Himself as the good Shepherd. This is in John chapter 10 verse 9. He said, 'I am the door.' Christ is both the door, and He is the key to opening and shutting that door.

This door, which is the doorway into the Father's house, is the door to which the ten

virgins come. This was spoken of this morning. It is the door to which the ten virgins come. We know that the door is only open to those who have a double portion of oil; but it is shut to those who do not obtain a double portion. When He is talking about open doors and shut doors, we can connect that to an entrance that depends on whether we have a double portion of oil or not. We are going to come to Him, and those who have a double portion are going to go through; they are going to go in through the door; and those who fail to obtain a double portion of oil, the door is shut to them. Only those who obtain a double portion of oil go through the door and into the wedding feast of the Lamb.

This feast takes place where the Father dwells. We are talking about a place of abiding or a place of dwelling. The promise is, 'I will make you a pillar... and he will go out no more.' It does not mean that we are not going out into the world to proclaim the gospel. It means that that is our place of abiding - our place of dwelling. The feast takes place where the Father dwells, and the five wise virgins obtain a double portion of oil through discipleship.

We have talked a lot about the ten virgins (the five wise and the five foolish), but I want to get a bit more specific today to say that the second portion of oil is obtained through discipleship. It is discipleship into the name of the Father, into the name of the Son and into the name of the Holy Spirit. It is talking about discipleship through which you abide. You are being made a pillar, and you will go out no more. It is the place of abiding. Discipleship is the initiative of Christ through messengers to teach us how to abide in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Through this discipling initiative towards us by which we are abiding, we are cleansed with water. We are being instructed through the water of the word. It is not just teaching us stuff about being in the kingdom; it is

equipping us with the capacity to be in it, but it is also cleansing us from those elements in our life that are an impediment to entry. These are the things that remain, causing us weariness. We are talking about our infirmity here. Discipleship is the means by which the wise virgins are cleansed with water, and they are purified with fire by the Lord as He comes among the unclean daughters of Zion in a spirit of judgement and burning.

The Lord is coming among us at the moment. We are part of the unclean daughters of Zion. But the distinction between those who remain unclean (or unwise) and those who become wise and are granted an entry into the temple is discipleship. It is the initiative of the word that is bringing this cleansing and refining initiative, and it is coming from Christ through messengers. It is a messenger-word that is going to disciple you and you cannot get a double portion of oil without it. You cannot get it without it.

The wise virgins who go into the wedding feast are those who have been made pillars in the temple, because the wise virgins go in, and those who are made pillars go out no more. In this passage, the temple refers specifically to the sacred edifice of the temple - the holy place and the holy of holies. It refers to the place of our participation where God dwells or abides.

I am going to stretch our understanding of a pillar here. In David's temple (which Solomon built), two pillars were placed on the porch of the temple. Those two pillars had names. One was Jachin, meaning 'God will establish', and the other was Boaz, meaning 'in Him is strength'. We are looking here at this aspect of the pillar; we are looking here at those whom God has established in Him.

In the new heavens and earth there is no temple, but it says that God the Father and the Lamb are its temple. All of us who abide in Him belong to that house. 'God will establish him' and 'in Him is our strength'. It is talking about putting no confidence in our strength but being those who are established

in the strength of the Lord. The amazing point is that as we are established as these pillars, they were at the doorway to the Father's house. We become part of that doorway to the world. This is part of our connection to Christ.

I want to bring another focus in relation to what it means to be a pillar which is connecting more with what it means to go in and to not go out anymore. I want to connect that to the elements of the tabernacle that were the boards that belonged to those sanctuaries (the holy place and the most holy place) over which the tent was placed.

This is to highlight that inasmuch as the pillars belong to the door, they also belong to that which has had the tabernacle overshadowing it or covering it. I want to connect that to how we become those who are made like the boards in Moses' tabernacle - the pattern on the desert floor from heaven - over whom the tabernacle is drawn. We note in relation to the importance of the tabernacle as a picture, that when the first heaven and earth have passed away, the Lord declared that 'the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them, and they will be His God.' It is a place of dwelling.

