

LWMORG

Return To Your 'First Love!'

Minister R. Thomas Lambur

Spiritual Conditions Of The Lukewarm Church

A Special Note....First let me say that the purpose of this outline is not just to talk on the lines of the corporate or institutional church but the individuals who make up the church as a whole... these are the people who I am expressing myself to in the teaching. There is a *spiritual prodigal* reoccurring throughout the Letters to the Churches (Rev. Chapters 1,2,3) for returning to your 'First Love.'

Rev. 2:29 He that hath (*spiritual ears*) an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Prov. 1:23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

Leaving Your First Love

Rev. 2:4,5 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

In looking here at Ephesus in these two verses we can see that this church has removed itself from an intimate relationship with the Lord. The love of other things have crept in and the state of this church is a state which is called religion (living in a mere form of its former intimate past).

Jerm. 2:13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

This church's spiritual condition is that of leaving their intimate communion with the living God and creating this form of church life without including the fountain of fresh living waters which only come as a result of daily waiting upon the Lord through His Spirit Word the Bible. Notice the course of backslidden mankind who doesn't dislike religion... religion is safe if you can control it...and of course a fervent relationship with the Lord isn't controllable by man...because He expects to be in control. Therefore it says they hew out for themselves cistern (which represent religion). Now religion can never contain the Living Lord or His Spirit; so these forms of man-made religion are flawed.... cracked and left without what they were originally meant to be in an intimate relationship with God's Spirit.

Lesson Of The Wine Skins

Matt. 9:17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Mk. 2:22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

The church is to fellowship with the Holy Spirit is a living robust relationship. The bottles braking give us another example like unto the *cistern* of how religion cannot hold the new wine. In our relationship with the Lord, there is always the new. There is a fresh refilling of the Holy Spirit and His anointing daily if we seek Him.

In our relationship with our Lord there is that flexibility with the Holy Spirit that is required at the Lord's instruction that calls us to leave our will and carry out His.

Lk. 17:33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

Jn. 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Religion And The Flesh

In relationship there is always the calling for the abandonment of our own plans for those of His. Religion never looks well upon the notion of sacrifice; yet the Lord calls for everything in our lives... the cost of this intimate and close relationship with the Lord is nothing short of our complete and total surrender to His Lordship in our lives. Religion which is always based upon self and selfishness always incorporates a person's will, carnality, or the flesh into the form of its sanctimony.

Gal. 3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

The Galatians went into religion having started in the Spirit... they were walking in religion... and the flesh was all over that!

Gal. 4:30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. One son was by the Spirit the other by the flesh... religion and intimate relationship with God DO NOT GO TOGETHER.

2Tim. 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

The form of religion is a robber of intimacy with the Lord... it is the substitute for the power and anointing which comes from this encounter. The true anointing is therefore spoken against.

Revealing Our True Spiritual Conditions With The Lord

Rev. 3:14-20 And unto the angel of the church of the *Laodiceans* write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

So then because *thou art lukewarm*, and neither cold nor hot, *I will spue thee out of my mouth*.

The Laodicean church condition was *lukewarm* which is another word used for a *backslidden* spiritual condition. The Lord says His witness is True... and He knows their works. Religious people substitute fleshly works for spiritual ones.

The One Thing Which Is Needful!

Lk. 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Lk. 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Most of the time the ones who are spiritually waiting upon the Lord before the doing of it are the ones who come under fire by the religious because the pride of the religious desires to look spiritual before people without having to pay the price of waiting upon the Lord. Sound familiar? This is a disguise and a cover-up. In the passage, there is *only one thing* that the Lord says is NEEDFUL... and Mary has chosen well. That part is intimacy with the Lord and all in the church should know that and have it... sadly many chose religion.

Am I Spiritually Rich Or Poor?

...Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;

To the religious worldly riches are the sum of spiritual riches which should be displayed to all proving their ability to lead the church in spiritual matters. The notion here is that because I am successful by the worlds standards that I am also successful in spiritual matters. This was a rich church whose wealth, building, programs, etc. were the answer to anyone questioning their spirituality. Their read was that the Lord knew how spiritual they were.

