

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 57

THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA

"And by the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write..." (Rev. 3:14).

The seventh and final church is the church in Laodicea. It is the most deplorable of the seven, representing the very worst spiritual condition a church can come to. Therefore, it also presents the greatest challenges to the overcoming elect, for the spiritual conditions within the churches are the very things we are called upon to overcome! The promise to the overcomer in this church is the *greatest of all the promises!* Therefore Laodicea represents both the lowest and the highest realms of experience in the Lord's people. Both of these are in manifestation in the earth today! While the church world in general exudes the very spirit of the Laodiceans, the called and chosen elect of God is overcoming all these things and ascending to the throne of Christ to rule and reign in the Kingdom of God.

It is interesting to note that the name Laodicea is composed of *lao* and *dika*, meaning "the people's judgment" or "consensus of opinion as to what is right!" Other variations of rendering are: "power of

the laity,” “the voice of the people,” “the people’s rights,” or “justice of the peoples.” Its name designates it as the *democratic church*, in which everything is swayed and decided by popular opinion, clamor, and voting, either within the church, or by adapting to the opinions, standards, and pressures of society without. Hence, Laodicea is a carnal, compromising, pusillanimous, self-righteous, and self-sufficient church!

The typical church in Laodicea was filled with carnal believers, just as the church systems today in the LAODICEAN CONDITION are also filled with carnal believers. Some people have trouble putting these two terms together — *carnal* and *believer*. How can a believer in Christ be carnal? Well, you’ve probably already met a great number of them, for I tell you the truth when I say that the vast majority of churches in this day is overflowing with them! You can have two extremes — sinners on one side, Christians on the other, and Christians can often be worse than sinners. You haven’t been truly “ripped off” until you have been ripped off by a Christian. Someone who says, “Praise God, Hallelujah!” and then socks it to you and takes you for a ride, lying, cheating, and confiscating your money is worse than an infidel. Don’t trust every business with a fish on the front door! That doesn’t necessarily mean this is a great company. It may be run by carnal Christians, and carnal Christians are often more deceptive, devious, and unreliable than sinners who are good business people. I do not hesitate to say that I do not seek to do business with the Christians in the church systems. I try to stay away from them! I have learned by years of experience that it is usually easier to deal with men of the world who are good business men. Listen to me — the most miserable people on earth are carnal Christians! Carnal Christians may be the worst people on earth, but God’s *new creation people* who have been processed and transformed into the image of Christ are the finest people on the face of the earth!

We have seen that the Laodicean church is a democratic church, controlled by the will of the people. We Americans have been told that

“government of the people, by the people, and for the people” is a divine form of government, given by the mind of the Lord to our founding Fathers. Where do you find that in the Word of God? Nowhere! The issue is one of authority: is it from God, or from man? If God is the sovereign authority over all things, and Christ is head over all things to the church, which is His body, then His Spirit, mind, and will alone can govern all things. If the ultimate authority is man, then all things must serve man and bow down to man. When the will of the people rules man assumes the posture of sovereign — and that is humanism, pure and simple. It is the rule of the flesh! There is even a church organization called the “Congregationalist Church” which glories in the fact that it is ruled by the people! It is a branch of the church in Laodicea.

I believe in the rule of God, by God, and for God! He is the almighty Creator of all things, for out of Him, and for Him, and unto Him are all things. His omniscient mind arranged the spheres and ordained the ages, and His infinite wisdom and immutable purpose established the end from the beginning. Nothing else has any potential beyond the dismal realm of sin, death, and the grave. If it had not been that God ruled me I would have gone to the devil long ago. I know just a little of my own heart, though it is abundantly true that the Adamic heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and the wise man wisely asked, “Who can know it?” Yet I know just a little of my own heart and I have seen enough of the little I know to realize that I would have shipwrecked on some benighted shoals of sin, shame, delusion, or death were it not for the rule of God in my life by the Spirit. Thank God, He has taken His great power and has reigned! This is precisely why the kingdom of God has to be *within*.

It is true — you may have good government under democracy *if you have all good people*. You may have saintly government under democracy if you have *all saintly people*. If the people were all ruled by

God and for God, and the Voice was the voice of an awakened, renewed, and transformed spirit within, then God would rule. But it is not so. It was not so in Laodicea, for the people were carnal, and the vast majority of Christians today are no less carnal! With carnal people you get carnal government, and all democracies in the end are government of carnality, by carnality, and for carnality.