To note too, in passing, that in Moses' tabernacle, those boards that became the walls of the sanctuary and the most holy place were lined with gold. Gold in the Scriptures is a symbol of the divine nature. That is important because the pillars have written on them three names and those three names are the mark of someone who has been born of the divine nature. We are connecting 'pillar' to 'sons of God'.

In his first epistle, John identified the two portions of oil that belong to a person who will go out no more. The promise is, 'I will make you a pillar, and they will go out no more.' The two portions of oil that belong to a person who will go out no more is in 1 John 4 verse 15. It says, 'Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he abides in God.' They are the two

portions of oil. You have to have God abiding in you; but you equally have to abide in God.

I have already noted that each pillar will have a threefold name. That is the name of the Father, the name of the bride city, and their new name as a son of God. Receiving these three names describes the process of new birth whereby God abides in us. I want to refresh us on these steps.

We most recently outlined 'The steps of salvation' in *The Promise of the Spirit* which we distributed at the NBS last year. We noted that we receive the name of the Father and the name of the city when Christ breathes on us through the ministry of the gospel of sonship. There are a few steps before that because our spirit has to be made alive, and we keep the commandments of Christ through His messengers. But this is a person whose spirit has been made alive from sin and death. When the Father sees that we are keeping those commandments, He sends the Son to dwell in our heart. The Son and the Father are one; so, we have the Son and the Father dwelling in our heart; but we are still not born again. It is when Christ, through the ministry of the gospel of sonship, breathes on a person, that breath writes on them the name of the Father and the name of the city to which they belong. That is the first element of this new birth process. Then, Christ says to us, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' This is when the Spirit is sent into our spirit. He is already in our heart, ministering conviction, but when He is sent into our spirit, something changes in us and we become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Christ breathes on us and we have the name of the Father and the name of the city written on us. Then Christ says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' and the Spirit is sent into our spirit, and we are made a temple for the Holy Spirit. When this happens (when we are made a temple of the Holy Spirit), we are sealed with the Spirit and it is ratifying that what has been written on us is that the name of the Father and the name of the city is true about us. We belong to the Father, and we belong to the city. You are a temple of the Holy

Spirit; He is the Spirit of truth, and He is saying that is true about you. We belong to the Father, and we receive a title deed to a dwelling place in the heavenly city on the top of Mount Zion and this title deed is actually a heavenly body. We have the name of the Father and the name of the city written on us. We have the Holy Spirit in our spirit. We have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. He is sealing us, ratifying that we belong to the Father and giving to us a heavenly body. That is you having received the Spirit of adoption. The evidence that you have received the Spirit of adoption is that you (as an individual, natural identity) begin to say, 'Abba Father'. That is brilliant - you as a *natural* identity saying that.

In response to this confession, the Father sends forth the seed of the Spirit of Christ into our spirit. This is the unique seed of our name and life as a son of God, which was multiplied from the one Seed, Christ, through His offering and suffering journey. It is sown in our spirit where it is germinated by the Holy Spirit who is already there, and we are born anew of the divine nature. We have become a new creation, and the evidence (or the indicator) of this transaction having taken place is great joy and the capacity for love. That capacity is the divine nature. That is, you now, as a son of God. Written on you is the name of Father, the name of the city and *your* name as a son of God. This is the *first portion of oil* that belongs to you.

But you, as a son of God, belong to an unclean daughter of Zion. You need *discipleship*. You have received the gold that belongs to the covering on the board. But you have to go in; and you go in through discipleship. I have written here, 'The new birth (or receiving of this threefold name) is the means by which God abides in us. This is the first portion of oil that belongs to the ten virgins. All the ten virgins get that portion. That is an amazing miracle; but that is not enough.

The *second portion of oil* is to abide in God. As we have also learnt in this season, we

obtain this portion of oil through discipleship as we are taught to abide. This is not just *choose to abide*; you have to *choose to be taught to abide*. We are taught to abide in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son and in the name of the Holy Spirit. This is the meaning of the great commission.

