

Study of Revelation (2016) – 4
Pastor Jesse O’Dorisio - June 22, 2016
Bible Text: [Revelation 2:1 - Introduction to the Churches](#)

<https://livingwatersternacle.com/sermons/06-22-16-introduction-to-the-churches/>

It’s time to get into it, praise God. Now tonight we’re going to get into the second chapter, and again so precious how we left off and the encouragement of so many encouragements in chapter one, but John hears that trump, and he turns back because he’s taken in spirit, and God is showing him such revelation at this time of what’s to be, and what’s going to happen. And so, he’s taken in spirit and he’s seeing all these things and then okay. Now John, here it comes and he hears the trumpet blast and it says then he turns back to look over the last two thousand years plus of the Church Age. So, he’s looking back over from the time of the day of Pentecost to where we’re at even at this moment right now, and this could be it because He could come right now. And this would be complete all of what he was looking over praise be to God and wrapped up as we’re speaking of it. 01:15

But here in chapter two we going to begin the journey into the seven churches. and what we’re going to find in these seven churches is the spiritual state again and the description of that spiritual state of all believers during this Church Age time. More importantly it’s the state of Christianity in all believers at this time. And we find as we’ll go through this how varying the state of spirituality is in this type of these seven churches. We are going to see ones that are fully ready. We’re even going to see ones that are actually have been so fully ready they actually died being fully ready. Praise God, and then there’s the ones that are fully ready right now. And then we’re going to see everything in between all the way to the point of where there was a complete falling away whereas Brother Hill used to say many times, Ichabod has been written over the door: God has departed. 02:24

As we get to Laodicea it says you’ve gone so far that you’re neither hot nor cold, and I’ll spew you out of My mouth that it has departed, not meaning that they were saved and lost their salvation, it means that that church; the preaching there got so far away from the things of God that eventually there was no longer any preaching of salvation; the blood was completely gone. We’ve talked about this many times, there are wonderful organizations that were set up as Christian -preaching organizations. They have taken the word blood and every song of the blood out of their hymnals; they don’t want to sing about the blood of the Lamb. Very interesting where it says so plainly in scripture without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin; the power is in the blood., amen? And God even said unless I see the blood I won’t pass over you, but if I see the blood I will pass over you. That blood is ultimately important praise God, not just vital, it’s the pinnacle of it all. That’s why the cherubim, those ones that are representatives of the ones that are fully ready, they’re staring at that mercy seat, the place where all the blood was poured over because of the great mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 04:00

But tonight, as we get into these churches so abundant, we're going to see and I mentioned this as we started earlier tonight, we're going to see the great grace of God that He so wants, and it will be; His bride will be fully prepared. But we're in this age of you talk about great, great grace, we're going to see that the high calling of God in Christ Jesus is for all believers. As we know in First Timothy as it says there, I would be that all men be saved and come to the full knowledge, the exact knowledge, the complete knowledge, the intimate knowledge, praise God of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And I'm so grateful of God of the truth. So, this high calling of God in Christ Jesus as we'll see here is to all believers, and to all believers no matter the state, He is preaching this so clearly to every church we're going to see the final thing He says to them; overcome, get out of that, wake up. The coming of the Lord is nigh, it's upon you, and we're so thankful again that that encouragement today He tells us to take the chastening, and to win Him. 05:36

And that is why this is so powerful; these letters to these seven churches, but it's more than just seven letters to seven churches, I believe truly it is one letter so perfect to each and every one of us individually asking us, where are we? Where are we with Christ? Where is our heart, are we distracted, or is He the first love of our life, and are we ready for the coming of the Lord. I've said it many times; by the grace of God, I'll say it many times again. The word of God is true. When the word of God says something's going to happen, it's going to happen, matter of fact it's already happened, but it's going to happen; God already sees it happening. He doesn't see time; He just sees it but it's going to happen. I've said very many times about the birth of Jesus Christ. It was preached for thousands of years prior to His birth that He was coming, that He was going to be born. Isaiah's so clear, Saul, all of those different ones told us that He would be born. But yet all of those years passed, and even those that had believed they waned in faith, they waned, and they thought I'm sure just like today, Christianity's saying well, Jesus really isn't coming, that was more of an allegory, or this, or you know, it's just kind of something to get us excited and reminding about Jesus. 07:15

