

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

Message 20

Words: 5994

Scripture: Revelation

INTRO: We are in the seventh and last church of Revelation 2-3. We are studying the historical purpose of this letter. We have looked at some of the history of the city of Laodicea. Like Philadelphia, it was relatively young in comparison to some of the other churches in Asia.

Let me mention briefly three outstanding features of this city that especially relate to the church of Laodicea. This city was very rich and had a great banking and financial center. Second, it was a manufacturing center for clothing. They mass produced a certain outer garment from the violet-black, glossy wool of their famous sheep. And third, it was a medical center known especially for its eye-salve.

We looked at the counselor who is described as the *amen*, and *the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God*. We said this could read that He was the faithful and true martyr, as it does of Antipas. And I think He is described as all of this because all of this is what Laodicea was not like, nor did they recognize Him as the Creator, as their life indicates.

We began to look at the criticism because we found no commendation. The Lord found not one good thing to say about this church. And the criticism is this: They are lukewarm. To the Lord, they are like taking a drink from the lukewarm water that flowed into this city and it made Him want to throw up.

And we had begun to look at what it means to be lukewarm. We saw that most view cold as being far from God; hot means good, and lukewarm means nauseating. And then, because some see this as picturing the great apostasy of the last Church age, we then looked to see if the Scriptures teach a great apostasy in the last age. What I see is not a great apostasy, but a church overrun by professing Christians who have never been born again. If you would put all those who profess to use the Bible as Christians, as many do, this would include all those who are true to the Roman Catholic faith; all those of the Greek Orthodox faith; all those we refer to as cults such as the JW's and Mormons, and all apostatized churches such as the United

Church of Canada. I checked this church out briefly. The first thing I read was, "The Bible is the shared standard for our faith, but members are not required to adhere to any particular creed or formulation of doctrine." There we have the majority of the number of those who profess to be Christians. But today almost, if not all the major denominations that came out of the reformation are fast being filled up by professing Christians who have never been born again. That includes many, many Mennonite churches.

We want to now pick up where we left off when we sought to identify what lukewarm means and then go on to the counsel the Lord gives to this church.

3. The criticism cont'd (3:15-17)

The Lord said of the Laodicean Church that they were neither hot nor cold. And because they were lukewarm, he would vomit them out. He found them absolutely nauseating. So we ask, what is hot and what is cold, and what is lukewarm. It is truly a difficult subject.

As we have seen so far, most hold that cold is someone who is far from God and hot is someone on fire for the Lord and lukewarm is somewhere in between. That view has a quite a lot to commend it. So let me quote John McArthur here. He says:

This takes us back to our comments about the water supply. In Hierapolis, six miles to the north, there was some famous springs, hot springs. In fact, they were one of the most well-known and popular places for healing. The water was hot and you went there and sat in that water and it had therapeutic power. It is still used today. Hierapolis had hot water and that hot water was therapeutic.

In Colossae, ten miles south and east, there was a cold stream. We learned that the stream was perennially running and perennially cold like typical water that flows from the high mountains.

That water was thirst quenching. That water was famous because of its cool, clear character.

They didn't have the hot therapeutic water of Hierapolis and they didn't have the cold clear refreshing water of Colossae, they had the foul, dirty, tepid water that flowed for miles through an underground aqueduct. It wasn't hot and it wasn't cold. Not hot enough to relax and restore, not cool enough to refresh and quench. Laodicea couldn't provide the refreshment of Colossae, it couldn't provide the healing of Hierapolis. Its lukewarm water was absolutely useless. Any visitor who came there who wasn't used to the stuff would put it in his mouth and immediately spit it out.

So he says of the cold water, We learned that the stream was perennially running and perennially cold like typical water that flows from the high mountains. That water was thirst quenching. That water was famous because of its cool, clear character.

Later he says, Now how are we to interpret these three categories? What does cold mean? Well that's not too tough. Cold means spiritually cold, open outright rejection of Jesus Christ, repudiating the gospel.

Now note this, earlier he had said, We learned that the stream was perennially running and perennially cold like typical water that flows from the high mountains. That water was thirst quenching. That water was famous because of its cool, clear character. And I question, does this mean bad, or unsaved?

So the question is, does cold clear thirst quenching water picture someone far from God, someone deep in sin? Of the hot he says, But on the other hand, what does hot mean? Zealous, spiritually alive and awake and eager and fired up, as it were, for the Lord. So, in other words cold

means far from God and in sin, and hot means close to God and righteous.

Of the lukewarm he says, He says you're not cold, I mean, you're just not openly, outright, rebellious, rejecting Christ and repudiating Christianity... and again, ...you're not that either. You're not boiling...with spiritual zeal for the Lord, nor are you openly outright cold.

