

To the Saints of God at Topeka, Kansas July 24, 2016

The Church at Laodicea – Part II

Rev. 3:14 And 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; 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

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

17 Because 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:

18 I 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.

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

20 Behold, 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.



21 To 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.

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

Because 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:



There is no doubt that there was much wealth in Laodicea, and that, as a people, they prided themselves on their riches. Those that are wealthy in the riches of this world are likely to be lukewarm and complacent in a spiritual sense thinking their worldly goods will save them in the next life. Warren Buffet has a fortune right now, but when he passes away he will see that in the spiritual realm of

the next world that he is totally and eternally bankrupt with no hope of ever escaping the torments of hell. Matthew Henry – *“they had no provision for their souls to live upon; their souls were starving in the midst of their abundance; they were vastly in debt to the justice of God, and had nothing to pay off the least part of the debt.”*

The members of this church were puffed up with pride and arrogance and had created their own form of righteousness. *For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God (Romans 10:2-3). The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate (Pr. 8:13).*

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall (Pr. 16:18). For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch (Mal 4:1). But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble (Jas 4:6).

The Laodiceans were so prideful, egotistical and haughty that according to the Savior they said in their hearts that they “had need of nothing.” Beloved, that is a breathtaking thing. That is to call God a liar and to say that they are independent of and equal to God and do not need God. That sounds similar to Donald Trump telling Anderson Cooper *“Why do I have to repent? Why do I have to ask for forgiveness if you’re not making mistakes?”* This is the picture of Romans 1. They had exalted themselves above Christ! *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing*

themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (Romans 1:21-23).

The Lord Jesus Christ, on this throne as King of Heaven and Earth paints a strong word picture here. He uses five adjectives to describe the condition of the Laodiceans so there is no question what their actual state is.

Wretched - deeply afflicted, dejected, or distressed in body or mind; extremely or deplorably bad or distressing (was in wretched health); contemptible (dressed in wretched old clothes); very poor in quality or ability; and, inferior.

Miserable - being in a pitiable state of distress or unhappiness (as from want or shame - miserable refugees); wretchedly inadequate or meager; causing extreme discomfort or unhappiness (a miserable situation); being likely to discredit or shame.

Poor – a beggar; destitute of wealth, influence, position, honour; lowly, afflicted, destitute of the Christian virtues and eternal riches; helpless, powerless to accomplish an end; destitute of wealth of learning and intellectual culture.

Blind – sightless, unable to see; unable to notice or judge something; and, mentally blind.

Naked – bare, uncovered, without clothing, and, stripped.

You cannot look at the outward state of a church and judge the spiritual state of it. Notwithstanding all their boasting and marketing, the Savior says they were 100% wrong in their view. Not only were they not rich, but they were completely destitute. Not only did they not have anything at all of spiritual value, but their souls – the essence of their being – was wretched (think worms and maggots), blind (no spiritual sight at all – pitch dark – you can’t even see shadows). In a true and spiritual sense their souls were poor having nothing of value. Their spiritual condition was miserable (just waiting for the sentence to enter hell).

They were walking toward a cliff and they could not see it. They did not see the reality of their condition; they had no clear view of themselves, of the character of God, or of the way of salvation. And, while they certainly had gorgeous and luxurious robes and outward earthly apparel, they were spiritually naked and bare. They had nothing to cover the nakedness and sinfulness of the soul, and in respect to the real wants of their nature they were like one who had no clothing in reference to cold, and heat, and storms, and to the shame of nakedness.

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away (Isa. 64:6).

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mat. 22:11-13).

Sin has stripped man of his moral clothing; man's own righteousness will not cover his nakedness; and whoever is destitute of the righteousness of Christ is naked and an abhorrence unto God. *And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses (corpse) of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh (Isa. 66:24).*

The word picture the Lord Jesus Christ paints is the picture of a walking dead man. Barnes says *"Their worldly property could not meet the wants of their souls; and, with all their pretensions to piety, they had not religion enough to meet the necessities of their nature when calamities should come, or when death should approach; and they were, therefore, in the strictest sense of the term, poor"* and wretched and miserable. Their true state in the eyes of God is He views them as totally disgusting and sinful, deserving wrath, in danger of hell and destruction, lost and undone, and unable to extricate themselves out of such a state.

I 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.