Let us remind ourselves of the great commission which is in Matthew 28 verses 19 to 20. This belongs to the open door. 'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [You have to make disciples through baptism into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What does that baptism look like, or how does this discipleship work? Verse 20], teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'

I love that, because if you are being discipled, it means you have gone in and you are not going to go out again, right till the end of the age. You should be touching this promise now, which is what I am trying to say to you - not *should* be; I am believing that you *are*. I want us to jump up and rejoice that we are already being made this pillar, and to not grow weary at the initiative of the Lord who is coming to disciple us to establish us as those pillars.

Discipleship in relation to the name of the Father pertains to our maturity as sons of God, and to the reformation of our marriages, 'for marriage is God the Father's holy institution which He loves'. If you are not married, I do not want you to switch off, because it is talking about the marriage of Christ and His church. Everything that belongs to the restoration of a marriage belongs to you if you belong to this bride. You have her name written on you as a first portion. But do not switch off or grow despondent because you are not naturally married. You are not *not* being discipled in relation to the name of the Father if you are not married. Discipleship in relation to the Son pertains to reformation in our houses and to our fellowship from house to house for

He is the Head of every house and of His church. Discipleship in relation to the Holy Spirit pertains to the expression of the life of God by every individual son proceeding from the fellowship of Yahweh.

Receiving a second portion of oil is necessary to receive an open door to the wedding feast. This feast is in the Father's abode. I want to say that it is under the overspreading of His tabernacle. It is in the place of His abode where He spreads His tabernacle over us. He spreads the tent over the pillars even to the end of the age; they go out no more.

What I want to do now is to consider this principle of the Father granting us an open door but also spreading His tabernacle over us in relation to discipleship into the name of the Father which is an initiative towards us as individual sons of God and also in relation to our marriage covenants.

In this season, the Spirit, through the ministry of Christ's messengers, has been addressing the covenant of our marriages. Christ has been addressing husbands and wives individually and as couples in relation to the culture of offering in their marriages for the purpose of bringing forth godly seed in our homes. This is the reason for the 'Discipleship Training Initiative'. The focus of our 'Discipleship Training Initiative' is the ministry of the word to sons of God who are already baptised into the name of the Father, the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Spirit and who are choosing this teaching - to minister to you the second portion of oil that belongs to going in and not going out anymore.

I am describing a couple's restoration to the covenant of marriage in the image and likeness of God. What I am trying to say is if you are receiving this word that is coming to disciple you, you are choosing this teaching. Each individual should be receiving the word, but the outcome will be a change in the way that you relate to each other. Paul said that if this reformation is happening to Christian couples and their marriage covenant is being restored to the image of marriage that belongs to the image and

likeness of God, this is what it will look like. This is 1 Corinthians 11 verse 7: 'For a man is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the image and glory of man.' That is what it will look like. What I want to dwell on is that what is being restored to a couple is *glory*. That glory is not for themselves; it is the glory that is revealing an expression - revealing their Husband, Christ. Can you see that every couple is needing to be restored to this order; but every individual is needing to be restored to the order that belongs to the bride of Christ so that they can participate in revealing the glory of Christ, their Head.

Let us go back to couples. As they are being reformed (the man is the image and glory of God and the woman is the image and glory of man), together, that couple with other couples and other individuals who are likewise obtaining glory, are part of a corporate bride who is the image and glory of Christ.

The key that I am focusing on here is glory. The living water of the word (which is proclaimed by Christ's messengers for our discipleship into the name of the Father) is coming to cleanse us from our fallen marriage covenants, including with the Son Himself, and establishing individuals and couples in the one-spirit fellowship of Yahweh. In this fellowship, they are able to express or reveal the glory of the Lord. That capacity to express and reveal the glory of the Lord individually (and as married couples and as households and together as a bride) is the hope of the gospel being revealed. It is the hope of the gospel being obtained by you, for we know that the hope is the glory of God. As the word is being proclaimed, it is bringing faith to you to believe; and that faith is the substance of things hoped for. It is the substance of glory being expressed. There is a word coming. It is not only bringing cleansing; it is bringing faith to you. But you will not be receiving faith in that word if you are not being cleansed. Both these elements belong to a discipleship initiative.