How watered down is it going to be? There was a handful then that was looking for the birth of the Saviour, and shepherds, some wise men, and all them, they even had to be quickened many ways too. But it's just the same today, how many people are really expecting the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as Bridegroom to come tonight? Not just to come, but to come tonight that He's ready to appear because it says in the hour that you think not. It says in the word of God that He's going to come like a thief in the night, and that's why praise the Lord in Thessalonians Chapter Five, the whole testimony there of that is to wake up. That we're not of them that sleep, we're not of the slumbering. Don't be slothful, when the thief comes be looking, be waiting, be alive and watching for Him because He's coming, and I thank God that this great grace is so apparent in here. He is preaching to all of His people; wake up. 08:32

Now, I'm led tonight to first to visit on some of the highlights of these seven churches. I don't know if we'll really get into starting on to the church of Ephesus which is

in order tonight, but I believe the Lord really wants us to have a sweet foundation of some of the highlights of these seven churches and specifically tonight kind of talking about the order that each one of the seven churches arrived in heaven. Now, I know there's new ones here in the meeting, I know there are new ones that are listening on the website, and tapes and different things of that nature, and case you have never heard this before I'm going to give you a truth. Every man is going to enter heaven in his own order, and in his own rank. And we know this by many things in the word of God, but if you go on over to First Corinthians Chapter Fifteen, it tells us this very sweetly in First Corinthians Chapter Fifteen, and in verse twenty-three. Well actually let's go back to verse twenty-two. For as in Adam all die, all die. Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. So, see, it's appointed unto men once to die, we understand that, but praise the Lord in Christ we know that in Him we're made alive. 10:09

But here it is in verse twenty-three. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. So, this word order, and I know many here know this, that word order actually means rank; it's like a military rank, it's a company. Every man, or everyone, of mankind all of these believers will be in their company and their own rank. Now think about this, this isn't some new concept in the word of God. If you recall Enoch, it said Enoch walked with God, and Enoch was not; God took Enoch, he didn't die, praise the Lord, and why did He take Enoch? It says because he walked with Him. There was a fellowship there, it didn't list out all of the things he did, it didn't list out all these great attributes about Enoch, and you know, his commitment and all. It just said he walked with God. And we understand that walking with God as the word of God tells us we walk how? by faith, amen? 11:22

So, what Enoch did is he had a life, or a manner of life, but he just walked by faith, and what is faith? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. So, I can take from that, that you know it didn't say God took all of these people. Let me tell you something, there were a lot of people on the earth even at that time. Alright? Lots of people, but there was one that was walking with God that God said, you know what? I just can't stand it anymore, I can't be in a sense, I'm not apart from him, almost with him; I'll never leave him or forsake him, but you know what? He's got to be with Me. He's got to have a body in a sense like unto My own, we got to fellowship in a more intimate and more personal way. You know it, I can't wait. Isn't that beautiful. What God is telling us that is I can't wait. I'm so in love with Enoch in our relationship that we have that I can't wait, I'm going to take him. And you know what He did? He took him. Praise the Lord, and a gift just to see how the Lord will just bring these things out, but that's how He embraced him in that. 12:36

Well, we saw as well too as you go on, think about Elijah. Elijah was taken up into heaven in that chariot, and God told him, I'm going to take you, I'm going to take you up with Me, you're not going to see death. So, why did He do this? Why did these types come forth? Well, we can go back and even talk about Adam being in that sleep. Why Adam being formed out of the dust and God breathed into him and he becomes a living

soul and all of that, why didn't He in in making his wife, why didn't He just do it in the same way? Why wouldn't that happen that way? Because there was something that God wanted to show us in that type. There was something that was even beyond creation. There was something more intimate, and more personal that He was going to reveal to us. And reveal to us WAY down the line in what's called Paul's gospel. This is why we can see into this is because we have the Holy Ghost, that'll take us into all truth now, amen? Went through John, how perfect, Isn't that wonderful? 13:43

