***Sharing Christ's Throne  
  
RV71-01***

We are studying the letter to Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22. This is segment number 26. We have seen that the Laodicean believers have been commanded to get hot, and to repent of their spiritual reversionism. The Lord Jesus, who loves the Laodicean sheep, has done His job of alerting them to their true condition. Now, it is their move. God the Holy Spirit always performs faithfully His function of alerting believers to their true spiritual condition. If we act in a calloused way, or in an indifferent way, we will harden ourselves to that leading, and we will then go far astray in a delusion, concerning where we really stand with the living God.

The alternative to repentance is always mounting divine discipline to the point of physical death. No one can reverse the condition which exists in Laodicea except the individual believers themselves. Discipline for carnality can only be applied by God, and therefore we are warned, as human beings, not to try to take over the Lord's job of applying discipline to believers who need it. Once a believer does repent and confess his evil, the fracture has been sealed; has been restored; and, has been healed, and the evil that caused it is to be forgotten. God forgets it, and we are to forget it. When we say that God forgets evil, we mean that our evil will never be held against us as repentant sinners.

It is true that God may refer to certain evils that people have done as an example in teaching godly conduct to others. This is one of the reasons that the Bible points out that when certain acts of church discipline are necessary, they should be done in a public way. When evil is public, the perpetrators are to be rebuked publicly for the sole reason of cautioning the rest of the congregation.

The apostle Paul, for example, observes his own past experience (his own past evil) of persecuting and even murdering Christians. In Acts 22:4, Paul says, "I persecuted this way (that is, the way of following Christ) unto the death, binding, and delivering into prisons both men and women." Paul says, "I persecuted those who were followers of Jesus Christ to the point of taking their lives. Since they were guilty of nothing, the taking of the lives of those early Christians, before Paul itself became a Christian, was an act of murder.

In 1 Timothy 1:12, the apostle Paul says again, "And I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has enabled me, in that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Again, the apostle Paul makes a reference here to his own past evil conduct. He makes that reference for the simple purpose of making a point. He isn't proud of it. He does not dwell on it. He simply refers to it in passing. He does not call a great meeting, as itinerant preachers often do, and build a whole service as they entertain people with their previous life of sin and debauchery.

If you searched 2 Samuel 11, you would see again where God is referring to the serious moral fracture on the part of King David in the situation of the case of adultery with Bathsheba. Again, the reference is a historical record recorded for our learning. That's the only purpose of that reference. God Himself does not hold sin against us once it is confessed. God does not remember sin in the sense of calling the believer to account for that evil, or to call upon the believer to pay for it.

So, indeed, while a sin might be mentioned in certain contexts in divine dealing, or by the leading of the Holy Spirit, it is not the business of other people to deal with the sins and the breakdowns of other Christians. When they have dealt with it before the Lord, it is none of your business; you are not to be probing into it; you are not to be dealing with it; and, you are not to be discussing it with other people.

If a believer does not forget his own forgiven evil, and move on again with God the Holy Spirit, as we pointed out in the last session, he then exposes himself to a serious consequence. He exposes himself to the consequence of a guilt complex; to bitterness; and, then, consequently, to a new breakdown of temporal fellowship. So, when you have fallen into the dust, and when you have bitten the dust, and you wake up to what has happened to you, and you turn to the Lord, and you admit it, and you confess it, it is very important that you realize that the Lord is reaching down; He is brushing you off; His hand is in your back; and, He's pushing you forward now on the path of His righteousness, and you're to move out. You're to forget what caused you to bite the dust. You're not to be brooding over it. The only value it should have would be as a caution for you in future conduct. That's the only reason that the sins of people are ever referred to: caution for themselves; and, caution for others.

