

**WIN  
&  
GROW  
DISCIPLES  
WHO SHOW ALLEGIANCE TO  
JESUS**

**Trinity Fellowship is here to . . . READ SLIDE**

**TR: That allegiance manifests itself in the . . .**



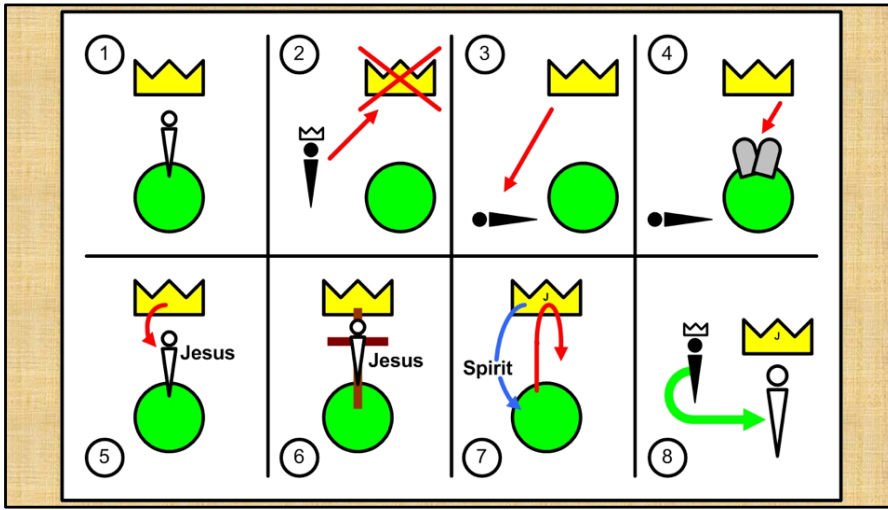
## **6W's of a Healthy Christian**

-- REVIEW SLIDE

-- Christians ought to be a beautiful reflection of Jesus.

-- Our lives, making ever more progress in these 6 W's, should make it easier for others to believe the truth about God's Good News Story.

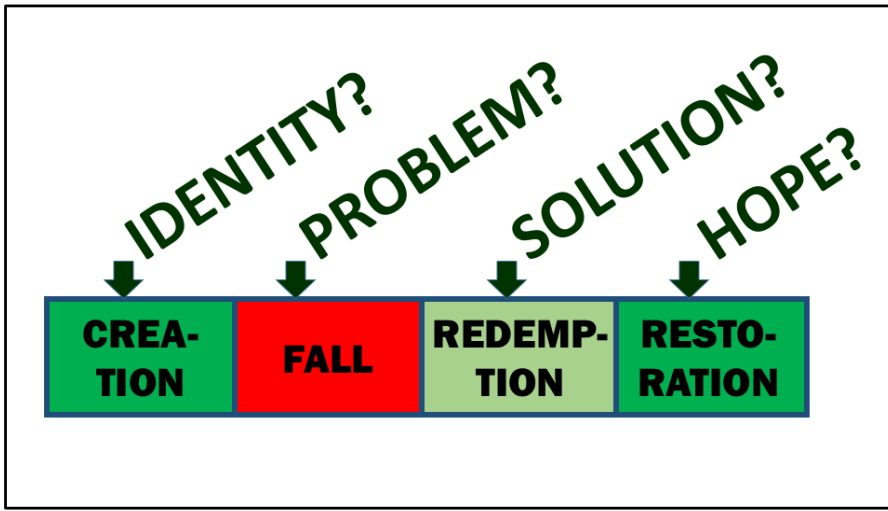
TR: His story that gives an outline to all history can be captured in . . .