I tell you today that I do not believe in democracy — I believe in *Theocracy*. Theocracy is the rule of *God*. It is the DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF THE SPIRIT. It is not the rule by votes or by any contribution of the carnal mind. It is not even the rule of believers over other believers — the rule of apostles, bishops, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers. God does not rule His sons through other people! This is not an *independent spirit* — it is the *rule of the SPIRIT*! God must rule you, my beloved, *out of His throne in your spirit*, or you can never know the power of sonship to God. We praise God for all the precious ministries in the body of Christ, and esteem them highly for their ministry to the Lord's elect, yet all ministries in the body of Christ, including ourselves, are *servants*, not *lords*. I seek not to gather men around me or under me, but to point all men to the omnipotent power of the Christ within! Democracy cannot be the kingdom of God or even a simile of the kingdom of God, because those in the kingdom of God are born of God, led by God, and controlled by God. "For as many as are *led by the Spirit of God*,, they are the *sons of God*" (Rom. 8:14). I no longer fit in the church in Laodicea, I have nothing in common with it, I cannot function there, it is an abhorrence to me. Furthermore, every one of God's apprehended sons has been brought *out* of the church in Laodicea, for the conditions there have been part of the things we have been called to overcome! Oh, yes! We were there once upon a time, for had we not been there, we could not have overcome it.

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ"

(Rev. 12:10). Read those words carefully and you will see that the kingdom of God is the *authority of His Christ*. The God who sits upon the throne is Christ! Christ is in our spirit! The Theocracy has become a *Christocracy*. Christ Himself is reigning! I may have a Christocracy today right here within my soul. I may acknowledge the Lordship of the Christ within that He may reign in my life, in my heart, in my will, in my mind, in my nature, and then as He reigns *through me*, a member of the Christ-body, I become a part of that Christocracy. This is sonship! This is such a beautiful form of government: God reigning in and through His chosen. His love, power, wisdom, righteousness, peace, and judgments all flow through the priesthood that He has called and ordained. As we experience this within ourselves in a greater way in this hour we are forming the very government of God for the new age now dawning, and for the ages to come! What makes this order so different from a democracy is that the heads are not voted in, therefore they cannot be manipulated by the voters. The government of God is raised up within every son by the POWER OF GOD WITHIN!

The business of the sons of God is to establish the Theocracy — the rule of God in the midst of men. Only with the mind of the Spirit can we discern the rule of God. Paul speaks of it in Philippians 3:20 wherein he says, “For our *conversation* is in heaven.” The Greek word here translated “conversation” is *politeuma* — POLITICS! Plainly he says, “Our **politics** are in heaven.” Our politics are not out of the Democratic party, or the Republican party, or out of church organization or the church board, or any other fleshly system. Our politics are right out of the realm of the Spirit, out of the mind of Christ, out of the power of God! Our politics are the RULE OF GOD BY THE SPIRIT. In all our life and relationships the sons of God have no other agenda, no other authority, no other source of blessing to humanity.

Since the church is a part of the kingdom of God it also was intended to function in the Theocratic Order. We see this so powerfully in the beginning, before man’s hand was put to it, in the book of

Acts. Notice how things were done by the Holy Ghost, by Theocratic principles. “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the *Holy Ghost said*, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them...they...being sent forth *by the Holy Ghost*, departed” (Acts 13:2-4). “And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him *said the Lord* in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand upon him, that he might receive his sight. Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, *the Lord, even Jesus*, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, *hath sent me*, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God” (Acts 9:10-20).

All ministry in the house of God is by divine appointment, on whatever level it may be. Only the Holy Ghost can do these things! The ministers of the Church in Laodicea who are called and appointed by the votes of the people are not the ministers of Christ! There is no such thing in the kingdom of God as appointment to ministry by human authority or hierarchy. Neither is there such a thing as a self-constituted ministry of a man's choosing. None but God can make or appoint a ministry of any sort or description. Even in Old Testament times Yahweh called Moses and appointed Aaron and his sons to the priesthood; and if a stranger presumed to meddle with the functions of those so appointed, he was put to death. Such was the solemn result — the awful consequence of moving outside of God's theocratic order. Spiritually it means that all who move in ministry apart from the

appointment of the Spirit are *spiritually dead*, for God does not anoint such ministry with His life! “Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God...*and no man taketh this honor unto himself*, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Heb. 5:1-4). “But now hath *God set* the members every one of them in the body *as it hath pleased Him*.” “There are diversities of gifts, but the *same Spirit*. And there are diversities of administrations, but the *same Lord*. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the *same God which worketh all in all*” (I Cor. 12:4-6).