I want to propose that both cold and hot are good. Cold is good for one thing, hot is good for another. But they are good. But lukewarm is good for nothing. This church could have been good for one thing, like the Church of Smyrna was. They languished in prison and died for the faith and had tribulation 10 days, but they were a tremendous testimony for the Lord. Or they might have been good like Philadelphia. They could have had the freedom to evangelize like Philadelphia did. But Laodicea neither went to prison for their faith, nor did they evangelize. They were not good for either.

And like the modern church today, they were not apostatizing. They professed faith. The modern church is not apostatizing. Most of them are not even saved. McArthur agrees and says the lukewarm church is unsaved. So what is the sin of being lukewarm? "Well", you might ask, "Is being lukewarm a sin?" That it is a sin is clear because the Lord calls on them to repent, and it is sin that requires repentance. So here is what I view that it means to be lukewarm. It is naming the name of Christ and putting on all the front of a Christian, when in actual fact all one is doing is going along with an expected life-style, for some personal benefit. It is being a nominal Christian. It is the sin of living in a constant lie. I am professing to be a Christian, when in fact I have been deceived or have deceived myself, and I am not a Christian at all. I believe that is what lukewarm means.

I think lukewarmness is well pictured in the unconditional love, unconditional grace, unconditional forgiveness, unconditional eternal security views. It takes no solid stands on sin. It, like a chameleon fits in anywhere. It is ever tolerant, except of those who hold to a standard of righteousness. It ripples no waters. It is nice, nice, nice. You can't say they tolerate that woman Jezebel, but you can't say they are truth seekers either.

Let me quote Kistemaker again, "The hot springs at a distance of six miles near Hierapolis sent water of medicinal quality down to Laodicea. By the time the water arrived there, it had cooled considerably, and because of the calcium carbonate in the water, it had a nauseating effect on the people who drank it. By contrast, Colosse, eleven miles away, was blessed with the springs producing refreshing water because it was cold and pure" (170).

So, the hot water was good for one thing, and the cold water was good for another. But the lukewarm water was not good for either. It was enough to make you throw up.

Now let me show you something else from the verse under study. It says:

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

The people in the Laodicean church profess to be Christians. They were not atheists. They are lukewarm. There is no doubt that they are not truly born again, and that is a picture of our age. How do I know these professing Christians are not born again? Because God says, "You make me nauseous and I am going to vomit you out." That is never true of a born again believer who is useful to the Lord. I do not even find the Lord use this language of a carnal Christian.

But our Lord is not done criticizing this church. He says in verse 17:

17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

What a picture is here! Now let me make this point first. I doubt you will ever hear a church or an individual Christian say the words recorded here. That flies in the face of all that even professing Christianity stands for. How then did they say this? Well, to this church, like all the rest, the Lord said, "I know your works." How did they say they were rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing? By their works! He knows what was in their hearts, not by their words, but by their works. Not by lip but by life!

What did the Laodiceans think of their own Christianity? We have it together! We are the church! We are the people of the Lord! Now they would never say that. Unthinkable. To say that would sound very harsh to their own ears. But by their works, this is what they were saying.

This is church number seven and seven times we have heard this from the Lord, "I know you works." Well, here is how their works stacked up with the Lord. Here is what the One says who has eyes like a flame of fire: "You are neither cold nor hot! You are absolutely nauseating." You see, there is nothing commendable here. But that is not what this church thinks! I want to read a section from John McArthur here. He is writing about the lukewarm people of Laodicea:

Who are they? Professing Christians...go to church, claim to know the Lord, but aren't saved. They're content with self-righteous religion. They're hypocrites playing games. They're the kind of people described in Matthew 7 where Jesus says, "Many will say unto Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord,' and I will say unto them, 'Depart from Me, I never

knew you. You may have done many works in My name and prophesied and cast out demons, but I don't know you.'"

They're like those in 2 Timothy 3:5 who have a form of godliness but without power. They're like the Jews in Romans 10 who have a zeal for God but not according to a true knowledge. They're just hypocrites touched somehow by Christianity but not belonging to Christ. And there is something obnoxious about them. They nauseate Christ. They make Him sick.

There's much more hope, frankly, for one who has been untouched by the gospel. There's much more hope for one who has made no pretense of knowing Christ. Do you understand that? Than there is for the one who makes the pretense but his life illustrates that he's not really honored Christ at all. In fact, I would say there's no one farther from the truth in Christ than the one who makes an idle profession without real faith. He is really in Satan's hands. They had bought a satanic lie about Christ. They were in religion up to their neck. They called it Christianity. They said they were a church. Satan was in control.