**. . . 8 Simple Drawings.**

**-- Hopefully, we are all able to present the data-points of the Gospel**

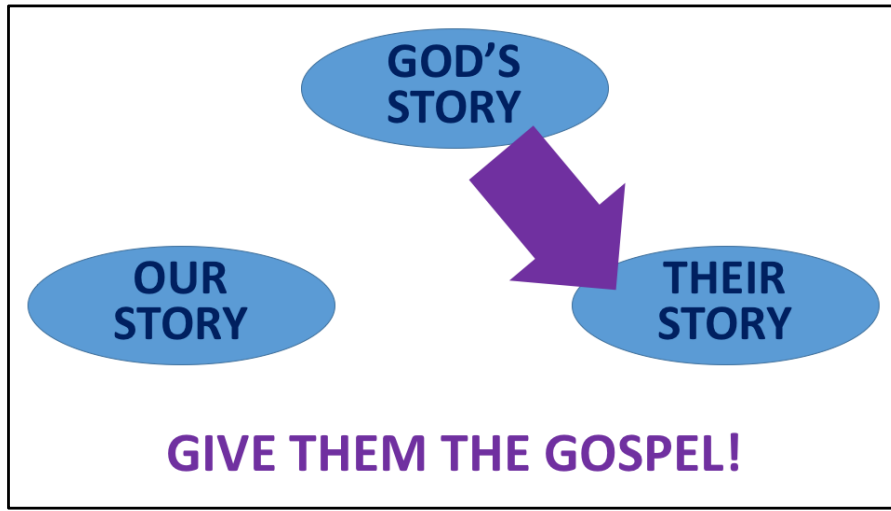
**TR: In our small groups, we've also learned an even more basic outline . . .**



## REVIEW SLIDE

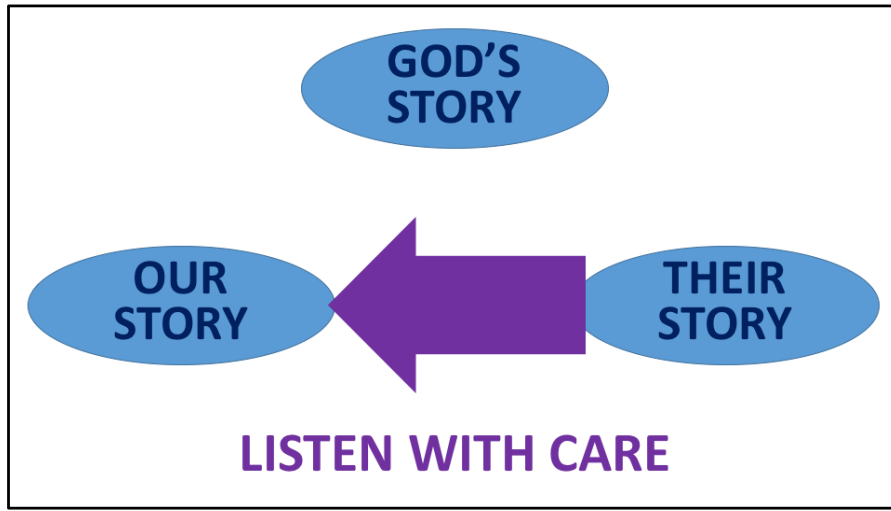
TR: With this clear outline and a clear mission, why does it often seem like we are ineffective at the outreach arm of healthy, the arm of WITNESS?





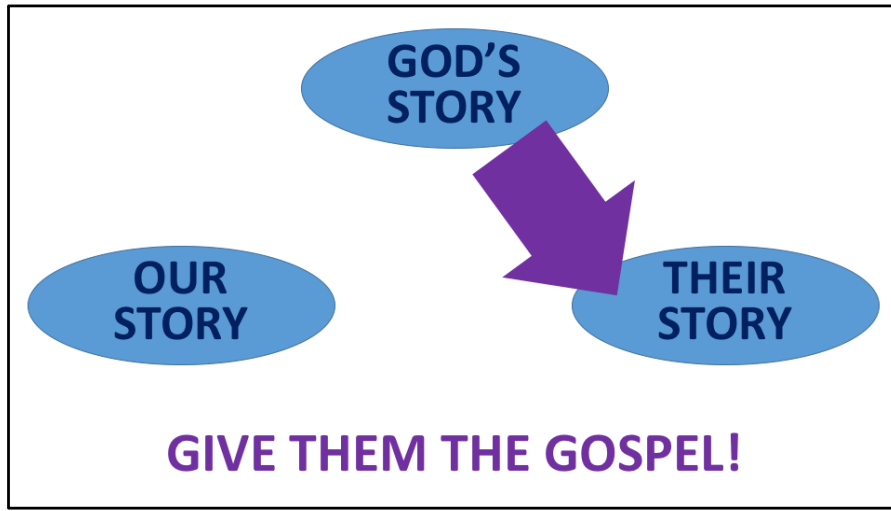
**Part of the reason is that we imagine being a witness is just about telling God's story to others.**