The “church voting” is all nonsense. I should just as soon ask a flock of sheep to vote where the shepherd should lead them! I should just as soon expect an army to vote as to what general should lead them, or whether they should go into battle or not. I should have no fear of an army that was controlled by the vote of the soldiers! The devil does not give a snap for the man-made and man-run church systems of this world where the ministers have to preach to please the people, or else have the people butt them out of the pasture. Nice kind of thing, that, is it not? Treating ministers as if they were cooks! If they do not happen to season the doctrinal soup to the people’s satisfaction, they say, “Go!” And they have to go. Nonsense!

In that harlot system which *calls itself the church*, they have been applying democratic principles to what is *supposed* to be a theocratic institution! Every honest man must admit that the so-called church cannot be the church of God if it is the church of the people. That would be the people’s church, not God’s. And that is exactly what it is! It cannot be the church of God, because those in the church of God are *born of God, called of God, led by God, positioned by God, nurtured by God, empowered by God, and controlled by God*. That is why God has called His elect out of the church systems of man! He has called us out that we may truly come to know Him, that we may hear His voice, be taught of Him, learn His ways, be processed by Him and brought to

maturity by the power of Christ in us. Only those who truly *know the Lord for themselves* and have learned to be *led by His Spirit alone* are equipped to reign with Christ in His kingdom!

I have been there — I have lived and walked and ministered in the church in Laodicea. Not the one in Asia, but the one in America! I know, and you know, that self-pleasing, pride, fleshly zeal, political manipulations, financial interests, clout of those who have money and control the purse-strings of the church, and a great number of other carnal considerations are always involved where the people call the preachers and the carnal-minded control the ministry. The ministers of Babylon are *hirelings*, one and all, and the people and hierarchies the usurpers of the Holy Ghost. I have found that the rule of man in church affairs is a curse unutterable; that the minister loses his ability to walk in the Spirit, loses his sense of being the messenger of God, loses his capacity to function in the government of God, and becomes the mere mouthpiece of some wretched committee or faction representing some miserable party that has attained supremacy in the church. Democracy and man-made hierarchies will always produce, sooner or later, “man’s man” and “man’s plan” rather than “God’s man” and “God’s plan.”

All who have received the call to sonship and the kingdom have been taught of God by the Spirit and have now exchanged the rule of themselves, by themselves, and for themselves, with the rule of themselves by God and for God. This is the route of sonship pure and simple! All who shall rule and reign with Christ as kings and priests sooner or later become thoroughly *undeceived* by the carnal church system and flee from it as a plague, for it has the *horns of a lamb*, appearing harmless and good, but it has the *voice of a dragon* (Rev. 13:1). It is the mind of Christ that will govern the world in the kingdom of God! Every son is being imbued with the mind of Christ and from those holy omniscient minds the life and light and love and authority and glory of the Lord will flow forth with a power that will encompass the

earth with transforming grace and fill it to overflowing with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. Thus it is that the Lord says to the overcomer out of the church in Laodicea, “To him that overcometh (the Laodicean condition) will I grant to *sit with me in my throne*, even as I also overcame (the religion of the scribes and Pharisees), and am set down with my Father in His throne.” With great earnestness I pray that God will open the understanding of all who read these lines, for it is of perfect truth that I tell you that *no man* can ever hope to reign *in the kingdom of Christ* until his will has become one with the will of the Father. Were it possible for *one man* to reign in the kingdom while still possessing his own will in opposition to the will of the Father, it would mean the destruction of the kingdom with confusion, strife, and rebellion.

The mark of the sons of God is that they are *led by the Spirit* (Rom. 8:14). Those who overcome the LAODICEAN CONDITION by the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit shall reign with Christ in His kingdom! One night a group of men were sitting around the fireside of a Swiss hotel, discussing the difficulties of climbing a nearby Alpine mountain. After listening for a while, one man said, “I am not afraid of that mountain. Tomorrow morning I am going to climb it alone.” The other men said, “No, it’s too dangerous. You must employ a guide.” But the man said, “No, I am going to climb it without a guide.” The next morning, when the other men arose, they learned that this man had gone out alone. All day they watched for him and he didn’t return. The night came on and still he didn’t return. The next morning a party started out to look for him. Halfway up the mountainside they came to a post to which every successful climber attached his card. They found this man’s card there with the notation on it, “Without a guide.” He had come that far in safety, but where was he now? The men climbed a little farther and came to a deep crevice. There they found the body of the stranger. He had decided to climb without a guide and had lost his life. You and I, beloved, are

climbing the heights of mount Zion! We are scaling the heights in God! This can only be accomplished — we can only reach the top where is situated the *throne zone* — as we are lead by the one and only great and glorious guide, the *Spirit of Truth*. He knows the way! He led the firstborn Son of God to the pinnacle of power and glory, to the heavenly throne of the universe! And now He is leading all the holy sons of God to sit with Christ in His throne. It is indeed wonderful!