We know that the time of the end is almost upon us. We are right at the door of it. Only those who are embracing the process of cleansing and purifying as Christ comes among the unclean daughters of Zion, in a spirit of judgement and burning, are being established through faith in this glory. The ten virgins are all unclean daughters of Zion. The five wise virgins belong to the unclean daughters of Zion, but they are receiving the discipleship initiative of Christ Himself as He is coming among the unclean daughters of Zion in a spirit of judgement and burning. Those who are receiving that cleansing (those who are being discipled) are obtaining the second portion of oil that belongs to the wise virgins. These ones are being established through faith in glory. They will find protection from the heat and storm that belong to the great tribulation. The tabernacle of the Father is spread over them, and they have become a pillar (or a board) in the temple or tabernacle of God.

This is the passage - Isaiah chapter 4 verses 4 to 6. You know in the beginning of Isaiah chapter 4, the Lord speaks about the unclean daughters of Zion. They are the ones who say, 'We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by Your name.' These ones have received the name, but they want to walk in their own word, and they want to wear their own apparel. They are unwise. Do they have a name? Yes, of course they do. They have the first portion of oil. But the Lord is coming upon and among every one of us in relation to those who have received this portion and He is saying, 'You need cleansing and you need faith.' That is where we are. That is the unclean daughters of Zion. Then this is what He said after He outlined who they are. He said this in verses 4 to 6, 'When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgement and by the spirit of burning, then the Lord will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion [this is every marriage and house set on Mount Zion], and above her assemblies [us as a church], a cloud and smoke by day and the

shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering.'

If you are a son of God, you have a first portion. If you are embracing the initiative of the Lord for discipleship towards you into the name of the Father, the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Spirit, it looks like a spirit of judgement and burning. You are not coming under that growing weary, you are going, 'This is my cleansing. I am gaining my second portion of oil. I have an entry into that house.' You should be rejoicing that the Lord is coming among us in the spirit of judgement and burning and the evidence will be that you have faith - faith to believe and faith to converse in a new way. You are conversing in your marriages, conversing in your houses and you will converse from house to house. I am telling you - that is as much part of a discipling initiative as the word itself. If you hear the word and you are not conversing, you do not believe. The Lord says, 'For over all the glory there will be a covering, and there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.' These are the people who have gone in and are not going out. They are finding protection from this great tribulation.

We see that the five foolish virgins are people who belong to the unclean daughters of Zion and spurn the process of discipleship. The five wise virgins are people who belong to the unclean daughters of Zion and embrace the process of discipleship. They are made pillars.

We are to walk as disciples in the light of the word, having fellowship with one another in our marriages and as couples together. Having received faith, we have boldness to speak and confidence in the day of trouble. If you are under that tabernacle, you are not afraid of the heat or of the storm. You have confidence, not in yourself, but you have confidence because you have obtained this blessing. The Lord says to us in Isaiah 43 verses 1 to 2, 'Fear not... [A person who is no longer fearing has obtained faith and is

therefore speaking.] ...Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; [This is a person who has this threefold name] ...you are Mine. [A person who has received this threefold name, and then the Lord is saying 'You are Mine', is someone who is abiding in Him. This is someone who has this double portion. What is the promise to someone who is receiving this double portion?] ...When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.' That sounds a lot like 'it will be a shade in the daytime from the heat and a place of refuge and shelter from the storm and rain.'

A person who is obtaining this faith is getting that promise now. You are protected. You are not afraid. But what is your protection? Your protection is resurrection life. You are not afraid to join the dying of Christ. That is where the process is happening. That is what it means to be sown into the likeness of His death, burial and resurrection. That is where the lessons are being learned. The word is being proclaimed, delivering to you faith so that you can believe for participation in His offering and sufferings.