**TR: Yet, we've learned that, after beginning with prayer, we need to . . .**



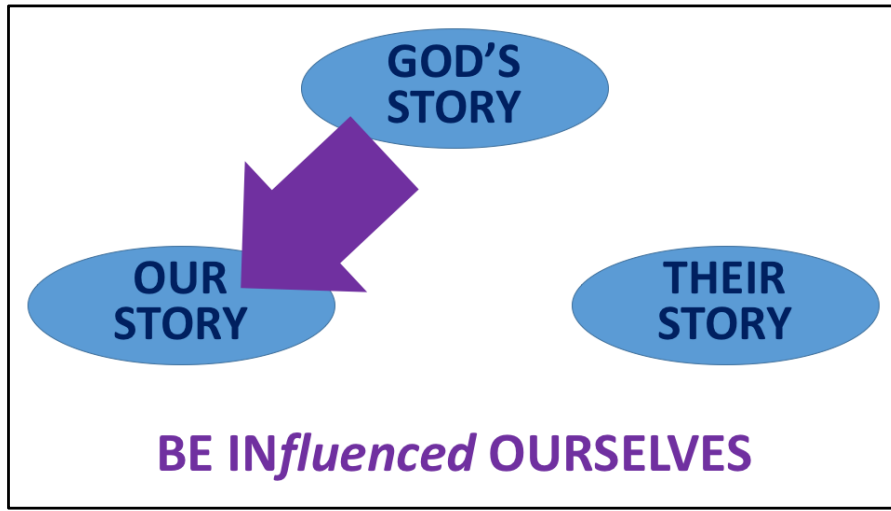
**listen with care . . .**

**TR: But, even then, we are often not very effective, because we use what we hear to impersonally . . .**



... “sell” them the gospel ... at least that’s what many folks feel like when we witness to them.

**TR: The missing component to WINNING disciples who show allegiance to Jesus is for us first . . .**



- . . . to GROW as disciples who show allegiance to Jesus.**
- We need to be influenced by the Gospel . . . we need to be gospelized ourselves.**
  - This doesn't mean perfection but progress . . . people are looking for authentic followers of Jesus, not pretenders of perfection.**

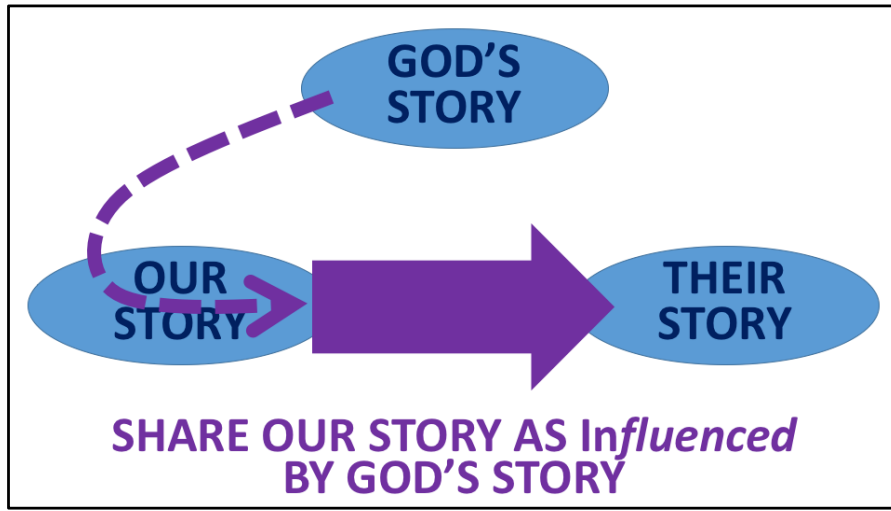
**TR: If we are to be Healthy witnesses . . .**

**WE MUST FIRST BE  
GOSPEL IN*fluence***

...  
**TO BE  
A GOSPEL IN***fluence*

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: And then we can seek to WIN disciples by . . .**



**. . . connecting their story to God's story through our story.**

**-- This is the step of vulnerability that many of us find challenging.**

**-- The complaint of the world is that Christians are hypocrites. That we try to sell the gospel, but we haven't really bought into it ourselves.**

**TR: Many Christians lose sight of the mission, making Jesus merely our FIXER. We forget what all of our lives are supposed to be . . .**

**“A quote I heard recently, ‘We are God’s plan to make it believable that He is good and loving and true.’”**

Francis Chan, You and Me Forever, p.36

**Francis Chan shared a quote he heard . . . READ SLIDE**

**TR: For example . . . Jesus is not here to fix our marriages, but rather our marriages are here to display the Gospel . . .**