LUKEWARM

“I know thy works, that thou art *neither cold nor hot*: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art *lukewarm*, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:15-16).

What does it mean to be lukewarm? The word described the water supply of Laodicea. Because the city lacked an adequate supply of good water, it had to be piped through a system of aqueducts from the cool springs of Colosse and the hot springs of Hierapolis. By the time the water reached Laodicea it was lukewarm, tepid to the taste, and unfit to drink.

What does that mean? We know that John received this revelation in figurative or symbolic language, so this imagery represents something spiritual! To understand this, we go back to the Old Testament, to the time of Moses and Israel in the wilderness. Aaron was anointed high priest and upon the breastplate of his priestly vestments was the Urim and the Thummim. When the high priest sought an answer from the Lord, he would consult the Urim and the Thummim. The scripture record is not explicit about what they were, what they looked like, or how they were used. It is believed that they were special stones, and that when Aaron went into the presence of the

Lord to ascertain the will of God in a matter one of the stones would light up, typifying that the will of God is revealed to His holy kingdom of priests by the Holy Spirit through *inner illumination*.

Urim and Thummim mean “lights and perfections.” These signified the light and perfection of understanding and judgment. When Aaron appeared before the Lord with a question there were only two possible answers, namely, “Yes” or “No.” There wasn’t anything between; there was no maybe. In the counsels of God there is only truth and error, life or death! Humanity wants gray areas, a compromise, something that is not clearly defined. This enables them to stand on the fence, accommodate, mix and mingle, prostitute, vacillating in their judgment according to what is convenient in a particular situation. Today this is called “situation ethics.” There is no right or wrong, no good or bad, no truth or error — it just depends on the situation! However there are no half-truths! Anything that has a lie concealed in a garment of truth is still a lie! Some people are afraid to declare what God has given them, afraid to commit to the word of the kingdom, afraid to proclaim the truth of the reconciliation of all men to God, afraid to leave the church system to follow Christ in His sonship, because it may not agree with popular belief or friends or family members. If we have heard the testimony of Christ it is imperative that we embrace it fully and unreservedly! More will be given to him who has; and he who has not, that which he thinks he has will be taken away. We must be either *cold* or *hot*!

The Lord offered no praise for the church in Laodicea. His evaluation resulted in total rebuke. Christ’s language indicates that being lukewarm is worse than being totally cold! On the surface, this contrast seems strange. Certainly being lukewarm in relationship to Christ is worse than being totally hot, but wouldn’t a mixture of at least some hot and cold be better than being totally cold? That is how the

natural mind judges! But spiritual insight into what our Lord meant by hot, cold, and lukewarm indicates that this is not the case.

Three spiritual conditions are brought to view in this message — the cold, the lukewarm, and the hot. It is important to discern by the spirit what condition they each denote, in order not to reach a wrong conclusion. Three spiritual conditions which pertain to the people of God, not to the world, are indicated. This is important! What the term “hot” means is not difficult to conceive. The mind at once calls up a state of intense fervor, when all the affections, raised to the highest pitch, are drawn out for God and His purposes, and manifest themselves in corresponding works. The word “lukewarm” has traditionally meant a Christian that held one foot in the world and one foot in Christ. To be lukewarm, however, is to lack this fervor, to be in a state in which love, commitment, and obedience are lacking, in which there is no self-denial that costs anything, no valiant pursual of Christ, His will, and His kingdom. Worst of all, it implies entire *satisfaction* with that condition!

But to be “cold” — what is that? Does it denote a state of corruption, wickedness, sin, such as characterizes the world of unbelievers? We cannot so regard it! It would be absurd and repulsive to represent the Lord as wishing under any circumstances that persons should be in such a condition, preferable to at least *some* knowledge and experience of Christ. Yet He says, “I *would* thou wert *cold* or hot.” No state can be more offensive to the Spirit of holiness than that of the sinner in open rebellion, unbelief, and a heart filled with every evil. David said of the Lord, “For thou art not a God that hath *pleasure* in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.” What David was declaring is that sinners will never be “tasty” to the Lord! Nor will they ever be in His mouth to be cold, lukewarm, or hot, for evil will not dwell with Him in any way. What about believers who have had experiences with the Lord but left Him for the pleasures of sin? Can this be the cold that could be a tasty drink to the Lord? The writer to the Hebrews

stated that “the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have *no pleasure* in him.” It is therefore incorrect to represent the Lord as preferring that condition to any position which His people can occupy while they are still counted as His. Furthermore, the threat of rejection is *because* they are *neither* cold nor hot! It is as much as to say that if they were *either* cold or hot, they would be accepted of Him in a place of blessing and honor. But if by *cold* is meant a state of open worldly unbelief or wickedness, they certainly would not be welcomed into the highest purposes of the kingdom! Hence such cannot be its meaning.