So, attacking and gossiping people because of their sins, we have shown, invites a triple whammy discipline from the Lord. You get the first whammy for mental attitude bitterness. You get the second whammy when that mental attitude bitterness expresses itself in an overt word of slander. Then you get a third whammy when you decide that you're going to exercise divine judgment on another person. God says, "Whatever you mete out to that person, I'm going to give it to you." So, what the person deserves (and will get), you have stupidly and foolishly invited upon your own head.

So, as we come to the end of the letter to Laodicea, we have seen that these people are commanded to repent, and to do so with a hot zeal in verse 19.

**Revelation 3:20 Applies to Believers**

Now we come to Revelation 3:20. This is a very often misunderstood and misinterpreted verse. Some of the best Bible teachers will come to Revelation 3:20, and they have been speaking very consistently about Christian conduct, and Christian action, and what these Christians in Laodicea are doing. And, suddenly, they get to Revelation 3:20 and everything gets out of joint, and suddenly they're no longer talking about Christians. Suddenly, they have the idea that Revelation 3:20 applies to unbelievers. So, let's put that right up front. Verse 20 applies to believers.

This is a rather famous verse in many respects: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Mrs. Danish and I, a couple of summers ago, visited London. We were in St. Paul's Cathedral, and there we saw Holman's painting that all of you are familiar with, where Christ is standing with a lantern at the door. Very noticeably in that painting, there was no door latch on the outside, because, as the artist indicated, when that was called to his attention, he deliberately did not put a latch on the outside, because Christ, knocking on that door, can only get in if the person on the inside opens the door. So, the latch is only on the inside.

But what is the point of Christ knocking? If you were to read the little booklet put out by Campus Crusade concerning the four spiritual laws, they love to use this verse at the end to explain how you may become a Christian – that Jesus Christ is knocking at your heart's door. So, they are not satisfied with using biblical terminology, which is to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved." Instead, they want to use upbeat, modern, and very jet-set terminology. So, they talk about "Opening your heart's door." Well, "opening your heart's door" is a very meaningless term in terms of being saved, because the Bible does not talk about opening your hearts door in terms of being saved. But opening your hearts door in terms of this verse is a very important concept, as we shall see in a moment.

But this verse is used by Campus Crusade for suggesting to people that this is talking about salvation, and this has to do with how you can be saved. When this is called to their attention, as I have done, their leadership says, "Yes, we know that Revelation 3:20 does not apply to salvation, but it makes such a good verse for salvation, that we use it anyhow."

That seems innocent and innocuous enough, but it's a very serious thing. When God the Holy Spirit gives a passage of Scripture, intending it to convey a certain idea, who in the world do you think you are to come along and say, "I'm going to use it in order to convey something totally apart from what the Spirit of God intended to convey?" This verse has nothing to do with salvation.

The first word, "Behold," is a word that we have met before in Scripture. In the Greek Bible, it's the word "idou." Actually, this comes from the verb "horao" which means "to see." It is, in the grammatical form, in the aorist middle imperative form. Aorist means that at a certain point in time you are to behold. Middle means that you will benefit by beholding. Middle tells us that you are going to prosper by this. And it is imperative, meaning that it is a command of God. This word could almost be translated as, "Wake up." Things are bad spiritually in Laodicea, and the time has come to wake up.

Very consistently, when this word is used in the Greek New Testament, it also signals for us that an important statement of truth is about to follow. This word is addressed to the Christians who are in the congregation in the church in the city of Laodicea. They are the Christians that we have been studying who have been guilty of carnality – carnality, which has been perpetuated and intensified into reversionism. Now, they are completely out of touch with spiritual reality. And as we have seen, the Lord Jesus, as the Chief Elder, as an example to his pastor-teacher elders, has indicated in verse 19 that He has an emotional attachment to these people in spite of their reversionism. He is, therefore, warning them with words. He is going to warn them with external chastening.

Again, a lot of people did not appreciate it when the Lord Jesus did it, and you may expect that they won't appreciated when you do it. They will seek to attach ulterior and evil motives to what you do, but don't be disturbed by that. That's a smokescreen that's telling you that you've touched a raw nerve of guilt and of a personal sense of moral responsibility that they are violating. That's why they are not welcoming the warning that you have given them.

