

Letters from Heaven

Revelation 2; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 10-24-2021

Introduction

Would you like to receive a letter today from the Lord Jesus?

What do you think it would say? About you? About our church?

1. *Ephesus*: The Truth-loving but Unloving Church (2:1-7)

Do you see the real danger of loving ‘truth’ but not loving people?

The Danger

a faith *not* working through love (Galatians 5:6)

a head knowledge without a heart of love for God and especially for others (1 Corinthians 8:1)

valuing knowledge over love (Philippians 1:9)

truth that doesn’t produce love: laying down my life to do practical good to believers and unbelievers (1 John 3:16-18; 1 Thessalonians 3:12)

The Heart of God

God cares more about whether you love people like he does than whether you are a Calvinist or credo-Baptist or infralapsarian. If our theology doesn’t make us more loving toward those who disagree with us or agree with us, then we have caught the ‘Ephesian Virus’!

2. *Smyrna*: The Faithful but Fearful Church

Do you fear what you might have to go through before you get to heaven?

The Danger

fear of suffering

fear of death

The Heart of God

God wants you to be at peace and not to be afraid of what is to come. If we have a paralyzing and worrisome fear of suffering and death, whether through Covid or something else, then we are being tempted with the ‘Smyrna Syndrome’!

3. Pergamum: The Faithful but Unsound Church

Do you see the real danger of ‘loving’ people but not loving truth?

The Danger

false teaching among the members
serious doctrinal error and immorality
not making the break from societal norms for socializing and sex
failing to exercise church discipline

The Heart of God

God wants us to be concerned about truth because it is necessary for love. If we embrace liberal and ‘woke’ ideals that encourage ‘inclusivism’ and ‘redistribution of wealth’ and ‘gender and sexual self-identification’ and pro-abortion and LGBTQ rights under the redefined principle of ‘justice’ and ‘loving your neighbor’ then we have been infected with the ‘Pergamum Pandemic’!

4. Thyatira: The Growing but Tolerant Church

Do you feel the social and economic pressure to simply do what the culture and country requires of you?

The Danger

false teachers in the body
serious doctrinal error and immorality
failing to exercise church discipline
caving to the economic and social pressures to compromise your allegiance to Christ

The Heart of God

God wants us to oppose false teachers for the protection of his sheep and trust him for our daily needs without compromise. If we tolerate preachers and teachers who deny basic tenets of the faith and promote a ‘health and wealth’ gospel that encourages materialism and immorality, then we have been lulled to sleep by the ‘Thyatira Two Step’! If we follow Christ only when our ‘bread’ is assured, then how can we know for sure that we are truly following Christ and not simply our ‘bread’?

Conclusion

How do you need to trust God?

How do you need to love your family, church family, your co-workers/schoolmates and neighbors?