In this season of cleansing and purging, we must not grow weary or discontented in the face of the word proclaimed by Christ's messengers. Weariness, resentment, or just malaise... (that means you just can take it or leave it. That is lukewarm) ...weariness, resentment, or malaise are the first indicators of stumbling at Christ. He is the door of the Father's house. Let us heed the words of Paul in Galatians chapter 6 and verse 9: 'Let us not grow weary while doing good.' What causes us to grow weary? Weariness is the outcome of engaging with the word only through the law of our mind. That is what we have been learning about regarding our infirmity. It brings us to weakness. What have we let go of when we engage only with the law of our mind? We have let go of illumination and conviction. If

you are feeling resentment, or you are feeling weariness in relation to the word that is coming to bring a discipling initiative to you, can I implore you to cry out to the Lord, 'Help my unbelief?' The word of the Lord does bring illumination; and the Holy Spirit does bring conviction to you; and you know how to take the step of discipleship that belongs to that word for you, so that you are not growing weary in doing good. The 'doing good' is not *your* good. The doing good is the obedience that belongs to the word that is being proclaimed. Do not grow weary in your obedience.

'Let us not grow weary in doing good for in due season we will reap if we do not lose heart.' Nobody is reaping unless we sow, and sowing is the characteristic behaviour of a disciple. It is a son of God who is being conformed to Christ's death, burial and resurrection. That is the principle of the seed; that is the pathway that belongs to this discipling process. 'Do not grow weary, for in due season we will reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all and especially to those who are of the household of faith' of which we have become a part, and we are not going out anymore. I will leave it there.

Dan Webster

Last week we were looking at the rewards of Christ, and I am going to look at a few things as an overflow. Dave Baker spoke in relation to Philadelphia on Sunday, but he did not speak regarding Laodicea. I am going to look at a few thoughts in relation to Laodicea in particular. We will actually read through it in Revelation 3. We will pick our way through this.

There are two particular statements that I want to draw from the letter to Laodicea. The first one is, 'Because you say'. This is Christ addressing the church of Laodicea, and He is saying that they have a perspective of themselves that is not true. The second one is that, because they are deceived in relation to what they are, He then gives them an instruction to 'Be zealous and repent'. I want to pick up those two aspects, and (out of the

fear of being a religious zealot), I want to pick up a couple of points in relation to the zeal that we *can* have and are to have for His house.

Out of the fear that Kyle has been speaking about in relation to lots of different things... (fear of being a religious zealot; or stepping outside of the lines of our sanctification; or the fear of death [whatever it might be], and the fear of not being accepted or our projections not being accepted) ...out of this fear, we then actually have not done anything in relation to specific aspects of the word that have come to us where the Spirit has said, 'I have issue with this.' We have drawn back in unbelief. It has caused this veil (and even the prayer focus from Friday picked this up) where there is a veil that sits over us which is our perspective coming from drawing back in unbelief. That was the issue for Laodicea.

Let us have a look at Revelation 3. This is the last of the seven letters and John is writing to the church of Laodicea – the lukewarm church. Revelation 3 verses 14 to 16: 'And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, these things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth." '

I was looking at this aspect of lukewarm. It is described in the Scriptures in a number of different ways. Some of these could be faith without works; religion without power; a double mindedness (which Kyle mentioned); having two masters; thinking that you see when you are blind and being a foolish virgin with oil in the lamp but not in the vessel. These ways describe the nature of a lukewarm person, which was the condition of Laodicea.

We will keep reading in verse 17. It says (and this is one of the points that I really want to emphasise this morning), 'Because you say... [this is what the Laodiceans say of themselves] ...because you say, "I am rich,

have become wealthy, and have need of nothing” - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.’ They have a view of themselves which is not true. This is the aspect of ‘Because you say’. We will read the next section in a moment because Christ then goes on to counsel them in terms of what their response to the word needs to be.

I want to provoke us a little bit this morning and ask the question, ‘Are you someone who believes something of yourself that is actually not true?’ We read in the prayer focus a few weeks ago in relation to the things that we may have received from what somebody said to us that we have believed to be true. I am not talking about that. I am talking about whether or not we believe that the condition that we are in is different from the reality of our condition. We actually believe that we are a wise virgin - but we are a foolish virgin.