...and knowest not

But this was a carnal church and a religious one to boot. They were living loose... claiming God's grace; they weren't close to the Lord in fellowship...they didn't have Intimacy with the Lord... their religion placed Him on the outside. I mean they still talked about the Lord... sang songs... talked about things relating to their peer group... They made their church very modern and appealing and tried not to scare anyone with preaching the Bible. They didn't even correct the lifestyles of those in the church that were living worldly lives in sinful ways. They were popular... a large church. The Lord said to them ...

and knowest not

They were lukewarm – spit Christians ready to be spewed.... They had NO DISCERNMENT because of NO TRUTH being taught there. They were seduced by the world... most all of the religious are you know. And where there is SEDUCTION there is DECEPTION and where there is DECEPTION there is more SEDUCTION...

This church didn't have any pray meetings... no intercession ... no prophets correcting them. No, that doesn't play well in a religious backslidden church.

that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

Now the true spiritual condition comes out **WRETCHED** which means **SINFUL** is the condition that cuts people off from fellowship with the Lord.

MISERABLE the condition of which they on the inside of them are very grieved and unsatisfied with their lives. The rich are some of the most miserable people around without the Lord. You would think here that since the religious are getting what they want that they would be happy, but no, they are disconnected with their insides which is where the leading of the Lord is. Not good, when your life is a flesh driven mess-up. **POOR** – they thought they were in great spiritual shape here... yet they are not rich spiritually. They have served the master they loved after which the Lord told them you cannot serve two masters. The religious are divided in their interests never able to fully commit to the things of God that most of the time interrupt and contradict worldly success for spiritual success. **BLIND** – again they are groping in the darkness... religion is a hit and miss situation unlike hearing the Lord and being fulfilled through following His revelations and intimate mind.

NAKED - the religious are not at all spiritually clothed. They are naked in the flesh and not as ones having received the spiritual vestments that come by intimacy.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich;

1Cori. 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Jn. 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Gold here represents the Eternal works which are manifest through us as the Lord lives His life through us by His Spirit. The Eternal fruit which remains are the things in this life which the Lord says will be the materials from which He makes our crown. Just like we are told in Galatians there are fleshly works opposite of them are the spiritually works which surmount to spiritual riches.

Matt. 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... (these are spiritual works)

The Lord counsel is something that they have *not* had coming to them... the Lord explains that their spiritual life required listening and following Him *not* themselves, walking in the realm of the Spirit and so carrying out His will that is rewarded so that they might be truly called **SPIRITUALLY RICH!**

and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;

The shame here is that they are calling themselves Christians yet have no true relationship with the Lord only a relationship with the church institution which is no more than a religious **CLUB**. This is a church of unconverted converts as all religious churches are made up of this type who call themselves by the name of

Christ-ian (devotees of Jesus and His Word) yet always seem to live unto themselves and never unto the Lord's presence. The very word church means those which are called out from the world and called to be separate unto the Lord.

and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Spiritual blindness is for the most part self inducted... is it not that they cannot see But that most of them don't want to true see their spiritual condition. So here the Lord tells us they who desire to come out of religion need the Holy Spirit's anointing eyesalve. Saul of Tarsus (Paul) became enlightened through the light which came from his first encounter in intimate fellowship with Jesus... and thus religion could no longer hold him. This religious church here desperately needs their eyes to see... and the anointing will carry them into this transformation.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Now primarily religious churches will never take the Bible and preach correction of its people. This one didn't, yet the Lord says we are to have the Holy Spirit in the church doing this ministry unto the saints for their spiritual health.

Heb 12:7,8 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

2Tim. 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Spiritual sons and daughters are correctable by the Spirit' Word the Bible. Had this church been teaching the Bible and correcting their people it would have been more spiritually up-right and praised by our Lord.

Walk Though This Door

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

The religious church here as an institution doesn't have at its center the Lord Jesus Christ the head of the church. Notice Jesus is knocking outside of its building and calling not to its leaders but to its individual members... those spiritually sensitive enough to listen and enter into intimate communion with Him. Notice the church members here are spiritually having to get feed outside of the institution that they formerly attended yet once they have tasted of the Living Bread they are ever coming back to His table, again and again.

