

Title: The Church that Made Jesus sick

Text: Revelation 3:14-22

Turn in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 3. verse 14-

We come, tonight, to the last letter of Christ to the seven churches of Asia: ~~the~~ the letter to the church of Laodicea. I believe this is the saddest of the seven letters. In every other letter we hear Christ uttering some words of praise. But he has nothing good to ~~say~~ say about this church. He found nothing ~~good~~ good in it. ~~However~~ ^{Now}, I am sure the members of the church thought they were a wonderful group, but the eyes of Jesus penetrated the depths of every heart and found nothing worthy of Praise.

Someone has called this letter "The ^{Funeral} Autopsy of a Dead Church." That is a good title because in this letter Jesus takes this church apart and tells us what was wrong with this church and why ~~she~~ ^{it} was dead. But, also, in this letter I hope you will see the tender heart of Christ ~~revealed~~ revealed. He shows no anger. But all the way through the letter we feel ~~the~~ the loving compassionate heart of Jesus. He sees the condition of the church and he longs to see her come back to Him in loving devotion and faithful service.

omit (I The portrait of the writer.) *Read Rev 3:14-22 pray*

Jesus begins this letter by describing Himself. First of all, He says that He is "The Amen." I believe that means ~~the~~ Jesus is the establisher of all of God's promises. The ~~word~~ word means "finality, certainty, authority."

Often when someone makes a good statement we say, "AMEN". We mean... "that's the truth."....So, here Jesus is saying, "I am the truth, the absolute truth." All that He is going to say in this letter....all that He ever says...is true.

omit You know, ~~if~~ there is anyone who is hard to put up with, it is one who is insincere. We do ~~not~~ like a double-tongued person. We have little patience with a person who tells one thing to one person and another thing to ~~a~~ a second person. We want someone whose word is good. Who speaks the truth. Now, such a person is Jesus Christ in all of his perfection.

Then, secondly, he says that He is the "faithful and true witness."

You see, Jesus is absolute truth. Everything that He says is true. And as he looks into the church of Laodicea, He will tell the truth.

There are many wonderful things that Jesus promised us. And I know that all of these promises are going to be ours, because Jesus never says a thing that is not true. He promises to save and He does. He promises to take us home to heaven at the end of our life and He will. All that He says is faithful and true....Praise the Lord...

Then Jesus says that He is "the beginning of the creation of God."

We read in John chapter 1 verse 2 that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

Jesus is simply telling us that He is the King of creation. He created all things. And he has power over all things.

Friends, this verse is telling us that Jesus is above all people and all things. The church of Laodicea was a wealthy church. People were proud of their wealth. But their wealth was small in comparison to the wealth of the one who created the world and all that is in it.

So, here is a description of Jesus. He is called "the Amen." He is the "true and faithful witness." And He is the one who has always been here...the creator of all things....

(2)) Now, notice the Problem in the Picture of Indifference in the church.

In Vs 15 Jesus says, "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot." Here we have the best example of "indifference" found in the entire Bible. These people are neither hot nor cold....Indifferent... How TRUE OF The church Today

The word "cold" refers to the uncovered person. The person who has never been touched by the warmth of the Gospel.

The word "hot" refers to the one who has been saved. The person who is on fire for Jesus.

But these folks in the church of Laodicea were lukewarm. They had no enthusiasm, no emotion, no urgency, no compassion for the lost. No Desire To

Witness -

You know, I like ~~hot coffee~~ ^{cold milk}. I know folks who like ~~ice coffee~~ ^{hot milk}. But I don't know of anyone who like lukewarm ~~coffee~~ ^{milk}. You can drink hot milk or cold milk. But ~~lukewarm~~ lukewarm milk will make you sick.

Jesus felt that way about this church. He said that He would rather have them hot or ~~a~~ cold than lukewarm. If they had been hot, He would have rejoiced over them. If they had been cold, He wouldn't have expected anything from them. But, a lukewarm christian is repugnant to Jesus Christ. And I am afraid most of us are guilty of this sin.

Now, I believe the church of Laodicea was very evangelal. I don't believe they were dening the Cross and ~~the~~ Gospel. I believe they were simpley indifferent to them. They didn't deny the fact of sin. They just tolerated it. They knew that sinners were lost, but they didn't try to win them. They were justt going their own way, doing their own thing, lukewarm, indifferent, neglectful. ^{and self-centered}

We have so many lukeward christians in our church. Yes...they believe in the great doctrines of the faith. But they never put these beliefs into practice. You know, there are enough christians in First Baptist to turn ^{alameda} ~~the~~ ^{upside} upside down, if we would all get on fire for God and stop acting like lukewarm believers.

For example, alchol, which is killing so many people on our hyways, could be stopped tomorrow if Christians wanted it to go. We are in the majority in statistics, but we are lukewarm in using our influence for good.

Jesus says, "Your lukewarm condition makes me sick. I am about to spew you out of my mouth."

A man tells of a dream he had. A couple came to the end of their life and in front of them was an open grave. Right by the grave they saw a junk pile. On the other side of the grave they could see the pearly gates of heaven. The man was carrying some stocks and bonds and a bag of gold. The woman was carrying a jewel case full of precious stones. An angel appraoached them and asked, "What is that stuff that you are carrying so tightly?"

Staff? they questioned. "Why this is the fine wealth of the world. We spent our lives accumulating all of this stuff."