What the word is doing as it is coming to us, is that it is calling us, and it is proclaiming the truth of our name. As the Holy Spirit then convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgement, that same word is also proclaiming the truth of our condition. It proclaims the truth of who we are, but also our condition as we look into Christ's face. The Holy Spirit is then wanting to lead us in what is true if we would choose it. It is a choice. We have to choose it so that we can then *prove* that we are wise - not just *assume* that we are wise. Our response to the word is then actually proving that we are wise - not just presuming to be so.

I was considering King Saul in 1 Samuel 16. David played the harp to him and King Saul was soothed by him playing the harp. It says in the Scriptures that it was a sweet melody to his ears. But as soon as David stopped playing the harp, he was then greatly troubled and tormented, and this torment then came back to him. I was thinking in terms of us. On a weekend like this with the wedding yesterday - a great weekend of rejoicing, and receiving the testimony of the couple, and encouraging them in terms of

their season and journey ahead. There are weekends like this when we are doing that, and we are receiving the word, and we are singing the songs that we do. This is like the sweet melody that David played to King Saul and it can be soothing to us. But as soon as the music stopped for King Saul, he was then tormented again and he was distressed. The word needs to go from being sweet in our mouth to being bitter in our belly. This is where the reality of the word is impacting on the culture of our life; and how we live and what we prioritise, so that we are no longer tormented by the things that sit there. We can actually address these things and be freed of them as we are proving the will of God towards us. There is a healing work that is actually available to us (as Kyle mentioned), and it is by the seven Spirits of God that we can actually know full recovery from the things that torment us. We do not then go away from where we are receiving the word and singing the songs and doing all these kinds of things and then draw back into a distressed state where we then look to it and listen to something again to hear the soothing. It actually needs to get bitter in our bellies.

Christ is saying to Laodicea that they have a reflection of themselves that is not true. Often when we begin to say something of ourselves, the more that we say it, the more we actually believe it to be true - whether it is the truth or not. When Dave Hall was here for Bible school a few months ago, he was talking about how we can have an opinion or a view of ourselves or of somebody else, and then we pull our husband or wife into that same view. We then actually become a fortress. Then we pull somebody else in, and they align to our perspective as well, and we become a faction. The issue with this is that if we all in that faction or fortress have the same view of ourselves, there is no word that is coming from outside of ourselves to actually reveal the truth of our condition and the way that we have to respond to the word. We must be hearing a word from outside of ourselves, because we are not even aware of our fortress or our faction at times until the

word actually comes and breaks in and the light reveals it.

I was considering our prior Friday morning prayer focus that was written up, making reference to the right hand of Christ. For us, there is a really tangible interface of the right hand of Christ for us, which is the presbytery. They are the right hand of Christ to us, and they are set apart for a particular work in terms of proclaiming the word and caring for us as a people. I want to ask a follow-up question to the other one that I asked: 'Would your reflection of you and your household be consistent with the reflection of you from those who are in the right hand of Christ?' We have a view of ourselves. Is that the same as the reflection of you from those who are in the right hand?

I want to read another scripture from John 8 verse 31. This is Jesus speaking to the Jews. This section in my Bible is titled, 'The truth shall make you free'. We will go to it starting at verse 31, picking up where Bryan was leading us this morning. It says, "Then Jesus said to those who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants [they were talking in terms of the natural; they had a heritage; they had all these things, and a history] ... They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone [They are saying that they are not in bondage]. How can you say, 'You will be made free?' And Jesus answered them... Verse 37: "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you." Verse 39: They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." And Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham [which are the works of faith]."

The word was not part of them because it was not becoming substance in them. It is a fairly confronting statement that He then makes further on where He essentially says that Satan is their father because they do not

do the works of faith. What He is saying to them is that they have an opinion of themselves which is stopping them from being able to hear the word because they are presuming to be wise and something that they are not. This is then stopping them from doing the righteous works of faith.

Let us go back to Revelation chapter 3. We will keep reading in terms of the letter to Laodicea and we will go to verse 17 again and then we will read on to verse 18. 'Because you say, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing" - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked - ...because of these things [and you have a view of yourself that is not true], I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.' Christ is then counselling them to go and buy these things and commending them to a pathway forward. I was interested in all three of these aspects: the 'gold refined in the fire'; the 'white garments', and the 'eye salve'. There is a wise and there is a foolish side to all three of these.