It is my deep conviction that by this language our Lord has no reference whatever to those outside His body, but that He refers to three *spiritual planes or conditions*, two of which are more acceptable to Him than the third. Heat *and* cold are preferable to lukewarmness! But what kind of spiritual state is denoted by the term “cold”? The Lord points out that cold and hot drinks have a tastiness to them. Cold and hot drinks are something we prefer much more than something lukewarm! Cold and hot, to be true to the Spirit’s analogy, must both be something “tasty” to the Lord and something to be desired. Obviously a saint cannot be both at the same time! But, as a drink of tea may be cold in summer time and hot in winter, so can a child of God be cold or hot at different points in their walk in Christ! A person can be hungry or full, but not at the same time; yet, he can be both, and both are commended by the Lord! A tree may be covered with leaves and loaded with fruit in the summer season, and then be barren, stark, and cold in the winter; but in either season the tree has life in it and is faithfully fulfilling its necessary role in the cycles of its purpose. The owner of the orchard is just as pleased with the barren tree in winter as he is with the fruitful tree in summer!

Let us meditate further on the tree at winter time. The cold tree does not have much value or outward fruitfulness in this season. It

cannot serve even as a break against the cold north winds! It offers no shade from the sun, nor any fruit to the hungry. It is the very picture of bleakness, leanness, and desolation as it faces the tribulations of winter. Its life has sunk very deep within as it is buffeted by the cold winds, rain, ice, and snow. And yet, this state is necessary to the survival of the tree! It is like sleep for a human, a time of rest, recuperation, strengthening, and preparation for the season of fruit bearing when it shall become bread to the hungry, shade to the distressed, moisture to the atmosphere, and the joy of the whole earth!

Thus, the cold relates to those seasons of testing, trial, tribulation, stripping, purging, pruning, and chastening under the hand of our Father. Just as the tree stands enduring the winter, so we stand enduring our winter times. In these cold or winter experiences we feel sometimes as though God has forsaken us, the heavens become brass, and joy and blessing flee the soul. This is what the mystics have referred to as **“the dark night of the soul.”** It is a time of dryness, leanness, testing, and darkness in which we learn what it means to walk by faith and not by sight. Eventually we discover that there is great *purpose* in these distressing seasons, and great and wonderful lessons are learned there that can be learned in no other way! The very hand of God leads us through this valley of the shadow of death until there is raised up in us the understanding, wisdom, faith, power, and nature of the Lord. Then we are able to appreciate all the more the greatness of our God and His faithfulness, power, and purpose in all things! THIS, MY BELOVED, IS THE **COLD** IN WHICH OUR FATHER REJOICES! Either cold or hot, stripped and tested or blessed and fruitful, He delights in our way. It is only the *tepid lukewarm* that He loathes!

God led Israel through a great and terrible wilderness on their journey to the land flowing with milk and honey. He brought them into the wilderness to test them and prove them in preparation for their entrance into the fruitful land. The drier and more barren the

wilderness, the hotter the testings and harder the path over which one goes, the deeper the work of God to bring forth His glory! Thus did the Spirit “drive” the firstborn Son forth into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. For forty days He ate not and drank not, amidst the desolation, the howling winds and blowing dust; the vipers and scorpions were His only companions as He endured the inner struggles and wrestlings with the adversary sent to try Him, to prove the life of sonship within Him. When the temptations were finished, Jesus returned *in the power of the Spirit* into Galilee; and a fame went out concerning Him throughout all the region around.

Every son will be so tried! God brings us to a desert place where everybody and everything fails us; where we must stand upon the air, as it were, with nothing under our feet. We can look nowhere but up to God, and He leaves us hanging there upon the thread of faith, clinging and looking to Him, believing Him. He moves upon the clouds of the carnal mind, He moves upon all that hides the truth from our vision, He moves upon the fog of man’s theories and self-righteousness, He comes with conviction and purging power, showing us our shortage and the vanity of all things of the flesh; He blasts all our self-esteem and self-confidence, and sweeps away every carnal ambition, all our own plans and desires, our religious activities and multiplied works, our religious pride and fleshly motives, and every secret sin. As all of this falls off, we are left apparently stripped and bare, like the cold, bleak tree of winter; but, in reality, we are in a better condition to bring forth blossoms and fruit to His glory than ever before! He brings us low in the dust of humiliation and brokenness, that He may then clear the spiritual atmosphere about us, shining the splendor of the light of God into our lives, wooing us onward and revealing our destiny in Christ, raising up His life within us and bringing us out of the wilderness in the power of the Spirit as manifest sons of God that we may bear much fruit of His kingdom.

