

Session 10 Correction to Those Neglecting Jesus' Primary Message

I. REVIEW: THE CALL TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OF OUR HEART

- A. Outside of the coming of Jesus, the greatest miracle in history is the transformation of the passive, compromising end-time Church into a *"prepared Bride"* walking in the first commandment.
7...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)
- B. The end-time Church will be established in her spiritual identity as a cherished Bride (Rev. 22:17).
17The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)
- C. ***The Bridegroom revival:*** Jesus will come to His people as a Bridegroom who wants all of their heart. The end-time *"Bridegroom revival"* will be far more invasive than any revival in history. Jesus will reveal and impart His love in an unprecedented way that will transform the Church.
- D. Jesus' statement in Matthew 22:37-38 is one of the most significant statements in Scripture.
37"You shall love the Lord..." 38This is the first and great commandment." (Mt. 22:37-38)
- E. Some are dutiful in serving Him, neglecting to engage their heart with Him. We "set our love" on God by determining that the *primary dream* (purpose) of our life is to pursue walking out the first commandment by grace. Other blessings—family, vocation, ministry—flow from loving God.
14"Because he has set his love [heart] upon Me, therefore I will deliver him." (Ps. 91:14)
- F. We must intentionally cooperate with grace to cultivate a responsive heart that loves Jesus. Mary was never mentioned in the book of Acts nor in church history. She was not known by people for her public ministry. Nonetheless, she will be known forever for her extravagant love for Jesus.
39She had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. 40But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she...said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." 41Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled [bothered; NAS] about many things. 42But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." (Lk. 10:39-42)
- G. ***Sat at Jesus' feet:*** Mary sat at Jesus' feet to hear His word (10:39). Reading Scripture is meant to help us to talk with God by giving us the "conversational material" used in devotional prayer.
For more teaching on this, see the links at the end of this document.
- H. ***One thing is needed:*** Jesus settled the issue of how important Mary's lifestyle is. There is no substitute for this. Jesus honored the wisdom and power of this lifestyle by calling it "good."
- I. ***Has chosen:*** Mary chose this lifestyle (10:42). We also must choose it. No one can choose it for us.

- J. **Not taken away:** Jesus prophesied that Mary's heart of devotion would not be taken away from her (10:42). Grace for a lifestyle of extravagant devotion could be sustained throughout her life if she continued to choose it. At the judgment seat of Christ, her life will be rewarded (1 Cor. 3:14).

II. THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS WAS CALLED TO RETURN TO THEIR FIRST LOVE (2:4)

- A. Jesus corrected the church of Ephesus for neglecting to love Him in the way that initially was so prominent in the great Ephesian revival (Acts 19). Service and doctrinal purity are very important, but they can never replace taking time to cultivate our love for and communion with Jesus.

1"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write...***2***"I know your works...***3***you have persevered... and labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. ***4***...I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ***5***Remember from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works." (Rev. 2:1-5)

- B. Jesus called them to respond in three ways to restore their first love—to remember, repent, and act.
1. **Remember:** They were to recall how God loves them and how they used to love Jesus and spend time with Him. Do you remember when you felt the joy of abandonment to Jesus?
 2. **Repent:** They were to repent by changing their life vision, priorities, and lifestyle choices (the way they spent time and money) to pursue loving Jesus as their primary life dream. Jesus identified this neglect as sin that required repentance, not just as weakness. We are to repent from being content to grow in ministry without growing in communion with Jesus.
 3. **Act:** They were to *do the works* or actions they did at first when their devotion to Jesus was strong. Mary "chose" the good part. *We must choose it.* She sustained it throughout her life.

III. THE CHURCH OF SARDIS WAS TO OVERCOME SPIRITUAL DEADNESS (3:1-3)

- A. The church in Sardis had a reputation for its dedication to Jesus, but had become spiritually dead. They were dead or asleep in their spiritual life as evidenced by their lack of hunger for His Word and being weighed down with things like fear, shame, despair, depression, compromise, etc.

1"To...the church in Sardis write, '...you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.
2Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die...***3***Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent." (Rev. 3:1-3)

- B. Jesus gave them five exhortations that would result in restoring their spiritual passion:

1. **Be watchful:** Jesus called them to cultivate a lifestyle of prayer, obedience, and encountering Him. When teaching on the end times, Jesus called His people *to watch and pray* (Mt. 24:42-43; 25:13; 26:38-41; 27:36; Mk. 13:9, 33, 34, 35, 37; Lk. 12:38-39; 21:36; Rev. 16:15).

33"Watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is...***35***Watch...for you do not know when the master of the house is coming...***37***I say to all: Watch!" (Mk. 13:33-37)

2. **Strengthen the things that remain:** Jesus addressed the primary pastor and leadership team. They were to be intentional about strengthening those things they had practiced in past years.
 - a. **Say it regularly:** Leaders must speak often of the vision and values of their ministry.

- b. **Model it consistently:** Leaders are personally to walk out their values consistently.
- c. **Establish it organizationally:** Leaders set the spiritual culture of a ministry. They should only set other leaders into place who embrace the values of that ministry.
3. **Remember:** They were to recall *how* and *why* God called them to be wholehearted and *what* He promised to do, as well as to remember *how* they once responded in tender love with dedication (Acts 19). Our tendency is to forget, so we must be intentional about remembering the divine storyline. The call to *remember* is emphasized in Scripture—80+ references.
4. **Hold fast:** To hold fast is to persevere long term in the lifestyle changes that we committed to as a result of watching, strengthening things, and remembering God's love and call on our life. We must hold fast in the face of challenges and not be offended by delay in God's promises and provision, the mundaneness of the work, being mistreated by people, etc.
5. **Repent:** We make practical lifestyle changes in attitudes, speech, actions, and relationships—the way and place we spend time and money—as we follow through on our commitments. As we make these lifestyle choices, the seeds (our new decisions) will blossom in time.

IV. THE CHURCH OF LAODICEA WAS TO OVERCOME BEING LUKEWARM (3:14-19)

- A. Jesus promised deep fellowship and honor to the church of Laodicea now and in the age to come.
¹⁴To the...Laodiceans write...¹⁵"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot...¹⁶you are lukewarm...¹⁷Because 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"—¹⁸I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire...¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke...be zeal and repent."
(Rev. 3:14-19)
- B. **I wish you were cold or hot:** Those who are spiritually cold are in a better position to see their great need. One who feels the emptiness of a cold heart often searches desperately for answers.
- C. **Lukewarm:** This is opposite of walking in the first commandment to love God with all their heart.
- D. **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 (Isa. 63:9).
⁹In all their affliction He was afflicted...in His love...He redeemed them... (Isa. 63:9)
- E. **I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire:** The gold of a deep relationship with Jesus makes us rich by tenderizing our heart to feel more love from Him and for Him. 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 in a costly way to position ourselves to receive it.
- F. Isaiah called the people "to buy food" by listening or being attentive to the Spirit (55:1-3).
*¹Everyone who thirsts...and you who have no money...buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money ²...Listen carefully to Me...³Incline your ear, and come to Me."
(Isa. 55:1-3)*

G. Jesus beckons us to draw near to Him and promises great rewards for those who respond.

²⁰"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone...opens the door, I will come in...and dine with him..."²¹To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne..." (Rev. 3:20-21)

For free notes: How to Meditate on the Word, see: https://ihopkcorg-a.akamaihd.net/platform/IHOP/523/375/20110708C_How_to_Meditate_on_the_Word.pdf For free notes:How to Pray-Read the Word, see https://ihopkcorg-a.akamaihd.net/platform/IHOP/524/351/20150403_How_to_Pray-Read_the_Word.pdf