**“We are called to create such an attractive picture of marriage that it causes people to long for the coming marriage with Jesus.”**

Francis Chan, *You and Me Forever*

**Again, Chan . . . READ SLIDE**

**-- Our marriages should make it easier for people to believe that Jesus is Who He said He was and did what He said He would do.**

**TR: Our marriages are meant to shout the Gospel . . .**



**“And He chose marriage as a billboard by which He could shout His message. So He calls us to cultivate marriages that represent Him accurately.”**

Francis Chan, You and Me Forever, p. 73

**Again, Chan . . . READ SLIDE**

**-- As Lisa Chan says . . . imagine if the divorce rate among Christians was next to nil . . . that would be a billboard the world would certainly stop and read.**

**-- BUT, many times, when we finally get the courage to tell some of the data-points of the Gospel, it is without the vulnerability of sharing how God’s story has and is impacting our story.**

**TR: I imagine a bride extolling the wonder of marriage, but when asked about how her groom had lavished love on her recently, she only could hold up a . . .**



**. . . bouquet of wilted flowers.**

**-- Our marriages are first and foremost to be displays of what Jesus and His bride's relationship is like.**

**-- Jesus is not primarily here to make your marriage such a bliss that it makes you NOT want to see Him face to face.**

**-- He wants us to have the joy of being the eternal friendship with Him that we were created for and redeemed to. It is that daily-fresh relationship that will change all our relationships, including our marriages.**

**-- The ultimate hope is not just a fixed marriage, it is a vital relationship with our Creator and Savior.**

**-- In other words, we may be talking about Jesus without walking with Jesus . . . and the world around us crinkles its nose and says, "That doesn't pass the smell test."**

**TR: With this as background, can you take a moment to imagine with me sitting with Jesus . . .**

**(14, 18a) Imagine receiving counsel from Jesus on being a faithful and true witness.**

**. . . He is the faithful and true witness.**

**-- He walked AND talked, showing allegiance to His heavenly Father and the plan of salvation.**

**-- What counsel would He give to many of us who are struggling to have a healthy arm of witness?**

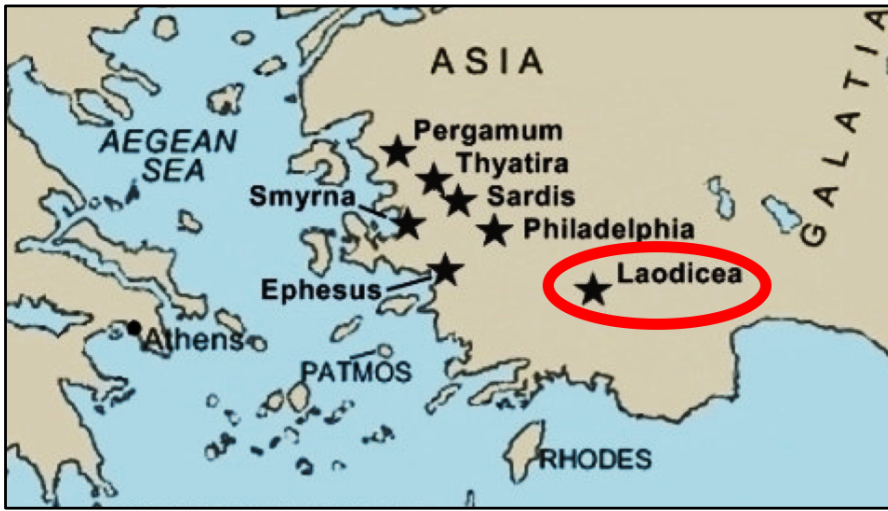
**TR: We can find out by turning to the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation.**

**“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.’”**

ESV

**In the last of the seven letters to the churches, addressing “what is” before He addresses “what is to come,” we read . . .  
READ SLIDE**

**TR: The seven churches in Asia Minor, modern Turkey, follow a trade route . . .**



**. . . that starts at Ephesus, makes its way north to Pergamum and then southeast, ending with Laodicea.**

**TR: Zooming in a bit . . .**



**. . . we are reminded that Laodicea is located in the Lycus River valley, within sight of Hierapolis and Colosse.**

**TR: Remember, we are thinking about Jesus giving us counsel. We may be tempted to think it would be a . . .**





**. . . comfortable moment, full of smiles and laughter.**

**TR: But, in Revelation 3, we find something very different, don't we?**



**(14, 18a) Imagine receiving  
counsel from Jesus on being a  
faithful and true witness.  
But, it is really an intervention.**