The Lord says, "Having given you this warning, 'idou' (behold). Wake up. I'm going to give you one more word of caution: I stand." The word "stand" is the Greek word "histemi." The word "histemi" is in the perfect tense. The perfect tense tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ, in the past, has taken the position before the heart's door of the believer who has gone negative to the leading of the Holy Spirit and of doctrinal truth, and He continues to stand at that point. The Lord has approached the negative believer who is out of step (out of fellowship) with God the Father. This happened in the past when the person stepped out of the inner circle of fellowship, and it continues. It's very comforting to know that this word "I stand" is in the perfect tense. It means that He doesn't do it for just a while. He doesn't knock, and then leave – the way you and I do when we go to someone's door, and nobody responds. What do we do? We quit knocking, and we leave. The perfect tense tells us that He's going to keep knocking. He's going to knock on this door, and He's going to keep knocking on this door until you check out of this life.

It's in the active voice, which means that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is doing this appealing to the believer to return to temporal fellowship. It's indicative mood – a statement of fact concerning any Christian who is in a status of carnality and reversionism. He says, "I stand at the door." The word "door" is the Greek word "thura." The "thura" pictures a believer's life. In this case, it pictures a believer's life who is in reversionism as has been described in verse 18 of this chapter. The Lord Jesus Christ has been shut out of the life. Instead of being on the inside, in the place of communion and fellowship with this person, the individual believer has literally opened the door, and shoved the Lord out of his life. That is a very strong picture here. Here is a Christian who has opened the door of his life, and he has given the door to the Savior. The Lord, therefore, stands outside. He is not welcome in the life of the believer. He is ignored, and He is rejected.

This in no way refers to the life of an unbeliever. An unbeliever has no relationship to Jesus Christ whatsoever. An unbeliever has never shown Jesus Christ the door, because He has never been in the life of the unbeliever. This is a picture of Christ being on the outside, and that's the point of the door here.

What the Lord is doing, locked out of this life – shut out, with the door closed against Him, is that He is standing there, and He is knocking. The word "knock" looks like this in the Greek: "krouo." What He means by this word is that he is appealing to the Christian to return to temporal fellowship. So, the Lord is saying to the Laodicean Christians, "You people have shoved me out of the door of your life. You have slammed the door on Me. I'm on the other side. The latch is on the inside. I can't come back in until you open the door. I'm appealing to you, by My knocking, to do just exactly that." The idea of knocking here is appealing for them to return to the inner circle of temporal fellowship.

This is in the present tense, which again tells us that the Lord persists in this appeal. He keeps knocking continually. It's active. The Lord applies steady pressure Himself. We have seen that this steady pressure goes in the various stages of the discipline: the warning stage; the pressure stage; and, finally, the execution (or death) stage. What we have here is Christ knocking and knocking. He Himself is executing the appeal. It's indicative mood – a statement of a great spiritual truth.

"Behold." Pay attention. This is a very important statement to a Christian who is in the condition that you Laodiceans are in: in carnality; out of fellowship; in reversionism; out of touch with God your Father; insensitive to the leading of the Spirit of God; and, calloused in your soul against the Spirit of God: "I'm standing outside of the door to your life, and I'm knocking and knocking in order to alert you that you're in serious trouble, and I want you to open the door and let Me into your life, so that I am here supervising and guiding as I should be."

This has to do with temporal fellowship. It does not have to do with the fact that we are baptized into Christ at the point of salvation. That cannot be reversed. This has to do not with eternal fellowship, but with the fellowship of the believer in his daily walk.

Then follows His promise: "If any man hear My voice." You must immediately ask yourself which class condition of the word "if" is this? One, two, three, or four? Well, this one is a third class. Immediately, we know something about the nature of this "if." This is a third class condition. Third class means maybe you will, and maybe you won't. There is an uncertainty here whether you will or not, because the individual believer has to decide to reach down to the latch and open the door.