The Reverence Of The Lord And A Watching Praying Church

Rev. 3:1-3 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and

repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Sardis not a watching praying church. Those who are not reverence are not devoted. Sardis is letting the word of God slip away from them – they are not in it... they spiritually are digressing. If a church is not progressing spiritually they are digressing, there is no middle ground. They are told to strength their spiritual conditions. They haven't been plugged into pray and their spiritual works are lacking. When the church is spiritually in these conditions as a group as well as individually the Lord says to REMEMBER what was received... what was heard... This would mean a review or refresher on the person they are believing namely the Lord and His fresh fellowship... and what He has taught. Holdfast to those things that are the foundations of our believing and the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Repentance here is for spiritual neglect with the warning of being overtaken and without spiritual awareness or spiritual sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

Lord, Lord...

Many people in the church want to have Jesus in their lives and live on their own term with the Lord. They want to name the name of Jesus and live as they please. They want their own ways about them instead of the choosing the ways of the Lord. These may be among those who will some day say LORD, LORD...

Matt. 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

The obedient are rewarded with heaven.

Matt. 7:22 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?

Those who operate out of reverence and observation not independently will be rewarded.

Lk. 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

The Lord is pointing out hypocrisy here toward the religious who name His name And call Him their Lord when they live for themselves by their own will and serve themselves.

Matt. 25:11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

The same group apparently weren't watching and praying and were overtaken missing the Rapture of the church.

Lk. 13:25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

The same group ends up in the Tribulation knocking on heaven's door but missed out because they didn't have time to be ready for the Lord's return.

Following False Teachings And Gurus In The Church

Pergamos

Rev. 2:14-15 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

False teachings by gurus indoctrinate people and can them away from a right relationship with our Lord. We can come under the judgment if we do not separate ourselves from these teachings.

Thyatira

Rev.2:20-23 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Following a guru as these did will be very costly. She convinced those in this church to receive that which was not taught in the Bible. She led these into the worship of their own concept of God (making an image of God for themselves and not that which comes from the Scriptures). This false teaching leads them to commit spiritual fornication or spiritual adultery which without repentance cast them into the great tribulation. The Lord wants to tell the church that He will judge it for these actions.

Jesus searches and tries the reins and hearts... and says He will make an account of all. When the image of God is marred and distorted by false teaching it causes those who entertain these notions to worship another Jesus, a counterfeit Jesus that is false and we are seduced into thinking the Lord is in agreement with all our fleshly lusts, wrong desires. It is amazing that after hitting a few HOT BUTTONS of the flesh... they are well on their way in putting it over on their listeners.

2Tim. 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears

The enemy raises up these gurus for only one reason... to steal away your pure devotion and intimate fellowship with His Spirit.

Paul Talks About A Simple Pure Worship And Devotion (the Bride of Christ)

2Corin. 11:2-4 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled (tricked) Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted (((from))) the simplicity (of worship and devotion to Jesus Christ) that is in Christ. For if he (the false teacher) that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him (Paul's rebuke for them not stopping this spiritual seduction).

The Apostle says that he is aware of those who are trying very hard to take you away from your pure worship and devotion to the Lord. When a person has something wrong in their heart... the enemy who is the tempter seeks out a false teacher to tell them what they want to hear reinforcing or justifying their desires to go astray from the Lord. There is a spirit behind the scene who is directing and orchestrating this introduction to the acceptance that it was the Lord Jesus all along which is giving them the OK ;-) ... This spirit teaches *another message*... twisting Scripture to be on the side of the sinful disobedient. This spirit presents for a persons acceptance, another Jesus must more in agreement with the world, the flesh and the devil. In fact normally the lines between good and evil are black and white but this spirit majors in making the lines blur and it OK to do as one pleases. So religion here is making the Lord into our own image and likeness and having our will about everything and still claiming security in Christ.

The Bride Of Christ

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

It is in this marriage chapter that Paul speaks of the Bride of Christ of which we are, so that we should live our lives as those who are intimate in heart toward each other.

Ps 4:4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

Speaking to God and listening for His voice in our conscience.

Ps 77:6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

Remembering the Lord, worshiping the Lord, searching the Spirit of God in our spirit (or heart). These describe what happens when we are engaged in having an intimate relationship with our Lord.

Repentance, Restoration, The First Love, And The First Works

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Restoring The Spiritually Fallen

Gal. 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

We are called to help our brothers and sisters to be restore to spiritual wholeness, Spirit, soul, and body.

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

We are called to pray for those who are those who are weak in faith, encourage and strengthen one another by washing each other.

Jn. 13:14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

Our example was Jesus as He washed those as a servant.

End

Discussion Time –

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