

Repentance & Restoration

Revelation 3:14-22

¹⁴And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

¹⁵I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

¹⁶So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

¹⁷Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

¹⁸I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

²⁰Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

²¹To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

²²He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Review

Last month, in our study of the Laodicean church, we noted four ways it was described:

1. The Busy Church: God knew their works, but He never knew *them*.
2. The Lukewarm Church: Less interested in living the truth than discussing it.
3. The Talking Church: It's me, it's me, O Lord, Look at all I've done!
4. The Desensitized Church: Like a leper, this church has lost their sense of feeling. In truth, they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, *but they know it not*.

God's Diagnosis

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p. 396

Now what God saw was entirely different from what they said they saw. They said that they were rich in goods and Spiritually wealthy. They had arrived. They had need of nothing. **But God saw it otherwise.** He said, "You don't know this, but you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked."

Wretched

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.396

God says this church of the Laodicean Age is "**wretched**". That word comes from two Greek words which mean 'endure' and 'trial.' And it has nothing to do with the trials that come to a true Christian for God describes a Christian in trial as "blessed" and his attitude one of joy whereas this description is phrased as "wretched and miserable". How strange. In this age of plenty, in this age of progress, in this age of abundance, how can there be trials? Well now, it is strange; but in this age of plenty and opportunity, when everyone has so much and there is so much more to be had, what with all the inventions to do our work and so many things to give us pleasure, SUDDENLY, we find mental illness taking such a toll as to alarm the nation. **When everybody ought to be happy, with really nothing to be unhappy about, millions are taking sedatives at night, pep pills in the morning, rushing to doctors, entering institutions, and trying to drown out unknown fears by alcohol.**

Yes, this age boasts of its tremendous stores of worldly goods, but the people are less happy than ever. This age boasts of its spiritual attainments, but the people are less sure of themselves than ever. This age boasts of better moral values

and it is more corrupt than any age since the flood. It talks about its knowledge and science, but it is fighting a losing battle in all fields, for the human mind and soul and spirit cannot comprehend or keep abreast with all the changes that have come upon the earth. In one generation we have gone all the way from the horse and buggy age to the space age, and we are proud and boastful about it; but inside is a dark void cavern that is crying out in torment, and WITHOUT A KNOWN REASON men's hearts are failing for fear and the world is so darkened that this age could well be called the age of neurotics. **It boasts, but it cannot back it up. It cries peace, and there is no peace.** It cries that it has a great amplitude of all things, but it keeps burning with desire like an unsatisfied fire! "There is no peace," saith my God to the wicked.

Miserable

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.396-397

That means that they are objects to be pitied. Pitied? They scorn pity. They are full of pride. They vaunt what they have. But what they have will not stand the test of time. They have built upon quicksand rather than the rock of the revelation of God's Word. Soon cometh the earthquake. Soon there will come the storms of the wrath of God in judgment. Then comes sudden destruction, and in spite of all their carnal preparation they will still be unprepared for what comes upon the earth. They are those who in spite of all their worldly efforts are actually opposing themselves and don't know it. Objects of pity are they indeed. Pity the poor people who are in this last day ecumenical move, for they call it the move of God, when it is of Satan. Pity those who do not know the curse of organization. Pity those who have so many beautiful churches, such lovely parsonages, such grandly trained choirs, such a show of wealth and such a sedate and reverent form of worship. Pity them, don't envy them. Back to the old store buildings, back to the dimly-lit rooms, back to the cellars, back to less of the world and more of God. Pity those who make their great claims, and talk about their gifts. Feel for them as objects of pity, for soon they will be objects of wrath.

Poor

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.397

Now of course that means spiritually poor. The sign of this age as it closes, is bigger and better churches, with more and more people, with more and more manifestation of what is supposed to be demonstrations of the Holy Ghost. But the filled altars, the gifts of the Spirit in operation, the remarkable attendance is not the answer from God, for those who come to the altars very seldom stay to go on with God, and after the great campaigns are finished, where are all those who came down the aisles? They heard a man, they listened to an appeal, they came into the net, but they were not fish, and turtle-like they crawled back to their own waters.