"Well," said the angel, "throw it all on the junk pile. It means nothing."

The couple was horrified. But the angel said, "as for gold, our streets are paved with it. As for those tiny jewels, we use that kind for the foundation of our city. WHAT WE VALUE IN HEAVEN IS SOULS."

You see, it is so easy to let worldly possessions cool off our zeal for Christ? We need to remember that this life will soon be past and only what is done for Christ will last. Or, as Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all of these things shall be added unto you."

Do you know the thing which most heavily burdens a pastor's heart? The members who are consecrated and active do not burden him. The unbelievers do not trouble him. But the lukewarm members, the "don't care" members, the off-and-on members are a constant source of grief to him. His heart aches for them as he longs for them to shake off their indifference and get going for Jesus.

(3) Now, third, notice in Vs 17 the poverty of riches.

These church members declared that they were rich and needed nothing. But Jesus looked at them and said that they were the neediest people on earth.

Laodicea was one of the richest cities of ancient times. An earthquake destroyed the city of Laodicea. And the Roman government offered aid to help rebuild the city. But the people of Laodicea refused the aid, and they rebuilt their city out of their own resources.

Laodicea was also a great clothing manufacturing center. They supplied clothing for the entire empire. Laodicea was a rich city. The people were financial secure.

Let's try and picture in our minds eye a visit to the First Baptist Church of Laodicea.

You arrive at the church and a deacon meets you and welcomes you and shows you around the church. He shows you the beautiful and wonderful buildings. He tells you with pride how much the church paid for the property.

And how much the building cost. He shows you the expensive pews, the rich carpets through out the church. And he says, "whatever we want, we have. We can pay for it. We lack nothaiing."

And we ask him if the church has had a revival this years. The deacon answers, "Oh, no, some churches need a revival, but we don't."

Then we ask him if they have had a time of prayer and humbling of themselves before God, and he answers, "Oh, no, we don't need that. We don't need anything. It's all here."

But let's don't listen to that deacon. Let's listen to Jesus. He says, Vs 17, that the church was wretched. This means that they were oppressed with a burden. And I believe the burden was their wealth. Instead of lifting them, it hindered them.

^{Evils}
Now, there is nothing wrong with having money. Money is not evil. The love of money is evil. The sin comes in letting money absorb you and posses you. When a person lives to make money, his love for Jesus naturally becomes lukewarm....Is that true of your life?

2 Secondly, Jesus said that this whurch was "miserable." They were sad pitful people.

3 Then he said that they were poor. In spite of their fine buildings and their fat bank account, from the standpoint of Jesuse they were poor. They had many worldly possessions, but they were worth nothing.

4 Then he said that they were blind. They had no vision of God..no vision of their own hearts...no vision of the world's needs. And friends, there are none so blind as those who refuse to look deep into their own hearts and see the need which is there.

5 Then, Jesus said that they were naked.. I like this. The city of Laodicea was a clothing center. And I am sure that the members of that church took pride in being well-dressed. But, when Jesus looked down upon them He saw only the rags of their self-righteousness. POOR RICH PEOPLE. They were rich in the things of the world, but poor in the sight of God.

And that is true of many people today. They have much of what the world has to offer, but they are poor in the things of the Spirit. And it is ~~and~~ sad. Because ~~the~~ Jesus is inviting us to leave our sin and to come to him where true riches are found.

Then in Vs 18, Jesus gives this church some wise counsel. In simple words Jesus said, "Come back to me in true repentance. Stop trusting in your wealth. Come and I will give you true riches. Come and I will clothe you with the white garments of righteousness. Come and I will open your eyes that you might see." *Can you capture, some what, Christ love for that church*

And Jesus is saying the same thing to us today. If we would only see ourselves as Jesus sees us and then turn in repentance and confession and love to him. We can know, without a shadow of a doubt, the joy of salvation. (4) The fourth principle that I want you to see is found in Vs 20. I really want you to see the love and compassion of Jesus.

~~73?20?3293????~~ Jesus says in Vs 20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him, and will dine with him, and he with me."

He stood on the outside of that church pleading with that church to repent. And friends, he stands on the outside of our hearts, pleading with us to let Him into our lives. Jesus is not going to knock the door down and force his way in. Oh, no, He just gently, lovingly, knocks and ask us to invite him to come in.

I am ~~sure~~ sure you know this story, but let me share it with you once again...Holman Hunt had just completed his famous picture showing Christ standing outside a ~~fast~~-closed door, knocking and seeking to gain entrance. Another artist looked at the picture and said, "Mr. Hunt, you have made a mistake. You painted the door without a latch."

And Holman Hunt answered, "No...I have not made a mistake. The latch is on the inside. The door must be opened by the person on the inside."

And it is true. We control the latch. If Christ comes into our lives, we must open the door for Him...

Oh, friends, the son of the living God stands knocking at the door of your life. He wants to come in and save you. I wonder, are you so full of indifference that you turn away from Him. That is the greatest tragedy in life....Jesus promises that if we let him in, he will dine with us and we with Him. This means a banquet. A great feast of good things. Christ doesn't want to come into your heart and take all the joy away. As Ephesians says, He wants to come in and bless you with all heavenly blessings....

Will you open the door of your life and let Jesus come in?////

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches....

Let's close in prayer

→ Christians are indifferent.