**What we find seems to be more of an intervention.**

**TR: In many of the other of the 7 letters, we find some  
affirmation. Jesus knows their good works . . . but that's not  
what we read . . .**

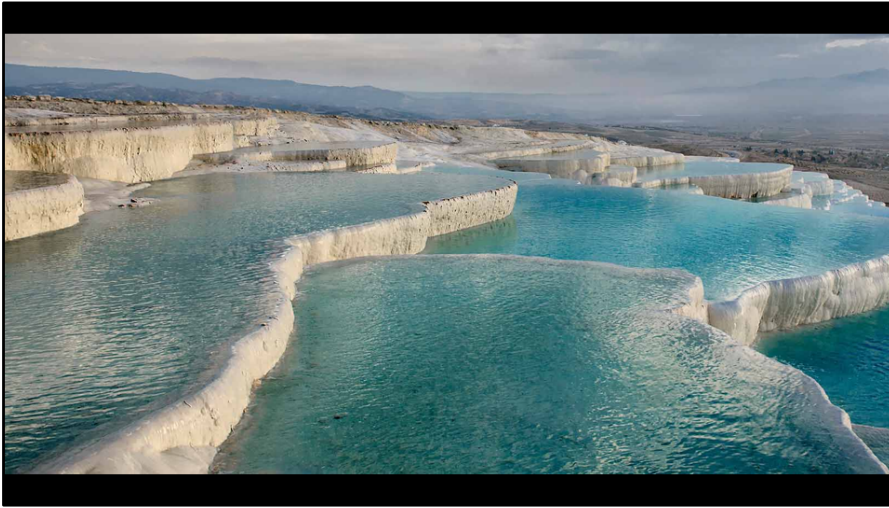
**“I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! <sup>16</sup>So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.”**

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

- Jesus is not wanting us to be HOT for Him, OR to be COLD towards Him.**
- He is not speaking to the Laodiceans about their level of fervor.**

**TR: He is using their geographical surroundings to make a powerful point.**



**Across the valley, maybe 6 miles away, were the cascading cliffs of Hierapolis.**

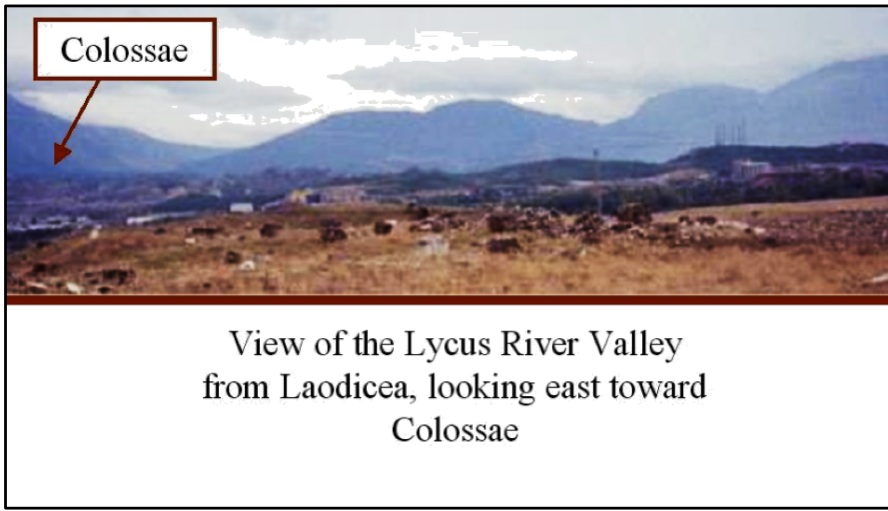
**-- Warm water, that we now know is radiated, was useful for bathing and for the reducing of tumors.**

**TR: The Laodiceans could look over the valley and . . .**



**. . . see the white “cliffs” of Hierapolis with its HOT water.**

**TR: If they turned their gaze up the valley, they would have seen . . .**



**. . . Colossae. Though there are no unearthed ruins there now, its location in the foothills was known for its COLD, refreshing water.**