Matthew 13:47-49

⁴⁷Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

⁴⁸Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

⁴⁹So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.397

Don't you know that many are going to come in the last day and say, "Lord, Lord, have we not done many wonderful works in Thy Name, even to the casting out of devils?"

And He will say,

"Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity. I never knew you" (Matthew 7:22-23).

Jesus said they were workers of iniquity. Yet, you get a man that can come and pray for the sick, get oil and blood appearing in the congregation, prophecy coming forth and all manner of the supernatural, and the people will gather round him, and swear that he is of the Lord, even though he is actually making a money racket of religion and living in

sin. **The only answer they have is the absolutely unbiblical answer of "well, he gets results, so he must be of God." How terrible. How actually poor this age is in the Spirit of God, and the poor poverty-stricken ones don't even know it.**

Blind and naked

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.398

Do you remember when Elisha and Gehazi were surrounded by the army of the Syrians? You recall that Elisha smote them blind by the power of God. Yet their eyes were wide open and they could see where they were going. The blindness was peculiar in that they could see certain things, but other certain things such as Elisha and the servant and the camp of Israel they could not see. **What this army could see did not avail for them. What they did not see brought on their captivity.** Now what does this mean to us? It means exactly what it meant back there in the earthly ministry of Jesus. He tried to teach them truth, but they would not listen.

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.399

Now God says they are naked as well as blind. I cannot imagine anything as tragic as a man who is blind and naked and does not know it. There is only one answer--he is out of his mind. He is already deep in oblivion. His faculties are gone, spiritual amnesia has set in. What else can it mean? Can it mean that the Holy Spirit has taken His leave of this last day church? Can it mean that men have put God out of their minds to such an extent that it is happening even as stated in Romans 1:28.

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."

It surely appears that something like that has happened. Here is a people who say that they are of God and know God and have His Holy Spirit, and yet they are naked and blind and don't know it. They are ALREADY DECEIVED. THEY HAVE THE WRONG SPIRIT. THE ELECT CANNOT BE DECEIVED, BUT IT IS EVIDENT THAT THESE OTHERS ARE. **These are they who have become blind because they refused the Word of God. These are they who have stripped themselves naked by leaving God's care and protection and sought to build their own way of salvation, their own tower of Babel by organization.**

Oh, how lovely and beautiful dressed they appear in their own eyes as they formed their general assemblies, and their councils, etc. But now God is stripping it all away and they are naked, for these organizations have but led them into the camp of antichrist, into the field of tares, right up to their binding and burning. Objects of pity indeed they are. Yes, pity them, warn them, beseech them, and still they go their way headlong to destruction, wrathfully turning away any and all attempts to save them as brands from the burning. Miserable indeed they are, yet they know it not. Calloused and beyond hope, they glory in what is actually their shame. Defiant against the Word, yet one day they shall be judged by it and pay the price of its awful indictments.

Exodus 32:25

And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:)

God's Prescription

Buy of ME

God doesn't give this church a list of 7 Steps of Highly Effective Christians. He doesn't point them to additional works to perform. He points them to *Himself*. **Verses 18-19 repeat themselves. Verse 19 is a succinct call to repentance, but verse 18 is a rich description of what repentance looks like.**

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.400

The counsel of God is terse. It is to the point. He directs this last day church to one hope. That hope is HIMSELF. He says, "Come to Me and buy." **It is evident from this phrase "buy of Me" that the Laodicean church is not at all dealing with Jesus for the Spiritual products of the Kingdom of God. Their transactions cannot be Spiritual.** They may think that they are Spiritual, but how can they be? The works in their midst are definitely not as Paul would say, "God in you willing and doing of His own good pleasure." Philippians 2:13. Thus what about all these churches, schools, hospitals, missionary ventures, etc.? God is not in them as long as they are denominational seed and spirit, and not the Seed and Spirit of God.

The gold of God

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p. 401-402

Now these people had plenty of gold, but it was the wrong kind. It was that gold that bought men's lives and destroyed them. It was the gold that warped and twisted human character, for its love was the root of all evil.

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p. 401-402

The gold of God is a Christ-like character produced in the fiery furnace of affliction. That is the right kind of gold....