As he told those disciples, I have many things to say unto you, but you can't understand them until He, the Spirit of truth He's been with you, and He shall be in you. Until you get filled with the Holy Ghost, until you walk in the fulness of that Holy Ghost, and then it's not just that because the fulness of the Holy Ghost is going to happen one way; that's when I give you Paul's gospel and you begin to walk in that into all truth. That's why all of that came, just allow the Spirit, not you put it together because you can't put anything together. Allow the Spirit to put this together. These are just, it's just line upon line, and line upon line; it's just again rightfully divided words that's so evident that's the cookies on the shelf. These are hard to be understood by people that are going to wrestle with it. How do you wrestle? Well, I have been taught this way, or my church organization says this, or I believe ... Let me tell you something, I don't want you to believe what I believe, I want you to believe what the bible says. See, I don't ever want to say this is what I believe, no. This is what the bible says, and by the grace of God I believe it. That's the difference, I don't believe what my church says, I don't believe what my pastor says, I believe, praise God what the word of God says. And the word of God rightfully divided, praise His name. 15:10

So, here we had again getting back to, you had God make Adam, but He said it's not good for man to live alone, he's going to have a wife. Now did God come to that realization, did it say oh well look at this, I made Adam, Now, You knew this. This was known, but this is for us, and we understand that there's a much the more here that's going to come forth. Adam is not going to be alone. Matter of fact, he's not just going to have a friend, he's going to have a wife. And it's going to be bone of his bone. Isn't that something how that's going to be how wonderful that is? See, even my wife as much as I love her even in that type, she's not necessarily bone of my bone, this was even deeper in meaning, and everything that God was bringing out here. See. Adam represents the Church Age right now, and the church is in a sleep. That's what we're going to see in these seven churches. The majority of these Christians, the majority of Christianity today is slumbering. Yes, they're saved, they're thankful and all of that, but it's just a slumber. It's like I'm in a fog; there isn't this passion for truth. There isn't a passion anymore to know the word of God, but there's a passion that's going to be a wife and it's not going to come out of the whole body. It's going to come out of a little rib. 16:47

And that is why God didn't just take the dust again, breath into it, and have Eve become a living soul. He took that rib portion out of Adam, and notice, before He did that He showed that Adam was going through a sleep. It wasn't because had to do a surgery

like that. You know, they even have nowadays that they can just numb a piece of your body and you don't actually have to be sleeping, and you can take that out? So, don't think this was a surgical thing, this is a spiritual thing; you get it? Alright? This wasn't just you know, God foresaw anesthesia before it was ever made which He did, but this wasn't about anesthesia; you get that? I want to make sure we understand that this is a type, this is an analogy; this is symbolism that the body of Christ is asleep, and that's what's happening today. But while they're asleep the most intimate part is going to be taken out of that body, and it's going to be the wife, the place closest to the heart. And we thank the Lord that again this is speaking of that rank, and that order, and how thankful we are. We went through the Song Of Solomon even, and you thank the Lord for that. That as she said, you know, many daughters have done virtuously. Those daughters of Jerusalem, they're wonderful, wonderful, but thou excellest them all. 18:20

You're the choice one of your mother. You're the one, and notice of your mother, mother grace; you're the choice one of grace because you took it all. It exceeded so abundantly. At the end of that precious Song Of Solomon, we even see that she has a little sister, but it's a little sister, she's not ready for a wedding. And as it says so clearly there, it says she has no breasts. She's not developed, she's still a child, she is nowhere near ready for a wedding, but that Shulamite sure is. Matter of fact so stunning that the bridegroom is even having a hard time keeping it together and it's the truth. And that was how our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is tonight in hearing us to hear this message. How excited He is just as God and beyond was so excited to say Enoch, you walk with Me. I can't wait any longer, you got to come home, amen? How wonderful, praise the Lord. See what happens when we come, and He gives us stuff, and really. He's given me this right now and that's the truth, thank the Lord. Then He gave us; oh yeah, I did; never mind. 19:44

