

## The Church that made Jesus sick

Revelation 3:14-22 <sup>14</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation. <sup>15</sup> “ ‘I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! <sup>16</sup> So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. <sup>18</sup> I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. <sup>19</sup> Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. <sup>21</sup> The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. <sup>22</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ ”

### ❖ Introduction

- The Church and People you don’t want to be like
- **Recap**
  - Chapter 1
  - Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia
- **City Information (important background info)**
  - **Can you get excited about Historical Information?**
    - Lets try today...
    - If you can place yourself in their situation, you can better understand these spiritual truths..
    - Some of these things may be familiar to you
  - **Jesus used parables throughout the N.T. to explain spiritual things to earthly people...**
    - Throughout these letters he uses terminology, and analogies
    - Of things they are familiar with
    - To explain spiritual realities to them...
  - **Aqua Ducts**
    - Piped in nasty tasting tepid water...
    - Cause their rivers and streams would dry up
    - Heiropolis had really hot water...
      - ◆ Used for relaxing and healing...
    - Collosae had really Cold water for drinking and refreshment...
      - ◆ Had a constant supply of it coming straight up from some sort of spring
    - Their water system made them easy to conquer, because their enemy could just find their source and cut it off... it was from outside the city....
  - **Very rich city**
    - Earthquake came, and they rebuilt with no help from Rome
  - **Wool Industry**
    - Soft black wool...
  - **Medicinal School...**
    - Had an ointment for the eyes

### ❖ Major obstacle

- **Is he talking to Christians, or false believers (unsaved)**
  - This could be the key to understanding the whole letter...
  - Without knowing that, it will be impossible to interpret the letter

- **Believers?**
  - On one hand He is writing to a church that bears his name...
  - At one point He says, those whom I love I rebuke and discipline...
    - So we would assume He means his children
    - Because we know this is how the Father treats His children...
- **Non – saved?**
  - **But He does say He wants to spew them out of His mouth**
    - That does not really provoke a whole lot of confidence that these people are His children
    - He doesn't talk about His children like that...
  - **And the love He has for these people... when He says...**
    - Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline
    - Is not an “agape” all consuming love...
    - Rather... phileo – a friendly love, and affection for....
    - This could be the same love He has for all His creation... all those He longs to see saved
- **Cant really tell! He doesn't say**
  - Maybe that is the point
  - Good scholars and expositors are divided on this...
  - I say, maybe there is a reason...
- **Could it be both?**
  - Could it be like the parable of the wheat and the tares?
- **A Shame**
  - That it is difficult to tell... that is a sad testimony for this Church
- **These things Jesus' says... applies to the believer and the unbeliever**
- **Major Point...**
  - It is clear that the people in this church were in danger of going to Hell....
  - It is clear that these professors of the name “Jesus” were on shakey ground
  - **The Parable of the sower**
    - Hard ground – they didn't take the gospel
    - Rocky and Thorny ground did take the gospel...
      - ◆ Rather, persecution made them let it go... and cares and temptations made them drop it
    - Good ground took the gospel, and it bore fruit from them...
- **Major Doctrine of the Bible**
  - True Believers, will persevere until the end...
  - No matter what comes their way, they will hold on to Jesus
  - They will be zealous for Good Works...
    - They will be faithful to Jesus...
    - Not perfectly... but purposely...
    - Everytime they get knocked down...
    - They will get back up....Repent, and follow Him
- **There is always that warning though**
  - If a person fall away... they will be damned
  - John explains, that they fall away, because they never truly knew Him...
  - They may have a head knowledge...
  - Or some experience they thought was salvation
  - Or held it for sentimental reasons...
- **Be on the right side today... !**

<sup>14</sup>“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation.

## ❖ 1) Needed to Know who Jesus Is

### ➤ Amen

- Truly, Surely, Firm, Faithful
  - Church full of people that were not firm in what they believed, or how they lived...