"Any man" is the word "tis" which means "any one" who is in reversionism. "If anyone (maybe you will, and maybe you won't) hear My voice." The word "hear" looks like this in the Greek: "akouo." "Akouo" is in the aorist tense. That tells us that, at a certain point, you will decide to get off the negative signal (to stop being negative to the appeals of the Spirit of God). It is active. You exercise your own will to return to fellowship. It is subjunctive because the change is potential. Maybe you will, and maybe you won't return to functioning on the principles of Scripture, and return to functioning on the grace system of perception.

"I stand at the door and I continue to knock. If any man hear My voice." What He means by "His voice" is the mind of Christ, as we have it in the form of Bible doctrine. 1 Corinthians 2:16 speaks of this. And the Greek text says "*The* voice." This is the particular voice of appeal, in this case, which is being given through discipline to return from revisionism.

This is one of the things you want to remember when you begin to find yourself in a miserable condition. When you began to find yourself in a spiritually miserable condition, the Spirit of God puts pressures and screws upon you. When your position is right, you do not feel miserable about it. If you are in a status of misery over something, that ought to be the first signal to you that you are out of line with the mind of Christ, and you are not listening to Him. That's what He means by this word "akouo." He's knocking. If you will pay attention to Him, and respond to Him, you will then open ("anoigo"). The word "anoigo" means that the Christian opens the door of his life to Christ by going positive to doctrine. He accepts the mind of the Lord, and he confesses the sin that has broken that fellowship.

It's in the aorist tense – at the point when he decides to make the confession and go positive to doctrine. It is active. The believer must make this move. You finally decide that you welcome the knocking on the door. You want to listen to what the Lord has to say. Again, it's subjunctive. It's potential. Maybe you will open the door, and maybe you won't. But if you do, then the Lord promises a very dramatic change in your life.

He says that, "He will come in." This is the Greek word "eiserchomai." This is not the indwelling of the Son of God. That happens at the point of salvation. What He's referring to here is the coming in to a relationship of fellowship, when you have opened the door through confession of sin, and returned to temporal fellowship. The latter part of this verb "erchomai" means "to come." The word "eis" is a preposition which intensifies the idea of coming in. When you open that door, the Lord Jesus is going to walk right in. He is not going to stand on the outside. He will immediately respond. It is future tense this time, because it's at any point in the future when the Christian goes positive. It is middle, because the Lord Himself enters for fellowship. It is indicative. This is a promise.

"I will come in to him;" that is, into the life of the reversionistic believer. It's an individual act of opening to the Lord. The picture here is that the Lord has been shut out. He has been excluded because of the reversionistic position of the believer. He has made the appeal. He has stood at the door outside. He has begun knocking in the past. He continues to knock to the present. He keeps on knocking. If anybody will listen to Him, and open the door to Him, then He will come back in to fellowship with that life.

What does that mean? Well, it means that once more you're in the place where there is a basis for happiness in your life. Once more, there is a basis for doing something in life that is not frustrating. How often do you and I perhaps stop and think, and say, "What in the world am I doing with my life? Certain things I do again and again and again. How pointless! How worthless! Where is it going, in terms of 100 years from now? And you are not a very wise person if, once in a while, you don't stop and look at what you do and say, "What difference is this going to make 100 years from now? What will be the impact 100 years from now?" Then you're going to be on the other side. That's when the chips are going to be down, and the count is going to be made.

The Lord says that your life will come into having some purpose again. It means that your prayers will become significant. You will again sense that the great service that you may perform for others is the service of prayer, whatever else you may do for people. The Bible says it is a sin not to do the supreme service, which is the service of prayer. It means that there is a sense of using your spiritual gifts so that you're earning rewards in heaven. That's a tremendous thing to have. Within our congregation here, we spare no effort to keep all of us alerted to the fact that there are such things as rewards in heaven.