For the gold refined in the fire, this is the trial of faith. The wise example would be Jonah, who was delivered through a trial of faith. The language that is used here in Revelation 3 talks about vomiting those who are lukewarm, which is the same language that is used about Jonah. They were both being delivered. The two thieves on the cross were delivered to their choice. There is an opportunity for both. That is the trial of faith.

The white garments: the wise side would be the Lord walking through the garden, coming to find Adam and Eve and recovering them to fellowship with Him and providing them with garments to appropriately clothe their nakedness. This is opposed to the unclean daughters of Zion, who are the foolish example, if they choose to continue to

clothe themselves. These are the filthy rags of Job as well.

Anointing your eyes with eye salve: the wise side is turning and seeing in repentance, which is John, when His orientation was completely flipped. But the foolish would just be remaining in your own perspective and staying blind.

There is a wise and a foolish aspect to all of these things, which are being commended to the church of Laodicea to recover them from the condition that they were in, where they thought they were something that they were not.

Verse 19 of Revelation 3 says, 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.' I am not sure about you, but when I hear the word 'zealous', I think of a religious zealot. That is the first thought that I have. I am wanting to refresh us that there is an appropriate zeal that we can have for the Lord's house. I am going to look at a couple of examples of this.

Galatians 4 verse 18 says, 'But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.' That good thing is the action that serves the truth of the gospel proclaimed. That is an important point - it is *proclaimed*. It is not what *we* think are the righteous works; it is actually responding to what has been proclaimed in the word. The word 'zealous' comes from the Greek word *zealos*, which means 'to be hot'. The root of that is to be hot, which I found in relation to the language of Laodicea being lukewarm. Being zealous is actually to be hot.

We will look at a couple of accounts. The first one (as Jamieson mentioned) is Zacchaeus. This is in Luke 19. We will not read the Scripture, but I will make a couple of comments from the account. This is when Jesus was in the town and Zacchaeus deliberately climbed up the tree to hear what Christ was saying and to see Him - to hear the word. Then Christ met him face to face. He looked up into the tree and called Zacchaeus and told him to make haste and

come down. Then the Scripture says that Zacchaeus made haste. What I was interested in was that there was a deliberate effort that Zacchaeus made after he heard the call of the Lord towards him. He had a response that was commensurate to the word that was calling him. Christ called out to him and said, 'Make haste', and his response was to 'make haste'. That is what the Scripture says. It was a commensurate response. Zacchaeus then goes on to speak about what his repentance was - paying back four times, et cetera. But Zacchaeus was a zealot in the way the Lord intended for him in response to the word.

The alternative to this (which is what we have been afraid of) is having met the Lord and heard His words, we then run with what we think He is saying and we define our own repentance and obedience to His word. That would be (as Paul describes in Romans 10) 'zeal which is not according to the knowledge' of Christ. The knowledge of Christ is His offering journey. We will read this in Romans 10 verses 2 and 3: 'I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness... [which is the good thing from Galatians 4 that was referred to - the good thing being God's righteousness] ... for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.' This is a zeal in terms of the negative side; but there is a zeal that we can actually have for God.

Zacchaeus had a deliberate response to the word, and he moved with intention and purpose. He maintained the eyes of Christ as he was moving and responding and found his repentance. His response to the word was then commensurate to the word received. That is the key point here.

The second example I want to have a look at is where Jesus cleanses the temple and this is in John 2 verse 16. This was at a time when Jesus and His disciples were going up to Jerusalem. It was approaching the time of Passover, and there were moneychangers

and animal-traders who would set up in and around the temple. They are selling pre-approved animals who were already spotless and clean. Historically, what people would do is that they would travel from their farms to the temple and they would bring their offerings with them. They would bring an animal that they had prepared and was ready to be made as an offering at the temple. But these money changes had set up there for convenience, so people would not have to have the inconvenience of travelling with the animal. They could just turn up, pay, or make a trade - whatever they did to be able to buy the spotless animal - and then they could just go in and actually offer it. It would have been like at a football game, where, on the outside are all the merchandise stands. I imagine they would have all been hanging out there, or doing whatever they are doing, or in the pens - I am not really sure. It would have been that you could then just go and choose. 'I am going to pay this much money for that animal, and I am going to make the offering so that I can actually receive the blessing.' It had become completely transactional. Here is Jesus approaching the temple and He sees that this is going on.