Alright, so. how about since we're talking about this, how about Matthew? Go on over there, and thank the Lord, I'm grateful that you know, we're brothers and sisters of like precious faith and you know these things, you know these scriptures, but I pray this is more encouraging than maybe it's ever been. You know, it's kind of like a kiss; it's always the first time with Him, and that's the only way the Lord else does it. But in Matthew 27:52, this is right after verse fifty, Jesus, He yielded up the ghost; He gives Himself over and He dies for us, and He cries teleo; it's finished. And at that moment in verse fifty-one it says behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. Now, listen to this, and the graves were opened; graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, okay? Many bodies of the saints which slept arose. Well, wait a second, it just said many of the bodies of the saints. Why didn't it say all of the saints, the bodies of the saints? Because again He's showing us in such truth that not all the saints are going to be resurrected or raptured at the same time. There is a rank, and there is an order praise be to God, and we're thankful for this. 21:34

So, in this at this time in the Son, remember, captivity was taken captive. During all of this time they were with the Lord. Captivity was taken captive, that means upper Sheol was taken up into heaven. That means all of those who had died in Christ, that had believed in the blood through out of that Old Testament time. Remember where old Samuel? When Saul called up Samuel; I should say the witch of Endor and God sent Samuel, and he wasn't very happy that he got sent out there, but that's where he was; it was upper Sheol, and that's why he told Saul, he said tomorrow you King Saul and your sons, you'll be with me; you'll be with me, you'll be in upper Sheol. And that was the place again that was prepared for those that believed in the blood at that time when they passed. Jesus, the first fruit had to ascend into heaven. This is why He had to die upon that cross and die, rise again and then go to the Father. He had to be the first fruit that would enter into heaven. When He entered into heaven, that's when He then brought at that time captivity captive. 22:58

So, all of the Old Testaments saints in a sense if you want to think about this that were in upper Sheol, all entered into heaven at that time. Alright, so it wasn't like some were left in the upper Sheol, upper Sheol was taken into heaven. But at that time as well graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose. And specifically, what we're talking about is there were saints that we see glorified bodies at that time. There were saints praise the Lord that again were given in a sense that fullness of a reward at that time of their rapture in a sense up to heaven when they were taken up into heaven. This again represents those full overcomers in the Old Testament. We'll get there God willing, chapter four you're going to see that the first company that is seen in heaven are the twenty-four elders round about the throne, and praise be to God this is that company of believers, hallelujah, that were again given those glorified bodies. I believe that you read about them in the Hebrew's hall of fame there in the eleventh chapter you do. You'll see the Moses, and the David, and all of those praise God by faith that want His best, amen? By faith, that's again, Enoch walked with God; how do you walk with God? by faith. So, there we go. 24:47

So, many of those saints we see glorified bodies at that time, again signifying that there's going to be a rank and an order just as will the church. The church, not all the body will arrive, and again the body of Christ not all arrive in heaven at the same time, nor will they receive the same rank, or the same glory. The four living ones, I'm kind of jumping a little bit here, but the four living ones that we'll read of in chapter four arrive in heaven at the time of the first trump. It's so wonderful, they arrive in heaven right at the same moment that the tribulation begins, and it's so wonderful to know that, that we see that company coming into heaven, the four living ones that are in the midst of the throne that are the worshippers, the true worshippers that worship Him in spirit and in truth. They arrive in heaven right at the first trump sound. That's why we're looking for His appearing right now. We really do by the grace of God. We are at that time praise God that Jesus could come. At that moment, that's when the bride praise the Lord will be raptured into heaven. 26:28

Now, the innumerable multitude, which is the majority of God's precious people, they don't arrive in chapter four, they arrive in chapter seven. That's why it's also called the innumerable multitude. By the time you're in chapter seven you're into the tribulation. So, you had faith that had been taken out that are alive, I mean living. They go out at the beginning of the tribulation, then you'll have one that the majority of them will go into the tribulation somewhere before the middle and will be taken out from the tribulation. From that point think of this, in chapter fourteen you have the hundred and forty-four thousand that we see up in heaven, and then throughout the word of God it talks about in chapter six that there will be martyrs that are under the altar that die during the tribulation and then are seen in heaven. So, again brother and sisters whether it was in the Old Testament times or the New Testament times we see these companies, we see these ranks, we see people hallelujah of the Lord are taken into heaven and are given different rewards when they arrive. Now, these companies will arrive in heaven at various times, and these seven churches that we're going to start to begin in give us qualities of the individuals in each of these companies. Now, I mentioned that the first trump is just sounded, praise the Lord, and that will raise up the bridal company to meet the Lord in the air. 28:06