Just as the Lord Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame, for the joy that was set before Him, we endure the individual cross set before each of us. The tree endures the winter and flourishes in summer. We endure the cold times, for they are appointed of the Lord, that we may flourish in the hot seasons that God sets to give fruit. The tree, Jesus, and all the trees — His many brethren, the manifest sons of God — who are, or have been, in the cold times stand in faith trusting and waiting. Each of us must trust that summer will come, and wait for it! We must trust that the Lord will take us through the winter and also wait for it. How precious and dear to the heart of God is the *cold* of our lives as well as the *hot*! He wishes us to be either cold or hot. Those are the two conditions that are acceptable to Him!

A. W. Tozer penned an article titled THE MINISTRY OF THE NIGHT. How skillfully he describes the condition of the COLD of our experience in Christ! He says, “If God has singled **you** out to be a ‘special object’ of His grace, you may expect Him to honor you with stricter discipline and greater suffering than less favored ones are called upon to endure...and right here, let me anticipate the objection someone is sure to raise, viz, that God has no ‘specials’ among His children. The holy scriptures and church history agree to show that He has! Star differs from star in glory among the saints on earth as well as the glorified in heaven. If God sets out to make **you** an unusual saint, He is not likely to be so gentle as He is usually pictured to be by the popular teachers. A sculptor does not use a manicure set to reduce the rude, unshapely marble to a thing of beauty. The saw, the hammer, and the chisel are crude tools, but without them the rough stone must remain forever formless and un-beautified.

“To do His supreme work of grace within you He will take from your heart everything you love most. Everything you trust in will go from you. Piles of ashes will lie where your most precious treasures used to be. This is not to teach the sanctifying power of poverty. If to be

poor made men holy, every tramp on a park bench would be a saint! But God **knows the secret** of removing 'things' from our hearts while they still remain to us. What He does is to restrain us from enjoying them. He may let us have them, but makes us psychologically unable to let our hearts go out to them. Thus they are useful without being harmful. All this God will accomplish at the expense of the common pleasures that have, up to that time, supported your life and made it zestful. Now, under the careful treatment of the Holy Spirit, your life may become dry, tasteless, and to some degree a burden to you.

"While in this state, you will exist by a kind of blind will to live; you will find none of the inward sweetness you enjoyed before. The smile of God will for the time be withdrawn, or at least hidden from your eyes. Then you will learn what faith is; you will find out the hard way, but the only way open to you, that true faith lies in the will, that the joy unspeakable of which the apostle spoke is not itself faith, but a slow-ripening fruit of faith; and you will learn that present spiritual joys may come and go as they will without altering your spiritual status or in any way affecting your position as a true son of the heavenly Father. And you will learn also, probably to your astonishment, that it is possible to live in all good conscience before God and men and still feel nothing of the '*peace and joy*' you hear talked about so much by immature Christians.

"How long you may continue in this **night of the soul** will depend upon a number of factors, some of which you may be later able to identify, while others will remain with God, completely hidden from you. The words '*the day is Thine, the night also is Thine*' will now be interpreted for you by the best of all teachers, the Holy Spirit; and you will know by personal experience what a blessed thing is **the ministry of the night!** But there is a limit to a man's ability to live without joy. Even Christ could endure the cross only because of the *joy* set before

Him! The strongest steel breaks if kept too long under unrelieved tension. God knows exactly how much pressure a life can stand! He knows how long we can endure the night, so He gives the soul relief, first by welcome glimpses of the morning star and then by the fuller light that harbingers the morning.

“**Slowly** you will discover God’s love in your suffering! Your heart will begin to approve the whole thing! You will learn for yourself what all the schools in the world cannot teach you — the healing action of faith without supporting pleasure. You will feel and understand the ministry of the night; its power to purify, to detach, to humble, to destroy the fear of death and, what is more important to you at the moment, the fear of life! And you will learn that sometimes **rain** can do what even joy cannot, such as exposing the vanity of earth’s trifles and filling your heart with the peace of heaven” — end quote.

There is yet another application of the three spiritual conditions of cold, hot, and lukewarm. It could be read this way: “Because thou art neither cold (Outer Court, feast of Passover) nor hot (Most Holy Place, feast of Tabernacles) you are stuck in the middle (Holy Place, feast of Pentecost), you’ve got enough of both realms to make you comfortable — *lukewarm!*” Listen — there’s nothing wrong with being in the Holy Place and the feast of Pentecost, but when you’ve been there for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years and never move on, the Lord says, “I’m about ready to spit you out!” Pentecost is the feast of **transition**. The candlestick realm (Holy Place) is the compartment of **transition**. Each is a temporary stopping point on the way *from* one realm *to* another realm. Neither is designed to be a permanent arrangement or an ultimate experience!