But what kind of gold does the church have today? It has but the worldly gold that will perish. It is rich. It is complacent. It has made affluence the major criterion of spirituality. The evidence of God's blessing and the correctness of doctrine, etc. is now based upon how many rich folks are involved in it.

- ➔ Satan does everything he can to keep us from affliction, and when we're in affliction he does everything he can to prevent us from understanding it and valuing its purpose. He doesn't want us to get the true *gold of God*.

White raiment

Revelation 19:7-8

⁷Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

⁸And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Philippians 3:9

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Romans 4:4-6

⁴Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

⁵But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

⁶Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

352-3 LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.404

There is a price to pay for those garments, and that is the price of separation.

Revelation 17 describes the Roman Catholic Church as a great whore whose daughters (the organized Protestant churches) are harlots like she is. Whores and harlots aren't known for their modesty, but for their nakedness, and this nakedness is one of the characteristics of the Laodicean church. Revelation 18 echoes the message of the church age messengers, "Come out of her my people." If you don't want to end up naked in the end, come out.

II Corinthians 6:14-18

¹⁴Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

¹⁵And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

¹⁶And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

¹⁷Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you.

¹⁸And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Anoint your eyes with eyesalve

352-3 LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.404

He does not say that you have to buy this eyesalve. Oh no. There is no price tag on the Holy Spirit.

"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or the hearing of faith?" (Galatians 3:2).

Without the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, you can never have your eyes opened to a true Spiritual revelation of the Word.

A man without the Spirit is blind to God and His truth.

You know there have been some awful cold drafts blowing on the church in this generation, and I'm afraid her eyes have sort of frozen shut and she is blind to what God has for her. She needs some hot oil of the Spirit of God to open her eyes.

Unless she receives the Spirit of God she will go on substituting program for power and creed for Word. She counts numbers for success, rather than to look for fruit. The doctors of theology have shut the door to faith and forbade all to enter. They neither go in, nor let anyone else go in. Their theology comes out of a text book on psychology written by some unbeliever. There is a text book on psychology, one we all need; it is the Bible. It is written by God and contains God's psychology. You don't need any doctor to explain it to you. Receive ye the Holy Spirit and let Him do the explaining. He wrote the Book and He can tell you what is in it and what it means.

Be zealous and repent.

This call to repent echoes throughout the church ages. Ephesus hears the call to repent (Rev. 2:5), as do Pergamos and Thyatira (2:16, 21), and also Sardis (3:3) and finally Laodicea (3:19). In reality, repentance is necessary for any Christian experience in any and every age!

It's not easy to repent because what you're called to repent from probably seems normal to you. Repentance involves a complete transformation, a conversion, of our thoughts, our values, priorities. It's as though we'd on every seen a map of the world upside-down. And when we see the map rightside-up for the first time, we feel like that is upside down.

Conversion calls for a reorientation of our mental map, a transformation of our minds.

Repentance is a turning around of our direction, but the metamorphosis of our hearts and minds is a continuing work of the Holy Spirit as He sanctifies our lives.

LAODICEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.9, p.408

But God is calling for another zeal. It is the zeal to cry "I AM WRONG".

Acts 3:19

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Romans 12:1-2

¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

What God's attributes mean to Laodicea

This church is a *far* cry from the glorious church described in the Book of Acts. Satan and the false vine seem to have had their way, in spite of the attempts at revival we saw described for Sardis and Philadelphia. The situation seems hopeless. But God always has the last word in our situations.

Revelation 3:14

¹⁴And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

He is the Amen ... the last word.

*He is faithful and true ... what has been prophesied **will** come to pass. In Ephesians 5, Paul spoke prophetically of a wife "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Such a Bride seems impossible to find judging by the description of the last age's church!*

Revelation 19:11

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Revelation 22:6

And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

He is the Beginning of the Creation of God... a beginning is always full of promise. It appears Satan has again successfully blocked out Light and smothered revival, but God Word and Nature remove that as a possibility.

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

The Promised Restoration

John 12:24

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Joel 1:4

That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

Joel 2:25-29

²⁵And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

²⁶And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

²⁷And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

²⁸And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

²⁹And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Matthew 17:11

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

Malachi 4:5-6

⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

⁶And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Revelation 3:14

¹⁴And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;