

## ***Jesus' Message to the Church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22)***

### **I. PROPHEPIC EXPERIENCE IN CAIRO, EGYPT IN SEPTEMBER 1982**

- A. In September 1982 in Cairo, Egypt, the Lord said to me, ***"I will change the understanding and expression of Christianity in the earth in one generation."*** Then He said, ***"I am inviting you to be a part of a work that will touch the ends of the earth. You have only said yes but have not yet done it. Many have said yes but did not do it. Beware lest your brethren steal these from your heart."***
- B. On November 28, 1982, fifty of us met in a home to talk about our new church plant in Kansas City. The Lord surprised us by speaking to us about being like ***Gideon's army*** (Judg. 6-7). On December 5, our new church had its first public service. I spoke from Luke 18:7 and Isaiah 62:6-7.
- C. I met Bob on March 7, 1983. He said, "You will lead a youth movement of singers and musicians that will be used in power evangelism and will mobilize prayer for Israel. You will receive abundant grace in the prophetic and intercession and be connected to Asia by "unplugged TVs."
- D. On April 13, the Lord spoke to me about Dan. 9-10 and calling a 21-day fast starting on May 7. On April 14, Bob said that Gabriel visited him saying, "Give the young man Daniel 9, and he will understand," and that the fast would be confirmed by a ***comet unpredicted by scientists*** on May 7. On May 7, a local Kansas City newspaper reported a comet unpredicted by scientists. The article, ***"May's Surprise Comet"*** (Harvard Center for Astrophysics) said it was first seen on April 25.
- E. During the 21-day fast/solemn assembly (May 7-28, 1983), God gave us two glorious promises.
  - 1. The Lord said, ***"I will establish 24-hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David"*** (in context to Ps. 27:4). An angel told Bob Jones that we would ***grow from 500 to 5,000 intercessors*** over night by the flood of the Spirit and that it would be confirmed as we watched ***"Mississippi"***.
  - 2. God promised to release a healing anointing in our midst; He said: ***"No disease known to man will stand before this people."*** This level of power will be seen in many ministries as well.
- F. On May 28, Bob Jones said the revival we prayed for would not coming immediately; the spiritual drought over USA would continue until God's appointed time to send "the rains of the Spirit." Bob prophesied a natural drought in KC lasting three months. But rain would come on August 23 to show that God had an appointed day when the "spiritual drought" in the US would end.
- G. On August 23, it rained for maybe 30 minutes as we gathered at 7pm; it came in the midst of a 3-month drought in KC (July 1-October 1) that was the second worst drought on record for KC.
- H. On November 7, 1983, Bob told me that God would give me a revelation directly from His throne on November 15, 1983 and that afterwards, ***"I would never doubt again"*** that God sovereignly called the solemn assembly on May 7, 1983, to birth a youth movement to touch the ends of earth.

- I. In August 1979, Howard Pittman had a heavenly experience in which God told him that He was raising up a people like “Gideon’s army” whom He would anoint with great miracles. God showed him that He would **“begin to recruit this army in earnest”** on May 7, 1983, accompanied by a heavenly sign. Pittman wrote his story in a book *Placebo* published 3 years earlier in May 1980.

## **II. THE CALL TO OVERCOME BEING SPIRITUALLY LUKEWARM**

- A. Jesus promised the church of Laodicea deep fellowship with Him at that time and in the age to come. He required that they repent of being spiritually lukewarm. Their problem was spiritual blindness and pride; also they were too easily contented with their spiritual lives and ministries.

***<sup>14</sup>“To the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: <sup>15</sup>“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot...<sup>16</sup>you are lukewarm...<sup>17</sup>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—<sup>18</sup>I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire...<sup>19</sup>As many as I love, I rebuke...<sup>20</sup>Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone...opens the door, I will come...and dine with him...<sup>21</sup>To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne...””*** (Rev. 3:14-21)

- B. ***The Faithful and True Witness***: What Jesus speaks is reliable and true (3:7). Jesus was about to tell them the truth in both positive and negative ways. He revealed great promises in 3:18-21 along with their spiritual condition in 3:15-17. He never exaggerates, flatters, or unjustly criticizes.

- C. ***The Beginning of creation***: He is the beginning or the “first” cause of creation. In other words, the power, source, and reason for creation “begins” with Jesus (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-18).

- D. In love, Jesus disciplines His people so that they might be rich in God and freed from spiritual boredom, dullness, and compromise. He speaks with tender love when calling us to wholehearted love and obedience. He insists on that which deepens our love for Him and results in our greatness.

***<sup>12</sup>For whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.*** (Prov. 3:12)

- E. ***Lukewarm***: This is opposite of walking in the first commandment: to love God with all their heart.

- F. ***I will vomit you out of My mouth***: Jesus’ heart was sick (His stomach hurt) with concern over them and what they were losing in their relationship with Him. He is not “repulsed” by the people who are lukewarm but feels anguish for them because of His love and investment in them. He does not despise His people. He boldly declared His love (3:19) and desired that they rule with Him (3:21).