I wish I could have people keep a record of the average church and the content of its messages, particularly how often they even hear the idea of the word "reward" mentioned in the services. That is a fantastic tragedy – that Christians are not constantly kept alerted to the fact that rewards is the name of the game.

As long as the Lord Jesus Christ stands outside the door of your life, you can forget about rewards. When you have opened the door, and He comes in, you have opened the door for your own personal enrichment in an enormous way. He says, "I will come into him." Then he uses an expression which, in the ancient world, signified the height of fellowship. He said, "I will dine with him." The Greek word for "dine" is "deipeneo." "Deipeneo" means "to sit down and eat a meal" with somebody. Bible doctrine, in this case, will flow again into the soul of the believer. His spiritual maturity structure will start developing. He is sharing the Word of God with the Lord. This again is future: "I will dine with him at any time" after you open the door. The Lord says that He will personally engage in this kind of fellowship with you. It's indicative. We have a statement of fact.

"I will come in and I will sit down and share a meal with you. I will dine with him and he with Me. This indicates the interchange of the fellowship around a meal. When you eat with somebody, that connotes fellowship. In Luke 15:2, the concept of fellowship associated with eating is very pointedly noticed. This is not salvation. This is fellowship: "And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'" They're not criticizing Jesus Christ for talking to the sinners. They're not criticizing Him because He is warning them. What are they attacking the Lord for? Because He sat down and He ate with sinners. In the ancient world, when you sat down and ate with somebody, you were thereby saying that you approve of that person. You are declaring to the world that you are sharing together a common ground of fellowship.

In Acts 11:3, Peter is being attacked because of his ministry of the gospel to the gentiles: "Saying you went into men uncircumcised, and did eat with them." You would think that the people who are attacking Peter would say, "You went to uncircumcised gentiles and you told them the gospel. You gave them the impression they could be part of the church." No, they didn't care that he had done that. The thing that they attacked him for was that he sat down and ate with these uncircumcised dogs of the gentiles – these people who had received Christ as Savior. They didn't even care that they had been born again. What concerned them was the concept of a Jew and a gentile having that intimacy of one ground of fellowship, which was unheard of in all of the Old Testament era.

So, the concept here of eating together is a concept of fellowship. In 1 John, John warns us that we are not to sit down and have a meal of fellowship with those who are heretics; with those who are opposed to the Word of God; and, with those who are liberals (we would say) – with those who are rejecters of the basic fundamentals of Scripture. The Bible says, "No, not so much as to sit down and eat with them." Why? Because when you sit down and eat with a person, you are telling that person, "I receive you for what you stand for, and for what you are." So, in the ancient world, to eat with a person spoke a great deal. That's what's behind this concept here in Revelation 3. The Lord says, "There will be complete fellowship. There will be no barriers between us. We will be on absolutely good terms. I will be able to lead you, and you will be able to be blessed by Me."

What's the alternative to this? Do you remember the alternative? We've had it earlier. The alternative is to be vomited out by God in discipline. Now, that's quite a stark alternative: "I can either come in and sit down at a meal with you, or I can vomit in your presence: one or the other." And what's the point? The point is, that it is absolute madness to shut the door on the Lord Jesus Christ in your life. It is absolute madness to close Him out. When you close Him out of your life, you are absolutely out of touch with all reality just as much as any unbeliever. The Lord Jesus Christ says, "My relationship to you can be the warmth of the social fellowship of sharing a meal together, or it can be the nauseating experience of vomiting you out of My mouth." He has told these Laodicean, "Now, there's your alternative. Make your choice."