Now, where do we get that? Well, we get it many places, but maybe nowhere more clear. Let's turn over to First Thessalonians Chapter Four. In First Thessalonians Chapter Four such a wonderful portion of scripture I love to read this, especially at the home going of saints that I believe have again taken the grace to have that mark that they were alive and ready, but God again in His great mercy better to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord, amen? So, in verse fourteen it says in chapter four of First Thessalonians. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself, here it is for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. This is the beginning again of the Lord's Day. This is where John is taken in spirit, and he hears this trump and turns back around. This is the moment that we're speaking of here in this precious portion of Revelation. 29:40

So, it says for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Isn't that wonderful, and then it says then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. And I love the last part because this is really so beautiful. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. See, we need to be comforted all the time, and what great comforter; Jesus is coming, and He could come today. And praise the Lord, we are going to be forever with the Lord. So, you notice here that the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them as it says with the Lord in the air. Now, in that which is so very precious we see that there really are two parts in a way of this bridal company. The ones that are dead in Christ, and praise God

the ones that are alive and remain. So, just kind of have that there So, this company will consist of two of these seven churches that we're going to get into. This is very precious, those two churches that I'll just visit a little bit about tonight are going to be the two parts of this company that will meet the Lord in the air when the first trumpet sounds. The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, praise God. 31:29

Now, we know this isn't the whole company of believers because we also understand and know in Revelation as we study thru here that believers are not all seen up in heaven at this event. As we're reading here about John the trumpet has blast. The blast has happened, alright? Flash forward again to chapter four as it tells about what does he see right after the blast. The thing that he sees right after the blast is the four living ones right in the midst of the throne. Praise God. At that time too we get the vision, he sees the twenty-four elders that are round about the throne. Well, that twenty-four elders praise God is that cloud of witnesses. That's why it says to meet the Lord in the air; the cloud that's with Him. Those speaks of those Old Testament full overcomers that rose up there in Matthew Twenty-seven were given those glorified bodies that are present with the Lord today. They're going to meet us in the air, hallelujah. That's great, I love that, but the main thing is the One that we're going to meet in the air; the Lord, amen. So, what's so beautiful about this precious encouragement here brothers and sisters is that you have the dead in Christ, and you have those that are alive and remain. Now we know it's not the whole church because we know that it's in chapter seven of Revelation where is approximately somewhere around two and one half, three years into the tribulation. That's when the innumerable multitude arrives in heaven. 33:06

So, how could I get all believers are raptured at the trumpet blast when Revelation will specifically show us that over a seven year period the church believers in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be raptured, they will be a company; a very small company at the time of the beginning of the seven years, about two and one half to three years under seven years, then you'll have the hundred and forty-four thousand at that time. You'll also have the two witnesses; you'll have the martyrs throughout that time as well. So, either the word of God is true and it's perfect, or it's contradicting itself all over the place, amen? So, this is how we know when we get to this scripture, and this trumpet blast, we know that this trumpet blast has to be speaking of one company, and that one company is the dead in Christ shall rise first. 34:11

Now, who are those dead? You know, people have asked me and said, now wait a second, does that mean all the ones that have died in the Lord? Well, wait a second, didn't Matthew twenty-seven show us that even in Matthew twenty-seven. When the graves were open; the graves were open upper Sheol all; all of upper Sheol, all those believers in the Old Testament were taken into heaven at that time, amen? Oh yes, they were, but only some are many of those graves were opened to receive glorified bodies, praise the Lord. So, I find it not hard for God to really do in type do the same thing as He does in type over, and over, and over again. When the dead in Christ shall rise, I'm

speaking of here, this'll be the dead in Christ that are the full overcomers in Christ just in the same type that the ones that arose were the full overcomers of the Old Testament time that we see their glorified body. That's why when we're speaking of the dead in Christ that shall arise we're talking about the likes of a Paul, Priscilla, Aquila, an Apollos, praise the Lord. And then praise God, all of those that I have marked, even in my life as I've walked praise the Lord with the Lord, to see those ones, to thank God for a Brother Copley, and a Sister Bodie. Brother Smith, hallelujah, Brother Hill, Sister McGuire, and again on and on, and it's not again for us to give. 35:47

