

A Study of the Seven Churches : Last Part of a Seven-Part Series

The Church in Laodicea

Study for the Month of February, 2007

By Nathaniel Fajardo

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 that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.” Rev. 3:14-16 (KJV)

THE PROPHESED LAST CONDITION OF THE TRUE CHURCH

The Age of Judgment

From 1844 to the final sifting of the final test of the National Sunday Law, with the outpouring of the sealing Latter Rain. Then, the purified, Church Triumphant emerges.

Historical Background

Laodicea. “This name has been defined as meaning, ‘judging the people,’ or ‘a people adjudged.’ The latter appears preferable here. By road the distance to Philadelphia to the Asia Minor city of Laodicea is some 40 miles. The latter was founded by the Seleucid king Antiochus II Theos (261-246 B.C.), and named in honor of his wife, Laodice. Situated in the Valley of the Lycus River, Laodicea was a prosperous commercial center in John’s day, specializing in the production of woolen goods. It lay within a few miles of the cities Colossae and Hieropoli, and at an early date there were Christians in each of these cities (see Col. 4:13). By the time Revelation was written, the church at Laodicea had probably been in existence some 40 years. Paul took a distinct interest in this congregation and directed the Colossians to exchange epistles with the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16; see Vol. V, p. 183). “- Footnotes,” *An Exhaustive E.G. White Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 610.

Dr. John D. Davis says Laodicea was:

“A city originally called Diospolis, city of Zeus, which was enlarged and improved by Antiochus II, and named by him, Laodicea, after his wife Laodice. It was the chief city of Phrygia Pracatiana, in Asia Minor. . . . It manufactured cloth and garments from the black wool produced by a breed of sheep in its vicinity; and it was the seat of a medical school, whose physicians prepared the Phrygian powder for the cure of ophthalmia. It numbered many Jews among its inhabitants (Ant. xiv.10, 20). Epaphras labored there (Col. 4: 12, 13), and is considered as the founder of its Christian church. . . . About the year 65 of the Christian era, Laodicea, Colossae, and Hierapolis were destroyed by an earthquake. Its citizens rebuilt Laodicea out of their own resources, without the customary aid from Rome.”- *A Dictionary of the Bible, Presbyterian Board*, 4th Revised edition, Westminster Press, PA, 1942.

Halley’s Bible Handbook with the NIV version has this entry:

“Laodicea was a leading banking center. In 51 B.C., Cicero, en route for his Sicilian province, cashed drafts there.” – (Completely revised and expanded 25th edition, p. 925, published by Zondervan).

The Church in the Laodicean Condition

Contrary to what I *previously* believed in the initial reading of these Scriptures, and as influenced by the opinions of some of the contemporary analysts and critics of the church, including some among the earliest believers of the 1844 Advent movement (as recorded in some of the oldest periodicals of the Advent Movement), the name Laodicea, does not mean “lukewarm” or “spewed out of the mouth of God.”

Rather, when a sound exegesis of the **2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14** and the all-encompassing **sanctuary doctrine*** are carefully studied without preconceived opinions, and judiciously applied, this name, as reckoned in the successive seven-stage evolution of church and denominational history means, “judging the people.” Or, as some state it, “a people adjudged.” The latter appears preferable here. Notice:

“Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize what will be required of him, in order to pass the close and searching test of the Judgment. Dear readers do not deceive yourselves concerning your condition. You cannot deceive God. Says the true Witness, ‘I know thy works.’” – *Review & Herald*, April 8, 1880.

This concluding study of the seven churches precisely sustains this interpretation. The emergence of the law-upholding, Sabbath-keeping, worldwide, organized church coincides precisely with the commencement of the investigative or pre-advent judgment begun 1844 at the culmination of the 2-300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:14.

“Since the messages to the seven churches reflect the entire course of the history of the Christian church (see chs. 1:11; 2:1), the seventh message must represent the experience of the church during the closing period of earth’s history. The name Laodicea implies the final step in the Christian process of history, that of perfecting ‘a people adjudged’ (see on ch. 3:14) righteous. Further, it implies that the preparation of such a people and the divine process of adjudging them righteous will be achieved by the close of the period (see on Dan. 8:13, 14; Rev. 3:8; 14:6, 7). **Appropriately, then, the Laodicean message may be thought of applying in a special sense to the church from 1844 to the close of time. . . and the period of time thus represented may be characterized as the Age of Judgment.** The Laodicean message is applicable to all who profess to be Christians (see 6T 77). For more than a century Seventh-day Adventists have recognized that the message to the Laodiceans also has a special application to themselves (see James White, RH Oct. 16, 1856; cf. 1T 141-44). **A recognition of this application stands as a constant rebuke to self-satisfaction and an encouragement to live wholeheartedly according to the pattern of the perfect life in Christ Jesus (see on ch. 3:18).**” – *“Footnotes,” An Exhaustive E.G. White Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 616-7.