There is a great *lukewarmness* in that Pentecostal realm today. Oh, how rich people *think* they are as, like little children, they “play” with the “gifts” of the Spirit and imagine that they have the *full*

gospel and that they are full grown and accomplishing mighty things in the kingdom of God! At present among the crowd in the *candlestick realm* there is much information coming forth in the way of books, tapes, and seminars concerning the gifts of the Spirit, healing, miracles, prophecy, casting out devils, deliverance, dancing in the Spirit, and many other things. By reading these books, listening to the tapes, or attending a training school one can pick up the “HOW TO’S” and quickly learn the techniques employed by those who are experienced in such sensational ministries. From such sources one can supposedly learn in a relatively short period of time *howto* move in a dynamic *prophetic ministry* with signs, wonders, and miracles!

Though some may disbelieve it, I would be remiss if I failed to exhort you that if, by reading a series of lessons, or sitting through a seminar, a man can “learn” to prophesy, “learn” to perform miracles, “learn” to dance in the Spirit, or be “taught” how to perform any other spiritual feat, then he is indeed THE DECEIVED who will be among the astonished of whom Jesus spoke when He said, “*Many* will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I *never knew you (intimately, as a husband knows his wife)*: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (lawlessness, that which was not at my word)” (Mat. 7:22-23). Who can dispute that the land is filled today with *lying signs and wonders* that are done in the name of Christ!

The mighty acts and manifestations of the Spirit of God are not *learned* in seven easy lessons — they are supernaturally bestowed by the lovely and wonderful Christ as a result of intimacy of fellowship, personal association, and vital union with HIM. How to do the works of God is not contained in a formula or in any set of methods or techniques understood by the carnal mind. The understanding of such high and holy things comes by revelation born of an inner work, in earnest

seeking and holy brokenness and a deep relationship with the Lord Himself. The wonderful works of God are the result, not of repeating certain phrases, or stepping out in faith on mental impressions or imaginations, or the employment of certain techniques, but of the SOVEREIGN POWER OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

After years of a ministry of transcending greatness our beloved brother Paul wrote of the true source of all spiritual ministry, saying, “For I neither *received it of man*, neither was I *taught it*, but by **therevelation of Jesus Christ**. But when it pleased God...to reveal His Son in me...immediately I *conferred not* with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia (a desert place), and returned again to Damascus. Then, *after three years* I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter...” (Gal. 1:12-24). Three years in Arabia *waiting on God*! Three years alone in the desert receiving the *revelation of Jesus Christ*! Ah, that was Paul’s **cold** experience! He came out from Arabia in the power of the Spirit, just as Jesus came out of the wilderness in the power of the Spirit. That was Paul’s **hot** experience! Let me tell you something. Paul read no books on “Soul winning made easy” or “How to prophesy” or “How to heal the sick and cast out devils.” Oh, no! If, like Paul, we will take the time to bow low in humility and holy waiting upon the presence of God, and listen intently for *His voice*, we will become strangely acquainted with the secret of His will, not only for the ages to come, but for the present age and the high purposes of God for those called to sonship in this new Day of the Lord! When we live in the Spirit we will walk in the Spirit. When we walk in the Spirit we will be led by the Spirit. And when we are led by the Spirit we are THE SONS OF GOD.

I WILL SPEW YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH

“So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will *spew you out of my mouth*” (Rev. 3:16).

When the Lord warns those in the lukewarm state that He is going to spew them out of His mouth it doesn't mean they are lost and He is going to send them to hell. It is not a word to unbelievers or unconverted, but to the people of God! God says that this is His attitude toward a carnal church! Just like lukewarm water, tea, or coffee, a carnal Christian is not good for anything. God cannot stand the taste. Lukewarm is a sickening combination of hot and cold water. He just wants to get it out of His mouth! Oft times I feel the same way myself. The Greek brings out the idea of *ad nauseam* more realistically, for it says, "I will vomit you out of my mouth." This sense of loathsomeness on the part of the Lord of the church is undoubtedly the saddest and most lamentable appraisal of God's professed people in all of the scriptures.