If you're in the position of the average unbeliever, for example, today, take a look at what we're hearing increasingly in terms of our national defense. What are you hearing about the issue of national defense? With all the things that a nation trying to recover out of its economic extravagance, and having placed itself in mortal danger to the communist world, what is the thing that we need more than anything else, except to put our defenses once more in order? Yet, people who have Jesus Christ out of their lives can't understand this at all.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:3, the apostle Paul tells us how it's going to be in the end times – the day in which we live: "For when we shall say, 'Peace and safety,' then sudden destruction comes upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." If you've been watching the people who've been commenting on this (the important people, and the knowledgeable people on the TV news programs), you have regularly listened to people with high IQs who are arguing that we should not try to develop such a strong defensive position, because it will lead to war. What we need to do is not to be able to have the ability to make war. Then there will be peace. How can a person come up with that kind of madness? Sooner or later, there's going to be the concept that peace has been established. If you know anything about the Bible (because you're in fellowship with Jesus Christ, you have been able to learn something about the Bible), you know that when the world comes to that point, and it will, there's going to come sudden destruction upon mankind.

In Matthew 24:22, we're told how bad it's going to be: "And except those days should be shortened, there shall no flesh be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened." So, do you have a question as to whether there's going to be an atomic war? You don't have any question about that if you know the Bible. You know very well that there's going to be an atomic war. You know very well that mankind is going to try to blow the fool out of itself. The Bible tells us that that's exactly what humanity would do, except that Jesus Christ cuts short, to some degree, the tribulation period, when all of this is going to take place. Thank God, it is after we're gone. So, some human beings manage to survive upon the face of the earth in spite of the millions who will, in that period, indeed be slaughtered.

The book of Mark backs up that same concept – that there's going to come sudden destruction, and that Christ has to shorten the period in order to preserve mankind from being destroyed. The simplest kid among us, who knows anything about the Bible, can listen to all these discussions about peace, and he knows how it's going to end up.

The ability to have discernment and to apply Scripture is the precious quality that we have. The world does not have it. When you lock Jesus Christ out of your life, you deny yourself that discernment.

**Drinking Alcoholic**

Let's take up the subject of alcohol (booze). There is a lot of discussion about that. What does the Bible say about that? The Bible says that it is a sin to get drunk. Therefore, we as believers may tell each other, you must not get drunk. Period. Over and out. You have no options. There are no exceptions. The Bible does not say that you may not use alcoholic beverages, but the Bible does say that we are to use discernment. We are to use the overriding law of our concern for the weaker brother, for example, and that we don't do certain things so as to not destroy his spiritual life. We are to exercise a higher motivation over that which may be our liberty to do.

So, we look into the Word of God, and we see that the book of Proverbs says that if you're the king (if you're the chief administrator of a nation), you must never use alcoholic beverages. Then it goes on to say that that's because there are so many people whose lives are at stake with your decisions, and therefore you must not threaten your thinking capacity. You must not disorient yourself by using alcohol.

So, how shall we as Christians apply this? One of the things that you have, when Jesus Christ is in your life, is the ability to take a principle and apply it – to apply it in terms of the day in which you live. It is not without reason that we say it is a point of wisdom for Christians not to use alcoholic beverages at all. Do you realize that, in all likelihood, William Holden would be alive today if he had not used alcohol? His death came about as the result of his being drunk. Do you realize that Natalie Wood would be alive today, in all likelihood, if she had not been consuming alcohol? It is the disorientation of the alcohol that put her life in mortal jeopardy, and snuffed it out.

What a terrible thing to shut Jesus Christ out of your life so that you can't think this thing through, and come to an understanding and a decision on how this applies to me in terms of my liberty, but in terms of my responsibility to other believers, and in terms of responsibility, for example, to your own children. I cannot believe how stupid some people can be that they actually think that they can do certain things in their home, in terms of personal practice, like maybe the use of alcohol, and their little children are there watching it, but they don't want their children to grow up and do the same thing. They don't want their children to be doing it. Do you think that your kids are not going to do it? In your heart, you would say, "I'd just rather he didn't do this." In your heart, you say, "I'd just rather she didn't practice this thing that I do, and that she didn't have this habit." They will, because you're that important to them. When you have Jesus Christ on the inside, He helps you to understand that. You get the perspective, and you act in keeping with reality – the way things are. When He's on the outside, you kick against the very best of judgment that the Lord has given to those who have Him on the inside.