In the history of the church and in my experience, no one has been harder to reach for Christ than a false Christian. Satisfied with the measure of his good works, satisfied with his attitude toward God and they sit in churches across the world. It would be easier to win a harlot, it would be easier to win a criminal, it would be easier to win an agnostic or an atheist, it's easier...Jesus certainly said...to reach the Publicans and the harlots than it is the Pharisees and the Sadducees. There's more hope for the salvation of an atheist than a spoiled half-hearted conceited hypocrite who thinks he knows the truth and pretends to accept it. Like the Pharisees, they don't feel their need. They have that lukewarmness of religion. They sense no chill. If they were cold enough to feel the bitterness and the severity of their sin, they would be more readily brought to the knowledge of

Christ. But these conceited self-deceived hypocrites, this lukewarmness made Christ sick.

John Stott once wrote, "The Laodicean church was a half-hearted church. Perhaps none of the seven letters is more appropriate to the twentieth century church than this. It describes vividly the respectable, sentimental, nominal, skin-deep religiosity which is so wide spread among us today. Our Christianity is flabby and anemic, we appear to have taken a lukewarm bath."

This is a people who aren't saved. But it's not an outright rejection. It's not a repudiation. It's not a hostility toward the Lord Jesus outwardly. They probably named His name. But I submit to you that Jesus said, "I would rather have you cold than like this. I'd rather you be a prostitute than a Pharisee. I'd rather you be a sinner who knows his sin than a hypocrite who doesn't recognize it. I'd rather you be a Publican beating on your breast saying...God, be merciful to me, a sinner...who feels the coldness of his lostness than a Pharisee who says...I thank You that I'm not as other men." Anything is better than lukewarmness.

But there was even something worse than being lukewarm and that was their self-deception. Look at verse 17. Here's the second condemnation. "Because you say I am rich and have become wealthy and have need of nothing and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Look at that, first part of the..."Because you say." Do you remember the study we did in Matthew chapter 7 and we talked about the "if we sayers" and the "if we doers"? If we say...if we say...if we say, Jesus said doesn't mean anything. What matters is if we do, if we do, if we do. It's not the people who say, it's the people who do the will of My Father, end quote.

As I considered what lukewarm means, I thought over what the NT says in other passages. So let me show you what I believe lukewarm means. You may not agree with me, but I trust you will give it some

careful thought. When a person claims to be a Christian, gives lip service to Christianity, testifies to salvation but this person is not truly born again, such persons enters a special class of people. They are not special because they are good. They are special because they are in a special situation and will get special treatment. By special treatment, I mean that if they do not repent they will be judged in a separate class from unbelievers. They will get a harsher judgment. You might write down Luke 12 here.

Who is this special class of unsaved people? They are not against Christ by profession. They are for Him. They are not those who want nothing to do with Christ, they claim they know Him. They do not work against Christ, they believe they are working for Him. They profess to be Christians. They do the work one would expect from Christian, but they are not Christians.

Let me show you this kind of Christian. Go to Matthew 7. You see, they are special because they get special treatment. They are unbelievers but the Lord does not treat them the same as all other unbelievers. And I believe these Laodiceans fall into this camp. We begin in verse 21:

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Notice that they say, "Lord, Lord." Notice that they claim they did His work. Notice that they had assurance of salvation though they were not saved. They are not Christians but they act like Christians. Neither are they outspoken against

Christ. They say they are for Him. And notice that they are judged as a separate group.

Let me show you this special group from John 10. Let me read John 10:1: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Of whom is Jesus speaking here? Not of those who want nothing to do with Christ. He is speaking of those who want to be Christians but they are not willing to come by way of the door. The door is Christ. To enter here requires two things; repentance and faith.

Let me show you this group yet another way. We go to Matthew 22. Jesus is giving a parable about a certain king who prepared a wedding feast and invited many folk. But they all began to make excuse. So that king said, go out into the highways and hedges and invite whoever wants to come. And when everything was ready, the king came in to see his guests, so look at verse 11:

11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

12 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.

13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Now notice, like those who entered the sheepfold some other way, these people got into the wedding hall some other way. The king said, "How did you get in without a wedding garment?" I ask you, of whom is this speaking? It is speaking of those who profess to be believers but they are not.