We will go to John 2. I will go to verse 15. It says, 'When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables... [He was going and flipping up all the tables]. And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" Then the disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up." ' This is a completely different expression of zeal from Zacchaeus in terms of what the zeal actually looks like. It was not anger, where the emotions of sin were intensifying something. It was actually zeal for His house, and it was a completely appropriate expression of zeal by Christ.

The third example I was going to look at (but for the sake of time, I will skip past) was

Paul. He is a great example because he was zealous for the teachings of his fathers, which was the negative side. But then after his conversion, he then has a zeal towards Christ - towards the body of Christ; and then towards the truth in terms of the word then being proclaimed. You can have a look at him yourself in your own time.

For some of us... (and I am thinking in relation to men in particular in our houses) ...For some of us, we are actually needing our eyes to be opened to the dynamics and the cultures that are actually present in our house. I was thinking in terms of how Christ saw what was happening in the temple - these things had been let in. We have also let things into our houses that we need to have our eyes open to firstly, and then there needs to be a zeal in terms of us actually dealing with these things. For some of us, we do need to flip up the tables; and for others we have flipped up too many tables, and there actually needs to be some recovery. There will be an appropriate zeal that you can actually have towards God's work in your home and your marriage.

2 Corinthians 7 actually talks about where we receive the zeal. I want to talk about this. We will read this in 2 Corinthians chapter 7. It comes after 'godly sorrow'. Verse 10: 'For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted [without regression], but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner; [so having received the word, we are then turning in a godly manner; we are finding a godly sorrow, and then repentance and then from that... We will read on] what diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear [and that is fear of the Lord - not the fear that Kyle was talking about], what vehement desire, what zeal.' So, godly sorrow first leads to repentance, and then there will be an appropriate zeal that we can know in relation to the word.

To finish, we will finish the letter to the Laodiceans in Revelation 3, and we will go

from verse 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 dine with him and he with Me. 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 [remembering that we were talking about the rewards of Christ last weekend and the reward is that we will sit with Him on His throne] ...' Verse 22: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

In the last couple of minutes, I want to finish with a couple of statements. I do believe that there is an open door... (as it says in the Scripture here) ...there is an open door for all of our houses today, and it is actually an open door of fellowship. That is what we are being invited to. It is not something that we just then walk through, and it is done. It is actually a relational dynamic where we are actually being known and actually knowing the truth in terms of who we are and the truth of our condition.

That aspect of 'Because you say' has really been sitting with me this week. Do we have a reflection of ourselves that is not true? The only way we are going to know that is from a relational fellowship. We actually have to speak. We have to invite reflection into ourselves and into our houses. I know for me personally, this has been when if something gets a bit awkward, or it is a little bit exposing, the temptation is to withdraw. This is withdrawing, not just physically, but into the thoughts of your own mind where you then start to justify whether you are wise or whether you are foolish; but it is all by the mind. I want to encourage us towards having some zeal for the things that the Lord is saying - not a religious zealot type of zeal - but an appropriate zeal which is then commensurate to the word that is being spoken.

There is a pathway of repentance for every person and every house in response to the word where there is full recovery - able to come to every home. This is the open door. There is a fellowship that we are even able to

have today as we make confession, and we actually believe that the things that are being proclaimed in the word can become true in us. When Bryan was singing this morning, I had a few things that I jotted down. I will read them out: some feel stuck; some feel ashamed; and some feel helpless; some are blind, poor, miserable and naked. But the glory of the Lord that is shining from His face is coming to expose whatever we are, and He is giving us a pathway so that we can make full recovery and have these things become substance in us.