

7 LETTERS AND 7 CHURCHES (part 7)

Greetings, precious ones: this week we come to the final of 7 letters that Jesus wrote in the Book of Revelation. This letter is a very difficult letter for it has much correction and rebuke. It serves as a picture of the “Last Days” church that has gone apostate (fallen away; turned away from the truth).

As with the other 6 letters, I will quote the entire letter but only comment on a portion of the letter that is applicable to us. Rev 3:14-22, "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked-- I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' ' "

Here we have some of the most serious language used in the Word of God, the Bible. Jesus warns that He will vomit them out of His mouth unless they repent. It **MUST** be understood to whom Jesus was writing these strong words to, it was not the atheist society of the day or the idol worshipers of Asia, it was to a church who claimed to know and follow Jesus Christ. Quite Heavy!

What was the condition of this church to warrant such warning? First, they were lukewarm when they should have been hot; hotly pursuing after Jesus and what was near and dear to His heart. Listen carefully to what caused this lukewarm condition because it is prevalent in the Church today among many of “God’s” people.

They had a high estimation of themselves, they thought they were rich; wealthy; and in need of nothing. They, no doubt, were following hard after the Humanistic, Health Wealth and Prosperity teachers of their day: the Joel Osteen’s; Benny Hinn’s; Creflo Dollar’s; et al.

There was one major problem, in their hot pursuit of what the world esteems (money, riches, wealth), they forgot about Jesus Christ. They neglected their relationship to Jesus to such a degree that He was no longer in the Church, as we see in His letter, He was outside of the church knocking on the door wanting to come back in.

The Bible makes it very clear that God is a Jealous God who demands not just part of our heart, affection, and life; He wants all of it. He deserves nothing less than everything we have and are. Jesus was asked one day what the greatest commandment was. He responded with quoting from the Old Testament He said in Luke 10:27, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.”

The problem with many today is that we placed God in the “back seat” (at times even in the trunk) as we pursue the riches of this world. Jesus made it very clear

concerning the inappropriateness of this as He stated in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (money and all it stands for).

Dear ones, this Laodician church represents the church in the "Last Days" and it would do us well to ask God to search our heart on a regular basis to reveal any and all areas that are not right with Him, where He is not number one in our life!

Drew Macintyre is the associate pastor of Calvary Chapel of Alpine and can be reached at 619-445-2589, or ccalpine@juno.com