***<sup>9</sup>In all their affliction He was afflicted...in His love...He redeemed them...*** (Isa. 63:9)

***<sup>7</sup>I have given the dearly beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies.*** (Jer. 12:7)

- G. They did not know their true spiritual condition

1. ***Wretched***: This Greek word means “calloused” or “hardened;” that is, to be spiritually dull.

2. **Miserable:** They were spiritually bored and without an appetite for the Word and prayer.
3. **Poor:** Being spiritually deficient and poor is not the same as being “poor in spirit” (Mt. 5:3).
4. **Blind:** Being spiritual blind includes not seeing the truth about God or one’s own condition.
5. **Naked:** Being spiritually naked speaks of believers who lack being rewarded with heavenly garments in the age to come—garments that express how they loved Jesus in this age.

### III. EXHORTATION TO RESPOND: BUY GOLD AND GARMENTS AND USE EYE SALVE

- A. Jesus gave three exhortations with promises that have temporal and eternal applications.

***<sup>18</sup>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...<sup>19</sup>Therefore be zealous and repent. (Rev. 3:18-19)***

- B. ***I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire:*** The gold of a deep relationship with Jesus makes us rich in this age by tenderizing our heart to feel more love from Him and for Him.

1. Jesus exhorts us to “buy gold” or to engage in the God-ordained process of acquiring a deep relationship with God. In “buying” gold, we do not “earn” it, but we invest ourselves in a costly way to position ourselves to receive “gold.” Isaiah called the people “to buy food” by listening or being attentive to the Spirit, then responding to what we hear (Isa. 55:1-3).

***<sup>1</sup>“Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters...buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money <sup>2</sup>...Listen carefully to Me...and let your soul delight in abundance.***

***<sup>3</sup>Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live...” (Isa. 55:1-3)***

2. Jesus exhorted them to acquire “gold refined by fire”—this gold is highlighted in John 13-17.
3. Purified gold does not come easy. People mine for gold and then put it in the fire to refine it. Gold refined by fire involves a costly and painful process to remove the dross.

***<sup>2</sup>He is like a refiner’s fire...<sup>3</sup>He will purify the sons...as gold and silver that they may offer...an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:2-3)***

- C. ***Buy white garments:*** Jesus exhorted us “to buy” or acquire garments by making righteous choices that will result in being rewarded with heavenly garments (Rev. 19:8). Being spiritually naked in the age to come speaks of believers who lack various heavenly garments that are given as a reward for righteous choices. Here, shame refers to lacking garments that reveal our love for Him in this age.

***<sup>8</sup>To her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen...the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev. 19:8)***

***<sup>15</sup>Blessed is he who...keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. (Rev. 16:15)***

- D. ***Anoint your eyes with eye salve:*** God’s people are to take action in the grace of God to cure their spiritually sick eyes. The Spirit gives us revelation of Jesus as we feed on the Word (Eph. 1:17).

- E. **Be zealous:** To be diligent and focused in overcoming their lukewarm spiritual condition.
- F. **Repent:** They were to make lifestyle changes in attitudes, speech, actions, and relationships—thus to change some of the ways and places that they spent their time and money.

#### IV. PROMISE FOR OVERCOMERS: INTIMACY AND AUTHORITY

- A. Jesus beckons us to draw near to Him and promises great rewards for those who respond.  
*<sup>20</sup>Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. <sup>21</sup>To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Rev. 3:20-21)*
- B. **I stand at the door and knock:** Jesus can open all doors (Rev. 3:7-8) except the door of our heart. Jesus will not violate our free will. When we neglect to invest the time and energy to open our heart to Him, we are not loved less by Jesus, but we minimize our ability to enjoy relating to Him, to receive greater understanding of Him, to enjoy godly fellowship, and to receive eternal rewards.
- C. **If anyone opens the door:** Jesus invites all individuals who hear. You have not gone too far. There is still hope and opportunity for any believer to recover the sensitivity and tenderness that was lost.
- D. **I dine with him, and he with Me:** To eat together speaks of deep fellowship as the Spirit tenderizes our heart. Jesus promises to manifest Himself in a greater way to those who love and obey Him.  
*<sup>21</sup>He who...keeps them [God's commands], it is he who loves Me...I will love him and manifest Myself to him...<sup>23</sup>If anyone loves Me... We will come to him and make Our home with him. (Jn. 14:21-23)*
  1. The eternal application of this refers to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 3:20; 19:9; cf. Lk. 22:16, 29, 30; Mt. 26:29; Mk. 14:25).
  2. He longs for His people to feast with Him as He makes them lovesick at His banqueting table (Song 2:4-5).  
*<sup>4</sup>He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love. <sup>5</sup>Sustain me with cakes of raisins; refresh me with apples, for I am lovesick. (Song 2:4-5)*
- E. **I will grant to sit with Me on My throne:** All believers are offered the opportunity to rule with Jesus in the Millennium (Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 20:4).  
*<sup>10</sup>“And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” (Rev. 5:10)*

***6...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.***  
***(Rev. 20:6)***

1. Jesus promised the apostles that they would eat and drink with Him and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt. 19:28; Lk. 22:29-30).

***28"...when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Mt. 19:28)***

***29I bestow upon you a kingdom...30that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Lk. 22:29-30)***

2. Eating and ruling with Jesus are regularly brought together and express intimacy with Him.