### ➤ Faithful and True Witness – in all He said and did

- This is a church full of people that are not good witnesses...
- Jesus is saying... I am about to tell you the truth about yourself...
- You can be sure I am not lying

### ➤ Beginning of God’s Creation

- **Jehovah witness (among a few others through history) would say.. this means he is created...**
  - But... We are not supposed to get doctrine from isolated verses...
  - Rather... we are to take the whole of the Bible into view
  - They would explain that He is just the first being God made, therefore the highest of creatures...
- **The Laodiceans had fallen into this false doctrine... as they were influenced no doubt**
  - But the teachings from Collosae... that Jesus was a creation
  - The English translation may mislead... but the greek
    - ◆ Archē (**Beginning**) does not mean that Christ was the first person God created, but rather that Christ Himself is the **source** or origin of creation

### ➤ Brief Explanation

#### ▪ 1) He is the beginning.... (He is where the beginning got its beginning)

- Colossians 1:18 <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church. **He is the beginning**, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
- John 1:1-3 <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

#### ▪ 2) He is the Creator...

- Colossians 1:16 <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
- Revelation 4:11 <sup>11</sup> “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”
  - ◆ John sees the Father here... But do you see the parallel and Oneness b/w Father and Son

#### ▪ 3) He is Worshipped as God in Rev...

- Revelation 7:10-11 <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” <sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,

#### ▪ 4) Angels always tell people not to worship them... because only God is to be worshipped...

- Revelation 22:8-9 <sup>8</sup> I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”
- God is the only one who deserves worship.... and if Jesus were just a creation of God, He would not allow himself to be worshipped....

- **Laodicea's Problem: They did not know Him... They did not understand who He was...**
  - This creates all sorts of problems for the professing Christian...
  - Something about Christianity appeals to the person...
  - But the Jesus of their profession, is different from the Jesus in the Bible...
  - This led to an overall Lukewarm faith in this church
- **APPLICATION: Do you know who He is? His characteristics**
  - We are called to love God with all we have right?
  - But how do we love if we do not have a knowledge of who He is...
    - If we have not intently studied His character and attributes...
    - **He is presenting Himself in so many ways to this church**
      - ◆ The Amen – true and firm
      - ◆ Faithful Witness – trustworthy and faithful
      - ◆ The Beginning – The one from whom all life has sprang

<sup>15</sup> “I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! <sup>16</sup> So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.

❖ 2) Needed to know Jesus knows them

- **I will spit you out of my mouth...**
  - They made Him sick...
  - These people are in danger of being rejected by Jesus...
  - Don't want to be known as that church
- **Sounds like the people Jesus spoke of in Matt 7...**
  - **Matthew 7:23** <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.
- **2 ways to look at what Jesus is saying (both have Biblical merit)**
  - **1) Cold water and Hot water both were good for use...**
    - The cold waters they would associate with Collosae... and Refreshment
    - Hot Water they would associate with Heiropolis and its therapeutic value
    - The lukewarm water, they would associate with their own nasty drinking water...
    - EXAMPLE: McCool... When I think of bad water... I think of McCool, Ms...
    - Spiritually they were not useful...
  - **2) Cold nor Hot**
    - Spiritually speaking... again...
    - Cold people did not claim to be Christians... they just had nothing to do with it...
    - Hot people, were on fire for God, ready to follow Him...
    - The Luke warm person was neither... Was just hanging out in the middle...
    - Spiritually they were not useful...
  - **The point being...**
    - Jesus can use the Hot person
    - The cold person can be converted... Because they will be able to see their sinful state.
- **The Lukewarm person is blind to His position...**
  - Thinking himself to be allright...
  - Having heard the gospel... and about Jesus, thinking to be saved...
  - But likely not...
  - He goes on to say... Next point...

<sup>17</sup> For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing,

### ❖ 3) Thought they knew themselves

#### ➤ Nothing Worse than Spiritual deception

- Rich and prosperous and in need of nothing...
- The spiritually deceived person doesn't know it,
- They think everything is ok...

#### ➤ They were Physically Rich...

- So, they probably did not have the need for God,
- Those without, know how important it is to have God providing for them...
- They never felt this desperation because they had everything they needed... they thought

#### ➤ They thought they were spiritually rich...

- As a church, they probably had a bigger, better run facility than any of the other 6 churches...
- Their Church was that big one on the corner that everyone thought was on fire for God...
- Not that all big churches are like this... Some are, some are not... same thing for small churches
- Their problem is they thought they were doing OK spiritually....