David Wilkerson wrote the following words a number of years ago, which have stood the test of time, and with which I heartily concur. "Jesus said of the Laodicean church, 'It will say...I am rich, increasing with goods (wealthy), and am in need of nothing...' (Rev. 3:17). How sad that this particular church, arrogant and boastful, is being heralded by so many undiscerning Christians as the glorious last days church of power and dominion which will subdue the world and bring King Jesus back. It is the Laodicean lie! One dear soul wrote the following: 'Don't you realize, sir, that our next president will be a tongues-speaking, Spirit-filled man? Don't you know that all these great building projects by evangelists are ordained of God? The Lord is training leaders, raising up huge projects so they can move into government positions — having learned all about high finances and building. The church is going to take over the government — Spirit-filled leaders are going to make the laws, doing away with abortion, pornography, and crime. God has raised up a powerful church to take dominion now.'

“God is not at all impressed with this church’s bloated estimate of itself! The Laodicean lukewarm church is not destined to dominion, power, and authority of any kind. It is destined to judgment! It is the worst kind of spiritual blindness to line up with those who boast that the modern American church, Charismatic or otherwise, faces its finest hour. What an incredible lack of spiritual discernment! Jesus rips off the façade and exposes the truth about the Laodicean church. It is not what it thinks it is — it is not what it says it is. It is not rich — it is poor! It is not on the increase — it is wretched and is about to be cut off! It is not strong and in need of nothing — but rather, it is naked, shameful! It is not a church with new revelation and deep spiritual insights — Jesus said IT IS BLIND! It is not going to be the vehicle of Christ’s dominion on earth, but rather the object of His wrath and abhorrence.

“You can be sure God has a people for Himself in these days, but they are a despised, holy, and separated remnant. This holy remnant people will walk in the light and enjoy great discernment. They see the modern Laodicean church through the eyes of Jesus and they will not be deceived by the pomp, bigness, and outward grandeur of popular religion. The true church is invisible; it is repentant; it yearns for Christ, the beloved One” — end quote.

There is still a deeper meaning to the words, “I will spew you out of my mouth.” What is the Lord’s “mouth”? It is the vehicle *speaking the word of God!* “If any *man* speak, let him speak as the *oracles of God*” (I Pet. 4:11). “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy *men of God spake* as they were *moved* by the Holy Ghost” (II Pet. 1:21). “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times *manifested His word through preaching*” (Tit. 1:2-3). The man who speaks the very words of God *is the Lord’s mouth* upon earth! God also speaks *mind to mind* or *spirit to spirit* and that is how we hear the voice of God within

ourselves. But when the Lord wishes to speak to men through men He chooses a vessel as His mouth, His medium of conveying His word.

So — what happens to these saints in the LAODICEAN CONDITION? The Lord says, “You will no longer be my mouthpiece, you will no longer speak my word! I am going to speak, all right. Yes, I am speaking to those who have ears to hear! But the living word I speak to men will not proceed from out of you!” Such was, and is, the condition of Laodicea as discerned by Christ; these are speaking words that the Lord *has spoken*, but they are not speaking the living words He is **now speaking!** That is the condition of all who refuse to move forward in God! They continue to live in yesterday’s revelation, in yesterday’s move of the Spirit, little realizing that God has moved on and is doing a new thing in the earth. Sometimes they are not even speaking the old, stale words of God, but just their own word out of the imaginations of their hearts; and it is nauseous to Him; He abhors it, and therefore declares irrevocably that He will spew them out of His mouth!

The meaning is, that He will totally reject these people as His *prophetic voice*, His responsible light-bearer in the world. I do not hesitate to say that the old order church systems today are no longer the mouthpiece of God! They are their own mouthpiece, speaking their own carnal message. God has already spewed them out of His mouth! That doesn’t mean they are no longer the Lord’s people, or that they cannot fulfill some function in His purposes on earth. It means, my beloved, that they are no longer SPEAKING FOR GOD! The true message of the hour is not coming out of their mouths! Whatever you hear from them is something other than the **living word of God for this new kingdom Day!**

The Lord goes on to say, “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing...” *Because thou sayest...*” See, they are speaking! They are talking as the mouthpiece of

God. This confirms what we just pointed out. But though they say it, that does not make it the words of God! *They say* one thing, but *the Spirit* says another!

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what *the Spirit sayeth* unto the churches!” God is speaking to His elect in this hour, my beloved, and those who hear His voice are living in His sight. Great and mighty things lie before us. The sons of God are now arising to possess the kingdom. It will be MORE than revival this time — IT WILL BE THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITH POWER! There is a fresh move of the Spirit, a new feast of His fullness, a new ministry from the Holiest of all, a new work of God in the earth that transcends by far anything that has ever been seen or known. We are nearing the hour of the full manifestation of the sons of God. The long awaited liberation of planet earth is near at hand. The *greater works* that Jesus told us of are ready to begin. We have not passed this way before. But God is speaking, and all that He speaks shall come to pass. Isn't it wonderful!