

PULLING DOWN THE LAODICEAN SPIRIT

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Rev3:14-22

It was King Solomon who said, **“There is nothing new under the sun. That which has been is that which will be and that which has been done is that which will be done.” (Ecc1:9)** This is a truth certainly applicable to our focus of busting out of the status quo and breaking the cycle of complacency.

- The sin our forefathers dealt with are all too often the same sin we struggle with today.

The book of Revelation opens with Jesus addressing the condition of 7 Churches of the time and in light of Solomon’s conclusion, addressing 7 possible conditions of the Church today. Seventh in the list of Christ’s address was the Church of Laodicea.

- All 7 of these corporate conditions are applicable to our theme of complacency; however Laodicea holds specific relevance in that the sin of Laodicea was the sin of complacency and the status quo.
- **Though Laodicea perceived themselves to be rich, Jesus said they were miserably stuck in the complacency of lukewarmness...accommodation, self deception, half heartedness, unresponsiveness, self satisfaction, no firm convictions, no Biblical principles, no ardor, no enthusiasm...**

Rev4:14-22

The word Laodicea means, “The rights of the people or conforming to the will of the people.” Laodicea was built at the crossroads of Rome, Babylon and Egypt. Laodicea was not a Port City as were most wealthy centers so Laodicea was driven by trade but vulnerable due to a lack water.

- Though rich in textiles, medicine and banking, the central weakness of Laodicea was its source of water. Cold water had to be piped in from Colossae but by the time it reached Laodicea it was lukewarm.
- Hot water could be piped in from Hierapolis but by the time it reached Laodicea it was lukewarm.
- So Jesus draws from this physical reality saying just as you are in the natural so you are in the spirit...you are lukewarm, apathetic, status quo, and good for nothing. You aren’t cold so you can’t vibrate and refresh nor are you warm so you can heal and cleanse.

Due to its lack of water, “peace at any price” was the world view of the Laodicean’s. In fear of being cut off from water the Laodicean’s became masters of compromise and appeasement. Having no abundant water supply the Laodicean’s were very susceptible to attacking enemies.

Being all attacking enemies had to do was cut off the importation of water and wait, **the Laodicean’s always remained neutral, never rocked the boat, always took the middle ground, never took a stand.** The Laodicean’s would build bridges but never live on either side.

- Jesus picks all of this up in Rev3 saying, The Laodicean mindset is the spirit of lukewarmness, apathy and making peace with the status quo. It is seen in them growing cold to the tragedy of becoming lukewarm.
- Laodicean’s become complacent about their complacency; apathetic about their apathy or passive about their passivity. The Laodicean mindset is friends with everybody because it will stand for nothing. Those soft in their convictions pose no threat.
- Laodicean’s worship they just don’t worship with abandon. They might lift a hand every now and then but they won’t become “clamorously foolish” as the Bible commands. Laodicean’s get involved but not too involved. They want the Body but not “The baptism of the Body “as Paul requires.
- **Those snared by the Laodicean spirit live on the bridge unwilling to commit, always wanting to keep their options open. They aren’t fully in but they aren’t fully out...they can swing both ways, not too radical but definitely not cold.**
- Absalom was bitten by the Laodicean spirit. Absalom was a member of the Kings family but wanting to conform to the rights of the people, he built a bridge of compromise and lived on it.
- Sickened by this spirit of compromise and accommodation Jesus said, “I wish you were either hot or cold but because you are lukewarm I will vomit you out of my mouth.”

So it is this Laodicean mindset that we want to go after today. Specifically, what is the present day application and how do we pull this mindset down.

Look at v.17. Jesus addresses 3 primary qualities that identify this Laodicean mindset. “You think you are rich, in need of nothing but in fact you are...poor, blind and naked.”

- **“Poor” in that the Laodicean spirit robs us of our richness toward God...**it is the thief of eternal investment. To focus on the eternal is too radical, not reasonable, would take away from the natural.
- **“Blind” in that the Laodicean spirit is unaware, undiscerning, unwilling to perceive, comprehend or heed.** If it were to do any of these it would have to take a stand and perhaps face loss. So it rides the fence and plays it safe instead.
- **“Naked” in that the Laodicean spirit is natural, common, having little to do with the spiritual.** With a big soul and a little spirit the Laodicean mindset is governed by the carnal nature not by the Spirit of God.

In v.18 Jesus gives us 3 directives in pulling down the Laodicean spirit... (3 directives that address both the 3 primary qualities of the mindset...poor, blind and naked and the 3 primary industries of the city...banking, medicine and textiles.)

1. **Buy Gold Refined by Fire that You May be Rich:** Gold is that which represents a spiritual richness toward God. Though Laodicea was a financial banking center it had no wealth toward God, no spiritual investment, so Jesus advised them to “get into the fire.”
 - Get off the fence and into the fire. **Fire is the answer to the Laodicean spirit. Those who are lukewarm and status quo must decide they will say no to the quo and step into the fire.**
 - Fire represents the integrity to stand, the courage to draw lines, the boldness to go for the gold. Fire represents the willingness to stay in the heat of circumstance and not settle for a manmade way out. **In the fire truth is never for sale.**
 - Gold represents the purification process. A refining process of eliminating the dross that cannot be done without the production of fire. Gold represents the purity of character, character that enables one to take a stand regardless of the cost
 - **Gold is the purity of character bought in the fire not given in a prayer line.** Gold is the character that comes when persecuted or falsely accused. Gold is the character that comes when you want revenge but instead you take humility.

2. **Buy White Garments that You May Clothe Yourself:** The garments the Bible speaks of are the garments of righteousness, praise and humility. Look at 1Pt5:5 “Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another.” **Humility is the first step out of the Laodicean spirit.**
 - Ultimately pride is the power of the Laodicean mindset. It is the pride of thinking we have a better way than the way of the Lord. Humility is an act of realignment that positions us for the favor of God.
 - **Putting on His righteousness and rejecting self sufficiency is the second step out.** This Laodicean spirit is not cast out as much as it is starved out. This spirit feeds on self sufficiency and is starved by the righteousness of God. We overcome as we trust in Him.
 - Finally and perhaps most importantly, **Praise, worship and Presence is the death blow to the lukewarmness of the Laodicean spirit.** We must be willing to become undignified to pull this spirit down.
 - The Laodicean mindset has held us down long enough now it is time to put on the white garments of praise and worship ourselves free. You don’t buy this garment with money you buy it with will.
 - As we will to worship with our all, the fire burns anything that is still lukewarm. A lukewarm worship won’t overcome a lukewarm spirit.

3. Buy Eye Salve to Anoint Your Eyes that You May See: The status quo is blinding. Complacency goes after our ability to see. The longer you live on the bridge refusing to take your stand with truth, the less likely you are to see.

- **The eye salve we buy is the Holy Spirit mixed with our willingness to be led.**
- God's Spirit empowering man's obedience is the eye salve that overcomes the lukewarm blindness of the Laodicean spirit.

Jesus closes His exhortation out by saying in v.19 "...be zealous therefore and repent."

This can't be a complacent repentance; we take the fire offered and season even our repentance with zeal.

- All of which results in Jesus coming to our door that we might hear His voice, invite Him in and go deep in our fellowship together.

To say no to the status quo is to break any agreement with this Laodicean mindset.