**TR: Jesus, giving the Laodiceans an intervention, says to them .**

**. .**



**(14, 18a) Imagine receiving counsel from Jesus on being a faithful and true witness.**

**But, it is really an intervention.**

- **(15) He says we are useless**

**. . . and to us, if we are lukewarm like them, that we are useless.**

**TR: The imagery of “spitting out of his mouth” makes the intervention even more forceful . . .**



**. . . since the water that the city did have was brought in by aqueduct.**

**-- It was full of minerals, as seen in the calcified pipes unearthed at the ruins of the city.**

**TR: Jesus not only confronts the Laodiceans by saying their works are useless, He says . . .**

**(14, 18a) Imagine receiving counsel from Jesus on being a faithful and true witness.**

**But, it is really an intervention.**

- **(15) He says we are useless**
- **(16) He says we make Him sick**

**. . . that they make Him sick.**

**-- Christians who are no longer influenced by the Gospel, who carry a dried out and wilted bouquet of Jesus' love, make God gag.**

**TR: That seems pretty strong. It feels like an offensive intervention. Verse 17 tells us why the Laodiceans and those of similar ilk make Jesus wretch.**



**“For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing,**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: In my imagination, receiving counsel from Jesus, I can picture myself responding to His strong words with a . . .**

**(17a) Like the Laodiceans, we want to defend ourselves.**

**. . . defense.**

- Laodicea was a crossroads town, made wealthy by the trade.**
- It was a proud town, refusing Roman help to rebuild after a devastating earthquake.**
- And the church there had been conformed the world around them, NOT transformed by the renewing of their minds.**

**TR: They considered themselves rich, prosperous, needing nothing from anyone . . . including from Jesus.**

**“For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.”**

ESV

**Let’s reread the whole of verse 17 . . . READ SLIDE**

**-- We want to defend ourselves and point to all our wealth and outward signs of success.**

**-- No longer do we say, “Silver and gold have I none” . . .**

**-- Rather, we have reached the American dream of being self-sufficient, self-sustaining, and secure.**

**TR: But, Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, says to us . . .**

(17a) Like the Laodiceans, we want to defend ourselves.

(17b) But, Jesus continues the intervention.

- He says we are wretched & pitiable
- He says we are poor, naked, blind

. . . we are wretched and pitiable . . . READ SLIDE

TR: If I were the Laodiceans, I know I would be tempted to at least think . . .

Perhaps, like the Laodiceans, we think, "I thought You loved us?"

. . . "But, I thought You loved us, Jesus?"

-- "How can you call us useless, sickening, wretched, pitiable, poor, naked, and blind?"

TR: Jesus seems to anticipate that thinking we He says in verse 19 . . .

**“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.”**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Jesus responds to our thoughts . . .**



Perhaps, like the Laodiceans, we think, "I thought You loved us?"

(19) Jesus responds to our thoughts, "Those I love, I discipline."

. . . reminding us that His love is not a weak, syrupy, sappy, sentimental emotional vapor.

-- His love is one that includes discipline.

-- When a church or an individual Christian is made useless because of pride, He disciplines to restore us to a station of humility.

-- It is the humble who realize that they need first to be influenced by the Gospel if they are to be effective influencers.

-- It is the grateful humble who understand that the wedding photos, that are to show the world the love between Jesus and the Church, will be a lot more effective if the bouquet is fresh.

TR: What does Jesus counsel Laodicean-like Christians? Verse 18 . . .

**“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.”**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: The Amen and the Beginning of God’s Creation, the One Who created all things . . .**



**(18) The “Amen” and “Beginning of God’s Creation” gives His counsel:**

- **Buy from Him gold refined by fire and be rich**

**. . . gives us His counsel . . .**

**-- first, READ SLIDE**

**-- This city, known for buying and selling, was told to “BUY” gold . . . with what?**

**-- I think it is by faith, asking and believing that the grace of Jesus wants to give us exactly what we need . . .**

**-- BUT, we need to want it. We have not, because we ask not.**

**TR: This town was known for its luxurious black wool garments, but Jesus counsels them . . .**

**(18) The “Amen” and “Beginning of God’s Creation” gives His counsel:**

- **Buy from Him gold refined by fire and be rich**
- **Buy from Him white garments and cover your shame**

### **READ SLIDE**

-- Jesus, in the letter, is not speaking of literal gold, nor of literal, earthly clothing.

-- He is speaking of the righteousness, His righteousness, with which we cover our shame.

-- How many Christians are still controlled by shame? At times, in our pride, we imagine that no one knows and that we can cover up adequately so that no one will see . . . but such pretense makes our witness powerless.