It is a terrible thing to imagine any of us putting ourselves in the position that these Laodiceans did, where they shut the door on the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of having fellowship with Him, He was nauseatingly disgusted with them.

Maybe we can tie it up in this session. Verse 21 then says, "To him that overcomes." This is that word we've had before: "nikao." This word means "to conquer." It refers, as we have seen, to those who are born again. 1 John 5:4-5 tell us that the overcomers are those who are born again. This is in the present tense. This is their constant status as born again people. It is active. This is the status that they possess. It's in the participle, telling us a spiritual principle. "To those who are born again, whether you are a reversionist or not." Notice: "To those who are born again." Verse 20 is an appeal. Verse 20 is an opportunity to respond. But then here is that comforting hand of grace: "To every one of you who are born again, I will grant." The word "grant" is actually the word "didomi." It means "to give something:" "I'm going to give you something very special." "Didomi" ("to give") is future. It is indicating sometime in the future that He's going to give this. Not now – not to those who are in heaven with Him, but sometime in the future, all of you who are born again are going to be given something by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

**Christ's Throne**

What is He going to give? "That you may sit in a certain place." The word for "sit" is "kathizo." This is aorist tense. At some point, this will be executed. It is active. The Lord will personally do this for you. It is infinitive mood. It is His purpose. Therefore, it will not be frustrated. His purpose is for us to sit with the Lord Jesus Christ "in." The Greek word is "en," and it means here "on:" "To sit on my own throne." The Greek word for "throne" is "thronos." This word refers to a place of authority. Jesus Christ says, "To every one of you who has received Me as Savior, the time is going to come when you will be permitted to sit with Me upon My throne."

What is He referring to here? "The one who is born again will sit with Me in authority." What kind of authority? The authority that He's referring to here is an authority that will be on the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ. What throne belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ?

This is the Christmas season. If you'll go back to that Christmas record in Luke 1:32, we have the clue. This is the reference to the throne of Jesus Christ, in describing Jesus' birth to Mary: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father, David."

If you'll turn back to 2 Samuel 7:14, you'll have the historical background of that statement. The Lord is making this statement to David concerning David's son Solomon, and those who follow in the royal line: "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity (and Solomon certainly did), I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before you. Whatever I do to Solomon and to the kings that follow. I will never take away the royal line again from them. (It will always be through you, David.) And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." And that throne of David is the throne that the angel was referring to here in Luke 1:32.

You can see what a terrible conflict the poor amillennialist gets himself into. The amillennialist knows that the liberal has come along, and he has shredded the Word of God with the principle of spiritualizing the words of the Bible, instead of taking them in a literal way. But the amillennialist does believe that Jesus Christ was virgin-born. In Luke 1:31, it says, "And behold, you shall conceive in your womb (this virgin woman), and shall bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus." When Mary inquired how this was possible, she was told that this would be a supernatural birth – a conception prepared by God the Holy Spirit, so that Jesus would not inherit the old sin nature which is in the genetic structure of the male. Instead, He would be born clean of a sin nature. He would be back to where Adam was.

Now the amillennialist fundamentalist says, "Yes, He was born of a virgin." Then he comes down to verse 32, the very next verse, and he says, "I've got to change my system of interpretation. Now, the words can't mean what they say. It can't be a real throne here upon this earth. Now I have to say that this is a symbol. I'm spiritualizing it to mean the throne in heaven." That's utter nonsense. It is the worst kind of ludicrous, unintellectual violation of the principles of interpretation. Within one context, you can't switch from a literal statement to a symbolic statement.