#### ➤ A Bad Spot...

- The Person that has heard the Gospel a lot, but has never been converted
- Is the hardest person to reach...
- They have just enough knowledge to think they are safe...
- But they have never given over their LIFE to Jesus...
- They feel they can keep parts of themselves...
  - They forget Jesus calls them to give their all...!

#### ➤ How would I know then?

- The word of God

, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

### ❖ 4) Needed to know themselves

#### ➤ This is what they really looked like...

- Wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.... Covered all the bases...
- These are marks of an unsaved person...

#### ➤ **Wretched** - in sin

#### ➤ **Pitiable** – their state is to be pitied

#### ➤ **Poor** – possessing no true wealth

#### ➤ **Blind** – a description of the person that can not see spiritual truths

#### ➤ **Naked** – not clothed in garments of righteousness...

#### ➤ Do you know yourself?

- One day it will come to light

<sup>18</sup> I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.

### ❖ 5) Needed to come to Jesus for Help ... for Saving or Sanctification

#### ➤ But, how can they buy anything... they have nothing....

- It is through their knowledge of having nothing that they will be able to buy...
- Repentance and Faith is the only way to gaining anything from God...
- They buy, by giving themselves...

- Knowing themselves to have nothing...
- Isaiah 55:1-3 <sup>1</sup>“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. <sup>2</sup>Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. <sup>3</sup>Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant....
- **Gold refined by fire – True Salvation**
  - Instead of the gold in their back accounts
- **White Garments – Being clothed in Righteousness**
  - As opposed to the black wool garments they found treasure in
- **Salve to anoint your eyes – See clearly spiritual things... Once being blind, now you see**
  - The truth that leads to salvation
- **What do you need to receive from Christ?**

<sup>19</sup> Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

#### ❖ Jesus is calling them

- **Those whom I love...**
  - I Reprove and discipline
- **Be Zealous and Repent**
  - Zealous
  - Repent
- **The Call to Repentance would be heard by His Children**
  - They would be like Peter when He denied Jesus
  - After hearing this, they would weep and follow Him
- **Those who did not know Him at the time**
  - Would have a chance to Repent and turn to Him...
- **But sadly...**
  - Many would remain unaffected by this call to repentance...
  - And they would continue on their way.... Living a religious life...
  - But too proud to repent, and say... I am wrong...
  - Following the wide path that **“leads to destruction”**
- **I Stand at the door and knock**
  - Jesus longs for communion with Us...
  - Many would say He is not talking about the heart....
    - Rather He is speaking to the church...
      - ◆ He is standing outside their church, knocking...
      - ◆ He is not even inside their church...
    - But you see it is addressed to the individual as well...
      - ◆ If anyone hears my voice...
- **What I do know about this verse is...**
  - Is that Jesus is constantly knocking at the door...
  - Through the Holy Spirit He is convicting the Believer and Non-Believer...
  - Through the word of God... **“hears my voice”** – the Bible
- **Calls to the unsaved person...**
  - Repent, and give yourself to me, and we will dine together...

- You can get to know me...
- **Calls to the saved person...**
  - Don't forget me... Spend time with me, if you want to grow...
- **Jesus wants us to seek Him...**
  - Because we will surely find Him...
- **EXAMPLE: My life is a mess**
  - I don't know if I am coming or going...
  - Depressed, no joy... frustrated...
  - How is your fellowship with Jesus?
  - I can already tell you... NOT GOOD...
- **I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.**

<sup>21</sup>The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. <sup>22</sup>He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' ”

#### ❖ **Jesus wants to give to them**

- What a Turn Around..... This is Truly Amazing... Amazing Grace
- From Sickening to Jesus... to Sitting with Jesus...
  - Meditate on this for a moment...
  - Wow
- **The One who conquers...**
  - **1 John 5:5 <sup>5</sup>Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**
    - **Spent a whole sermon on this!**
  - **Oh... do you see the connection between true Biblical Salvation and Truth... and knowledge**
    - Knowledge of who Jesus is...
    - When you KNOW who He is... truly, Then you Know Him...
    - Meaning you have believed on Him...
- **Sit with me on my throne...**
  - You will reign and rule with Jesus...
  - He will give you authority in His kingdom...
  - Not only will you be saved and given rewards from Him in heaven...
  - You will also be given authority in His Universal Kingdom...

#### ❖ **Built in Invitation...**

- He who has an ear... let him hear