-- Such self-protectionism and worrying about what others think, more than what God knows, is nothing but holding out a shriveled up bouquet and then smiling and saying being the bride of Christ is wonderful.

**TR: Laodicea was also known for producing an eye salve that**

**was renowned for its healing properties. It was the town with, if I can say it, a school of optometry in it.**

(18) The “Amen” and “Beginning of God’s Creation” gives His counsel:

- Buy from Him gold refined by fire and be rich
- Buy from Him white garments and cover your shame
- Buy from Him eye salve and be able to see

But, Jesus’ counsel is . . . READ SLIDE

-- Their, and our, pride keeps us from being able to see. We cannot perceive what God has done, is doing, and will do.

-- We are as blind as the world around us.

-- Jesus elsewhere talks about the blind leading the blind.

-- Laodicean Christians and churches are blind. We want to tell others how to walk down the path of life, but we ourselves cannot see.

-- Our counseling Jesus is the One described in Revelation 1 – *12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze,*

***refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.***

**TR: Who accepts His intervention, His counsel?**



But, only the humble . . .

- “Accept” their poverty

### **READ SLIDE**

-- Do we accept our poverty?

-- That every good thing we have has been a gift from Jesus.  
We have earned nothing.

-- And, as we have drifted into being “Christian Atheists”,  
claiming to be followers of Jesus but living like God doesn’t  
even exist for the other 167 hours of the week, will we admit  
our state of being useless and sickening to Jesus.

-- Only the humble stop defending themselves, saying,  
“Compared to others, I am rich.”

TR: Only the humble will . . .

But, only the humble . . .

- “Accept” their poverty
- “Receive” His discipline

**. . . READ SLIDE**

-- Jesus disciplines those whom He loves.

-- He wants us to show allegiance to Him in the 6W's. He wants us to fulfill His great commission by winning and growing disciples.

-- He wants our whole lives: marriage, schooling, work, play . . . to have the sweet scent of His presence . . . as we carry the fresh daily bouquet of His grace.

**TR: It is the humble who understand the relational dynamic of faith in Christ. As verse 20 says . . .**

Revelation 3:20-21 p. 1131

**“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.”**

ESV

## **READ SLIDE**

**TR: Many of heard of this imagery of Jesus standing at the door as tied to receiving Christ as Savior, but . . .**





**. . . this letter was written to a local church, to those who professed faith in Jesus.**

**-- Certainly the imagery works for trusting Christ for the first time.**

**-- But, the counsel of Jesus is that it works everyday . . . for He wants to have table fellowship with us.**

**TR: Only the humble . . .**

But, only the humble . . .

- “Accept” their poverty
- “Receive” His discipline
- (20-21) “Open the Door” to His eternal friendship

**. . . READ SLIDE**

-- We were created by God in His image for His glory by fulfilling His purpose of our being in an eternal friendship relationship with Him.

-- That is our identity. That is our hope.

-- Jesus is standing at the door, knocking. He wants to have table fellowship with us, His bride.

-- He wants to bring us a fresh bouquet of His grace every day, so that our beauty, as well-reflected in our earthly relationships, might draw others to Him.

**TR: His counsel to us, if we want to be faithful and true witnesses of the Gospel, is to realize that . . .**

Only the humble remain  
“gospelized” about our

- Resources (gold)
- Security (garments)
- Insight (revelation)

### **READ SLIDE**

-- Last week we talked about our hope . . . that's it's true, it gets better, and it will be OK.

-- It will be OK when we have daily fellowship with God . . . when we open the door and welcome Jesus in.

-- When we humbly realize that without Him we are resource poor, clothed with rags of shame, and blind to what He wants us to see.

-- I believe Jesus would give this same counsel to many if not most of the churches in the USA.

-- If we are to be people of influence, it will not be because we pretend to be perfect, but if we daily humble our hearts and remain gospelized ourselves.

-- We must be the bride with the forever refreshed bouquet of God's grace within our hands.

**-- Jesus is standing at the door and knocking . . . will you invite Him into the dailies of your life?**

**-- It is the presence of Jesus, though His Holy Spirit, that makes us useful . . . that makes us influencers IN our communities.**

**TR: A final reminder as we walk out of our counseling sessions with Jesus . . .**

Revelation 3:22 p. 1131

**“He who  
has an ear,  
let him  
hear what  
the Spirit  
says to the  
churches.”**



ESV

**READ SLIDE**