So, the throne of Jesus Christ that we are going to share is the throne over the millennial earth from which He will reign. You might say, "Isn't He on the throne now? Doesn't He possess the throne?" He does indeed. He is now in heaven on the throne. And the amillennialist will very quickly point this out to you. For example, in Romans 8:34, the apostle Paul observes: "Who is he that condemns? Shall Christ that died, yea, rather, that has risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us?" Jesus Christ is in heaven at the right hand of God. Ephesians 1:20 adds to this: "Which He wrought in Christ, who, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His Own right hand in heavenly places." Then Hebrews 8:1 clinches this. Where is Christ? "At the right hand of God the Father in heaven now." But on what? Romans 8:1: "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. We have such a High Priest who is seated on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father. But He is sharing the throne of the Father in heaven. He is not now seated upon what the Bible calls His throne.

You can see why, now, you and I cannot share that throne. That is the throne over the millennial kingdom, which is yet future. Add to this Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." He is at the right hand of God. He is on the throne of God the Father.

So, there is a very important difference here. The Lord says, "Those of you who go positive; who open the door; who let me back into your life; and, who come back into temporal fellowship, I am going to come and I'm going to sit down with you. I'm going to dine with you. I'm going to express fellowship. To you who are believers: whether you're in reversionism, or out; whether you're spiritual, or whether you're carnal; whether you are mature Christians, or idiots; or, whatever you are, as long as you're born again, I have a very great promise for you. Someday you're going to sit upon My throne when I rule in the Millennial Kingdom, even as I overcame." He overcame on the cross. That's where He conquered: "And am sat down with My Father in (that is, on) His throne." We have the same words: "I am sat down." "Sat down" is "kathizo" again.

This time it is aorist tense: "I sat down" is the way we translate it. When did He do that? He sat down on His Father's throne after the Father called Him to ascend, and He is seated there with Him at this time. How long will He be there? Matthew 22:44 tells us how long He is going to stay seated on the Father's throne before He takes up the authority of His own throne in the line of David: "The Lord said unto My Lord (God the Father said unto God the Son), 'Sit on My right hand till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" When Operation Footstool has been executed, which it will be at the end of the tribulation period, and the Millennial Kingdom is introduced, then Jesus Christ will come down to sit upon His own throne, the throne which He inherited as the greater Son of David.

That is a great promise. You and I will be on that throne. You remember that the apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6:4, criticized a group of believers because of their attitude of conflict with one another. He reminded them that they would be actually sharing the authority over angels. Paul says, "When you church members have a conflict with one another, you don't need to go to a lawyer." They're all crooks anyhow. "You don't need to go to the Law system. What you should go to is one another, and you settle it among yourselves, because you people are the judges. You're going to be the judges. You're going to sit on the throne of Jesus Christ in the line of King David, and you are going to be administering with Him." And again, I remind you, this is to whoever you are, whether you are a Christian in fellowship or out of fellowship.

Well, we close Revelation 3 now with verse 22, an expression that we've looked at in detail. We won't look at it further: "He that has an ear (that is, those who are able to listen to doctrine), let him hear (go positive to doctrine) what the Spirit says (what the Holy Spirit is teaching in the Word of God through the pastor-teacher) unto the churches" (to all local assemblies and their members). That's the point. If you can listen to doctrine; if you can go positive; and, if you can just get off your high horse and your old sin nature arrogance and say, "Yes, Lord, thank You for informing me. You have spoken to me, and I'll act accordingly," God says that the floodgates of My blessing will be open, and will be showered upon you beyond your fondest dream. And the best is yet ahead."

You're going to be kings and queens (that's why we call you the royal family of God), ruling with Jesus Christ – sharing His throne, and the authority of administration over the whole world that that throne implies. Aren't you looking forward to that, and itching to get your hands on that authority, so that you can deal with Ayatollah Khamenei and all the rest of those guys? That's what you're going to be dealing with. The authority is going to be yours. That's the kind of people you are. Do you want to really leave Jesus Christ outside, knocking and knocking, instead of confessing and letting Him come in. I trust not.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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