Let me show you this yet one more way. We go to Matthew 25. In verses 31 to the end of the

chapter we have what is called the sheep and goat judgment. This takes place at the end of the tribulation, so that it appears that even in this time, this special group of people is around. The sheep, we know, speak of true Christians. But who are the goats? All unbelievers? No, they are a special class of unbelievers. So let's identify the goats. We go to verse 21:

41 *"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:*

42 *'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;*

43 *'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'*

44 *"Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'*

45 *"Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'*

46 *"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

Who are these goats? The same ones who said, "Lord, Lord" in Matthew 7. The same ones who got into the sheepfold another way. The same ones who got into the wedding without a wedding dress. You see what they said here? They said to the Lord, "How can you say we didn't do all these things? We did them! We are Christians."

And what do we have in Laodicea? Goats! You see, the Lord is standing outside. He loves them. He wants to enter. But they won't let Him in. And

the Lord is lovingly counseling them to open up to Him in this passage. For the Laodiceans it is not yet too late. But let me say this; this kind of person is harder to get saved than wild, wicked sinners. Harder to get saved than drunkards and whores, much harder. I have told you of the older, godly pastor who said, "I could have led a lot of people to the Lord if they had not been church members already." But by professing to be believers, they have placed themselves in a special class for the day of judgment. Such, in my view, are those who are called lukewarm.

So, having identified the lukewarm, at least from my perspective, we now go to the counsel.

4. The counsel (3:18-20)

We come now to the counsel. And the counsel reveals why these professing believers are classed as lukewarm. We'll read verses 17-19:

17 *"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' -and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked-*

18 *"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

19 *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*

We begin then with verse 17, but we have to read verses 17 and 18 because they form one sentence:

17 *"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' -and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked-*

18 *"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

Let me put this sentence in the order we would normally put such a sentence in English and fill in what is elliptical:

"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and I counsel you to buy from Me white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and I counsel you to buy from Me eye salve to anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see, I counsel this way because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' and you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

Let me remind you of something. This city was rich, financially rich. So the people were rich. This city was known for its eye salve. This city was known for the clothing they made. Should they not understand the Lord's words here?

Now I ask you, can we in all honesty ask the Lord and say, "Lord, is it I?" An outsider came to our community and he could not believe what our people had accomplished here. And then he said this, "But money is their god." Could he be right? What did he see that made him say this? Did he perhaps do some business dealings here? But the much more serious question is, how does the Lord see us? Let me just add, it is not money and ambition that is wrong, it is when the money has us that it becomes wrong.

Let me say this again, no church ever says in words, "We are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." No, not by lip. How then does a church say such a thing? They say it by life. Oh Lord, if any of this applies to us and

we are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, Oh Lord, open our eyes, we beg of You.

So let us look at what the Lord counsels and the reason for His counsel. First, because they said, *I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, -and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked-* therefore He said, *"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire that you may be rich."*

We need to note first that this church has allowed itself to be deceived by Satan so that it sees itself as one thing, but it is entirely wrong. They thought they were rich, but were totally oblivious to the fact that they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Now this is first class deception. Physically they were rich, but they thought they were spiritually rich. The facts are they were spiritually wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. They were spiritually bankrupt.

Let me remind you of part of Barclay's history of Laodicea. He writes:

Laodicea, ...was a great banking and financial centre. When Cicero was travelling in Asia Minor, it was at Laodicea that he cashed his letters of credit. It was one of the wealthiest cities in the world. In AD 61, it was devastated by an earthquake; but its citizens were so rich and independent that they refused any help from the Roman government and rebuilt their city out of their own resources. The Roman historian Tacitus writes: 'One of the most famous cities of Asia, Laodicea, was in that same year overthrown by an earthquake and without any relief from us recovered itself by its own resources' (Annals, 14:27). No wonder Laodicea could boast that it was rich and had amassed wealth and needed nothing. It was so wealthy that it did not even need God. End quote.

Now I ask you, what kind of people are the professing Christians of Laodicea? They are people who name the name of Christ. They go to church. They know how to say the right things. But they are spiritually bankrupt. And what is the Lord's counsel? Come to Me and buy from Me gold refined in the fire, so that you may be truly rich.

In Matthew 13 and Luke 8 we have the parable of the four soils. And the soil where the seed fell among the thorns, Jesus points out the deceitfulness of riches. Riches are very deceitful. And in Laodicea, riches had deceived the people into thinking they were spiritual. Luke says those that fell among thorns brought no fruit to maturity, and to the church of Laodicea the Lord says, "I know your works..." and then He has nothing good to say about them. They brought no fruit to maturity.

Now look at our passage from a human perspective and then from the Lord's perspective. From a human perspective they were rich, and increased with goods and had need of nothing. They were self-sufficient. Like their city, when it was greatly damaged by an earthquake, it would not accept help. They had wealth enough to repair their own city. Independence can have very harmful effects. When we have to go to others for help, it humbles us and this we do not like.