As the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ said, it's not for Me to give, it's for My Father to give. And if that's so perfect to give then why would it not be His Father? He said the Father's seeking those that worship Him in spirit and in truth. See, that's the Father that's picking out the wife for His Son, and He sent that servant and said servant, this is exactly what she's going to be, and You're going to find her and You're going to minister to her, and You're going to encourage her, and then You're going to lead her all the way back. By the way, that's the Holy Ghost. It's so wonderful, and it's so perfect how all of this, God just lays out for us for the taking. And I pray really, that's why I was just praying tonight, God just let this even be those that it's real, let it be more of a reality. Those that are hearing this for the first time, are beginning this just say you know what? Praise the Lord, even with what I know in the word of God there's something quickening in my heart that praise the Lord this does, it's a oneness in the gospel, it's a oneness in this message, there's no doubt that why would God give us the example even in our own lives? Why would I have children what are my heirs, but wait a second, I only have on joint heir and that's my wife, amen? So, these are all of those precious things that God puts together so clearly for us. 37:17

So, here we go, two of the churches of the seven churches listed here are going to be in that precious company which will be the bride of Christ which will be raptured at the moment of the trumpet blast. Now, these two churches as we're going to get into are the only two of the seven that's there's no correction listed. We're going to read of their qualities and there's no correction. Now, I've heard people try to explain this, and pastors and teachers that see, these guys really walk the walk. You know, there's just no failure in them. There's no this, and no that. Know, as we'll get into this, you're going to find out that you know what, they're very human. Matter of fact they only got a little strength. They're not like these great maybe heroes that we think in a sense of what Christianity wants to put upon a pulpit. What they are though are ones that know the truth, that stay in the truth and absolutely love the love of Jesus; that's who these winners are, and they're willing to suffer together with Him, hallelujah. 38:33

So, there's no correction, and it also says in of these two churches, the reason that there's no correction is because there's no waning in faith and love. Isn't that precious? Isn't that wonderful, I talked about King David, it says that David's heart he walked in all the ways of God, it says and his heart was perfect in the ways of God, Now wait a second, if you look at David's life you'd say wait a second, he messed around with Bathsheba, he

killed her husband; this was a bad dude, he did some really awful things. You'd go to prison for life for this stuff. Come on, let's just be honest, we can talk about this. Alright, and then after that fact, and matter of fact after David sings of his praises and his deliverance, the Lord delivered me from all my enemies, even Saul, and the very next chapter he numbers the people which is probably his greatest failure, he's going into battle, and so instead of believing the Lord that can deliver me from a Goliath and all the deliveries, wait a second we got to number here people before we go, and that's exactly what he did. That's how in a sense he finished his life in a way. 39:52

Now, how many people would pig-pile on that, and that's exactly what it is, pig-piling Christians and say oh, that's just such a bad guy. There are probably even people that will go out there and say, oh look at that, he ended in a sin, he's going to hell, but yet God testifies of him as the greatest king that's ever been. He was the man after My own heart. Praise God, everything was in that type because why? Because of faith and love. You will fail; you will, but the difference is in that failure. Do you still see them faithful? Do you still believe that grace is so sufficient where in that failure you begin to magnify Him like oh, nobody's different, hallelujah, that's the testimony. That's the boldness whereas David said, all those ones I'm sure coming in after they found out about Bathsheba and Uriah and all this, and telling him he needed to pray around and step down as a king and you know, you can go over to, and you know, you need to Live in a shack and to tell us you're sorry you know and all that kind of stuff. He walked out there and he said, you know what? Before Thee and Thee only have I sinned. There wasn't some great eloquent all of this, what man wanted to see, God saw the heart and He got on with it, and God did not take that throne away from him, did He? Matter of fact He even made him mightier, hallelujah. Wonderful, how encouraging this is. Now, you never know where the Lord is going to take it, and I just love it. I just go with Him. 41:36