“I counsel thee...” – One of the names of Christ is Counsellor. He is qualified to give counsel beloved. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace* (Isa. 9:6). The only thing of real value in this life is going to come from Christ. If you are going to have true riches it is going to have to come from Christ. The gold here is pure religious obedience to God. It is following God in spirit and truth, fearing him and keeping his commandments. God freely gives this unadulterated gold to His people and to those that devote themselves to Him. *Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations* (De. 7:9).

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1Pe 1:7).

With true spirituality they will obtain the favor and friendship of the Redeemer and in fact be spiritually rich. When this occurs, God will clothe them with white raiment. It represents purity, heavenly glory, and robes of immortality. He will give them salvation to cover their sins. Once properly covered, their sins will be remembered no more and their shame will be forgotten and they will not be abhorrent or offensive to God. They will be clothed with a proper wedding garment. He commands them to buy eye salve. That is, that they must give up their own wisdom and reason which is blindness in the spiritual things of God. They are truly walking in their own light. They must seek God and completely give up the worship of man.

Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow (Isaiah 50:10-11).

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding (Pr 3:5).

If they will do this thing and leave their gross sin and seek God, He promises that their spiritual eyes will be restored and given to them. They will receive spiritual healing. Right now they are encumbered in spiritual gross darkness.

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee (Isa 60:2).

■ As Many As I Love, I Rebuke And Chasten: Be Zealous Therefore, And Repent

This rebuke and chastening is the same as when a father rebukes a disobedient child. It is done with care and with the child's best intention in mind.

...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Heb. 12:5-11).

Or, will they reject his rebuke and become offended. *And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me (Mat. 11:6).*

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them (Ps 119:165).

The Savior rebukes the church at Laodicea to be zealous therefore, and repent. The reproof is for the members to ask for true repentance, and to turn from the error

of their ways. The thought is that they should lose no time or spare no labour, and move quickly and diligently to correct their sinful ways. Severe discipline always comes when lukewarm religion is found. He bids them to be zealous – that is to seek repentance with hot, fervent, and ardent love – not in a lukewarm fashion. He tells them to be zealous of good works, and in the worship of God, both private and public; and "repent"; in an evangelical way, of her luke-warmness, remissness, and supineness; of her pride, arrogance, and vain boastings of herself; and of her self-sufficiency, self-dependence, and self-confidence. The thought is that they should *bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance* (Mat. 3:8).

Beloved this zealousness must be life-long. A halting form of devotion to Christ is not going to win this race.

Also, look at the verse carefully: *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten...* The context is clear, He does not love all; he does not rebuke all. The language is inherently limiting. This is not a God that loves every single son of Adam. If God wanted to make it broad language he would have said *I love and rebuke all* - but that is not what He said.

Behold, 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.

The Savior says that He stands at the door and knocks. This is a reference to James 5:9 "*Behold, the judge standeth before the door.*" This is expressive of the near approach, or sudden coming of Christ to judgment.

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness (Mal 3:1-3).

Barnes says "*The knocking signifies the notice that will be given of it, by some of the immediate forerunners and signs of His coming; which yet will be observed but by*

a few, such a general sleepiness will have seized all professors of religion; and particularly may intend the midnight cry, which will, in its issue, rouse them all.” And, “*if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him*” – this reference to opening the door means to show a readiness for the coming of Christ, including looking and waiting for it, and be like such that will receive Him with a welcome. Only the sheep of God will hear His voice. *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me* (John 10:27). Christ will then “*come unto him, and sup with him.*” These souls will be like the wise virgins in Matthew 25:1. They will be watching and ready for His return and run to meet Him at His coming. They will have properly prepared themselves and be ready and the Lord Jesus Christ will receive them into the marriage chamber and will sit with Him at His blessed table and He will feed them with the fruit of the tree of life, and lead them to fountains of living water, and his tabernacle shall be among them. They will have pleasant communion with Christ and His face will be turned to them.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (2 Ch 7:14).

■ TO 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.

The Elect of God must overcome! They must overcome great obstacles – and they will, because Christ overcame. The Elect will be victorious over Satan and will sit down with God at this throne. As a reward the Elect will be exalted to the throne of the universe and achieve great and glorious honors and enjoy everlasting peace with God and will assist Christ in judgment.

Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? 1 Cor. 6:2-3

But the LORD shall endure forever: He hath prepared His throne for judgment. Ps 9:7

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. Rev. 22:1-5.

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let 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. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (Rev. 19:5-9).

I love you all. Amen.