But look now at what they were like from the Lord's perspective. The Lord revealed something to them that they did not know. Verse 17 says, "You do not know that you are wretched..." Physically you are rich and have need of nothing. Spiritually you are wretched. Spiritually you are miserable. The Lord says, "Spiritually you are to be pitied." That is the idea here.

The Laodiceans thought they were spiritually rich. You see, in Laodicea we do not have those who are against Christ as far as they are concerned. They are fully for Him. They are

spiritually rich. They know Him, so they think. But from a divine perspective they are spiritually poor. How poor did the Lord see them. There are two Greek words used for poor in the NT. One is used only once, it is *penees*. It means one is a pauper. But the other is a *ptochos*. According to Bishop Trench's synonyms of the NT, this kind of person is a beggar and does not live by his own labor. The Laodiceans, while they viewed themselves as spiritually rich; from a divine perspective they were beggarly poor. They completely bankrupt!

Now, look at the counsel the Lord gives to this church. He says in verse 18, "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich...!" We have before us now a question: how do you buy refined gold from the Lord? Well, maybe we don't really want to know?

Well, no doubt what is in view is that we are to lay up spiritual riches. Isaiah 55:1 says:

1 "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

Isaiah, like the Lord in our passage, speaks in physical terms of that which is meant spiritually. Who is it that does not have money? Those who are the spiritual beggars. They are the spiritually bankrupt. And how do you buy without money? Well, that is not hard to answer. It is the price that stops us. You do this first of all by repenting from sin. And then you do it by placing your full trust in Christ and then by obeying the spiritual principles set out by the Lord in Scripture.

You see, in our passage the Lord said, "Come buy from Me gold tried in the fire." How do you do that? As I see it, it is by living by faith, which is living right. Here is the biblical principle of buying gold from the Lord. It is the

principle that got our Lord killed. Turn to 1 Peter. You see, to the Laodicean Church the Lord said He was the faithful and true witness, *martus*. A faithful and true witness will suffer for living right. If not, the Scriptures are not true. I ask you, is the Bible true? Then so is that passage. We begin in 1 Peter 1:

In 1 Peter 1, he is speaking to the elect, the saved. He then speaks of the believer's salvation. And in verses 6-9 he says:

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Isaiah said, "Come buy without money." Here in this passage we have something more precious than gold, though that gold has been tested in the fire, and is gotten without money. This is spiritual gold, which according to our passage in Revelation is tested by fire as well. And what is outstanding about this gold is that it does not perish. And what is this gold that is more precious than earthly gold? It is the genuineness of the believer's faith. You see, the faith of the Laodiceans was not genuine. They had no faith for the fire to test. If they had lived as they should, had opened their mouth when they should, they would have found this gold the Lord is speaking about.

Their faith was not genuine. It was hypocritical faith. They went to church. They said all the right things, but they would not ruffle any waters. It seems they were ever tolerant. No opposition is recorded! On the other hand, it is outstanding that there is no open sin recorded either! And the sin that is recorded is being lukewarm. I would gather from this that they were just nice to everybody. From today's culture I would say they were tolerant of almost everything. But in actual fact, spiritually they were bankrupt.

In 1 Peter, the gold is genuine faith. And for us to learn if our faith is genuine, we must be tested by the fires of trials. We see very clearly that the Laodiceans did not have genuine faith. Their faith was a sham. Gold is an expensive commodity. It will cost, and the Lord's first counsel is to buy gold from Him that they might be truly rich. While they thought they were rich, they were wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

And may I ask you, how do you like various kinds of trials?

CONCL: Well, we conclude. We have looked at what it means to be lukewarm. As I see it, it means to be unsaved while professing to be a Christian. It means to be useless to the Lord. It means to be nauseating to the Lord. It is not the picture of people who are openly opposed to the Lord. It is a picture of a people who think they are very spiritual. As a matter of fact, they are so spiritual that they have need of nothing. They have it. They have the best of it. But it is a picture that from a divine perspective they are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

And those who are in the state described here are those who say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name...?" These are those who climbed into the Lord's sheepfold without coming in the door. These are those who got into the king's wedding hall without a wedding garment. These are those who said, "Lord when did we see you hungry? And didn't feed you? etc..." These are those who have full assurance of salvation, but they are

not saved. These are those who think they did things right, but they are lost.

And last we saw how they thought of themselves, spiritually; and how the Lord saw them. They thought they were rich. The Lord saw them as beggars, spiritually bankrupt. Physically, they were decked out, spiritually they were miserable, wretched, poor, blind and naked. If we are right that these churches picture the church age in seven progressive ages, I think it cannot be otherwise than that we are in that age today.