Now, getting back here, these two churches as we're going to get into here are Smyrna and Philadelphia, alright, and we'll see this. Now, why is it Smyrna? Well, as we'll see Smyrna shows us that these are the bridal saints that died prior to the coming of the Lord. Remember the dead in Christ shall rise first, so this is Smyrna. See again, how perfect this is, Verse ten, if we go back to Revelation there and you look at verse ten of chapter two, this is speaking of Smyrna. It says, fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: and see in ministering death? behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison; (that's Brother Paul, that happened) that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life, hallelujah. Be full of faith. Be full of faith, finish that course. I finished my course, I've kept the faith, hallelujah. I fought a good fight. This is what this is speaking of right here, so these Smyrna saints they die prior to the coming of the Lord just as we read in 1 Thessalonian's 4:16, this confirms that, that the dead in Christ shall rise first. Praise God for Paul's gospel. See, without it you'll never understand this stuff. 43:13

But notice in Revelation 2:10 as we read there, I'll give the a crown of life; kind of jumping ahead a little bit, but that's the same meaning that is in First Timothy Chapter

Four, where Paul again speaks there after he says, I fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course. There is therefore laid up for me a crown of righteousness; that's the same crown. This is that exalted rank of righteousness crown. Even James mentions it which is so beautiful, and you know, you think about people talking about James. Well, you know that's a legal portion of scripture. I pray, if you think that way, so go back and listen to our study in James, you'll see how much bridal truth is in James. It's all here but in James One, verse twelve it says, blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to them that love Him. Praise God, endures temptation, amen? Yea amen. That means you get to see a lot of ugly stuff about yourself. 44:18

Isn't that what temptation is? See, when it doesn't tempt you, what else would else would you say about . . . well if it didn't bother, o-o-oh, that bothers me, it does show me a lot of ugly about myself. Hallelujah, because it's Christ in me, the hope of glory, and He's got to show me that ugly that may be foreign that He said. You know what, If I pulled that one from you, you're going to be magnified too much. This keeps you lowly by the grace of God, AMEN? Come on, this is that one that understands that, that yes, he's going to bring him through it, and oh what a crown of glory it's going to be. So, Smyrna is the portion of the first company that rose from their grave first, but now the other part which is verse seventeen which we read back in First Thessalonians, the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we which are alive, amen? And I'm praying by the grace of God that this is us. We know once again there's no correction given, this has to be the church of Philadelphia; they are complete full overcomers as we'll get to in our study. And I pray by grace again that this will be us, that we'll be the ones that love His appearing. 45:37

And in Revelation 3:10 let's just go over there and we'll read about that just so this kind of puts it all together as we kind of wrap this up tonight. In Revelation 3:10, this is speaking of the Philadelphia church; listen to what the Lord says to them. Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, and that is translated I will keep thee from the tribulation which shall come upon the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. So, here once again we get the absolute conformation that the church of Philadelphia is going to be spared from the tribulation. Again, these are the ones that we just read about in First Thessalonians Chapter Four that are caught up together with Him to meet the Lord in the air at the first trump rapture. They do not have to enter into that time of the tribulation, and praise be to God that's why in Revelation Four you see this company in the midst of the throne prior to anybody else getting up there from the Church Age. The twenty-four elders were there already, but here comes the four living ones. And then three chapters later. Boy, we're going to have a real good time alone with Jesus. But three chapters later here come the innumerable multitude. So, it's just such a magnificent thing that we see this coming forth. 47:04

Now, the bride, the rib portion is raptured and taken into heaven first at the first trump blast. Then the believers that are going to be found in the other five churches will

follow. As I mentioned the majority of the believers are going to arrive in heaven in chapter seven. In chapter seven of Revelation, we're going to see it very clearly the innumerable multitude; a number that can't even be numbered, and we're going to see them, they're not in the midst of the throne ruling and reigning like the four living ones do. They are standing before the throne, and we are going to see that they have palms in their hands. So, not only are they not sitting next to the throne, ruling and reigning, these ones are seen standing with a palm. Well, if you go back and flash back at this time the ones that stood before a throne with a palm, do you know what they were? They were servants, and you what the song that their song that they're singing together? They sing salvation to our God which is a wonderful thing, but that's all they know. And that's the majority of what all of Christianity knows is salvation through our God. But those four living ones, they knew more than salvation, they knew a wedding song, they knew a wedding proposal; they were listening for a first trump blast, and praise be to God they got it because in the word of God I'll tell you what, you see it, He gives you enlightened eyes of understanding, you take the grace of God you'll be it. So, that's a wonderful encouragement that He gives and its why? Because He'll perform the good work which He's begun in you.

48:56

So, all those other companies follow. The innumerable multitude, the hundred and forty-four thousand; all of these different things, so without a doubt don't just get caught up in a God we do of the Christianity speak which the church is the bride, and we're all going to heaven at the same time; that is defeating preaching, that's defeating doctrine because it's not the word of God. It is not the word of God, it just sounds good to everybody; okay; we just all kind of hold hands and everybody's going to be the same anyways, and here is what it is. I'm not competing with you; you're not competing with me. By the grace of God, we're running for a prize, and the word of God tells us very clearly, we all run, but one wins that race; one company is going to win Him. And like Paul said, he said, but I'm not running as one that just beats the air. See, praise God to even run you have to be a Christian to be on that race course you'd have to be a Christian, but do you want to just run to, you know, no offense and this is going to be offending I'm sure, but I think it'll get to the point.

50:13

You like to compete? Is there people out here that used to like to compete in sports and things like that? Now, I'm going to up that and say really, really compete like I want to get out there and really compete. Well, the difference here is the same, hey look, I'm going to really compete and play in the NFL, or I'm going to go out here and play pick-up or something of that nature. We used to say it in YMCA, but I think you get what I'm saying. You're not just out there, we're not in a heat, we're not in some qualification you know, this is the final heat; this is it. You got one race, you got one life, and this is it, and there is a mark for the prize for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It's a bull's-eye. It's a mark, it's an absolute; praise God it's the very heart of God that David pursued.

51:17

So, it's so wonderful that we can know this, it's so perfect and as He brings us into this fellowship the perfection, the beauty of Him just becomes more clear, and I do, I just; Lord, I pray for that passion all the time because we don't have that naturally. We can't build this up and be a cheerleader about it or things of that nature either that, but the one way you're ever going to see it is by the grace of God; you've got to get into the word. And the way it's going to remain is you've got to stay in the word and be encouraged in the word and gather with saints of like precious faith. But this isn't just something we hear, and yeah, God willing we will get to the church of Ephesus next week maybe. I think we will. But one thing about them it talks about all those wonderful qualities of them, and all of the wonderful faith and the patience, and how they wouldn't listen to people that; you know, they tried apostles to make sure that they were men giving out the word of God, that they weren't liars. They really searched those scriptures. 52:58

So, I mean these were like in a way, model Christians if you really think about it. They were the ones that you really wanted to be with because they would even bear with you. These were people that would help you, pray with you, be burdened with you; all of these wonderful qualities, But the Lord says, but yet I have one thing against you. All of those wonderful, marvelous qualities, but there's one thing that just ain't sitting. You have left your first love, and I'll give you just a tidbit that it really looked into that. You've departed or left your first love. That actually means divorce. It does, it means a divorce. That's how serious that is to God. 53:47

See, when we come into this fellowship with Him what is she called? She's called the readied wife, amen? So, in a sense that's the relationship that He had with us with the bridal message. But He said, but you left it; you divorced Me. You've departed from this first love. See, there's only one kind of love to this bridal truth, it's first love, it's marriage love? It ain't a tepid love, it ain't a thing love, it ain't a sometime love or something of that nature, it's passionate. And by the grace of God, He gives us a faithfulness that even when we do fail, even when we don't feel too passionate, we're so thankful for His passion. Even when I don't feel like I'm too excited about it I know He's head over heels for me, and you stay in it and we stay in it, and someday Bob's going to hit me and say I told you so. I love you praise God, let's stand and be dismissed. 55:09