*The precious sanctuary doctrine taught throughout the Old Testament Jewish economy and in the epistles of Apostles Paul and John in the New Testament, are what separates Seventh-day Adventists from all the other Christian denominations—and rightfully so. Without these distinctive Biblical doctrines we would be as sheep led to the slaughter through the “wine of Babylon,”—the apostate and counterfeit doctrines that have rendered the whole Christian world spiritually inebriated.

Am I ever grateful to God for leading me, a lost sheep, into this present, sealing truth! I am a member of the defective yet militant, remnant church of prophecy. By God’s grace, I will choose to remain with it until it is finally purified of all the dross in the hands of the

master Refiner, and emerges as the last edition of the church triumphant of the ages. It is *the one and only fold* of Jesus. All “other sheep” will be led into this fold by the Holy Spirit working in and through the “three angels” of Revelation 14, as directed by the *gentle Shepherd* who is also the mighty *Lion* of the tribe of Judah! I sure that this true church of the last days is in the mighty hands of Jesus, her Bridegroom!

How about you, dear friend? Are you sure of the faith you profess to believe? Are you “ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”? (1 Pet. 3:15).

“The Amen.”-

--“The coupling of this title with ‘the faithful and true witness’ identifies it as a title of Christ (see ch. 1:5), who is the author of the epistles to the seven churches. For comment on the meaning of ‘amen’ see on Deut. 7:9; Matt. 5:18. The application of this term to Christ may be compared with Isa. 65:16, where, in Hebrew, the Lord is called ‘*Elohe amen*,’ ‘the God of amen.’ In the present passage this title may be understood as a declaration that Christ is truth (see John 14:6). Accordingly, His message to the Laodicean church is to be accepted without question.” – *Ibid.*

Who is the “the faithful and True Witness?”

“In the Greek this title stands in apposition [juxtaposition] with ‘Jesus Christ,’ which is in the ablative [designating, or pertaining to] case. . . , and the phrase ‘faithful witness’ would normally be in the same case. Nevertheless, like the divine title for the Father (see on v. 4), it stands here unchanged in the nominative [designating or pertaining to] case. Some suggest that John thereby implies the deity of Christ and His equality with the Father. . . . Christ is the ‘faithful witness’ in that He is the perfect representative of God’s character, mind, and will to mankind (see on John 1:1, 14). His sinless life among men and His sacrificial death testify to the Father’s holiness and love (see John 14:10; see on ch. 3:16).” – *Ibid.*

This special title first applies to Christ, and secondarily, to the **Holy Spirit** as Christ’s appointed Successor on earth when He ascended to the sanctuary above to perform His closing work as High Priest (Advocate and Mediator). His first office was as the Prophet/Teacher; the last, as King, at His glorious second coming.

“**The Holy Spirit** is greatly needed in our schools. This divine agency comes to the world as Christ’s Representative. **It is not only the Faithful and True Witness of the Word of God, but it is the Searcher of the thoughts and purposes of the heart. It is the source to which we must look for efficiency in the restoration of the moral image in man.** The Holy Spirit was eagerly sought in the school of the prophets; its transforming influence was to bring even the thoughts into harmony with the will of God, and establish a living connection between earth and heaven.” – *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 526.

As part of the high honor and privilege, yet-highly-accountable role as “God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men” (AA9), the **remnant church** is divinely authorized and empowered, and thus expected of God to be “a witness and ground of truth” (see on 1 Tim. 3:15). And yet most members do not half realize this awesome privilege and grave responsibility. Notice:

“Falsehood and deception of every cast is sin against the God of truth and verity. The word of God is plain upon these points. ‘Ye shall not deal falsely, neither lie to one another.’ All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.’ [Rev. 14:10; 20: 6, 14]. God is a God of sincerity and truth. The word of God is a book of truth. Jesus is a faithful and true Witness. **The church is the witness and ground of truth.** All the precepts of the Most High are true and righteous altogether” [Ps. 19:9].”- *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 336.

“The Beginning of the creation of God.”

Many have stumbled over this phrase, hastily concluding that this text proves that Christ was the first of the created beings of God—not a co-equal with the Father. But to do so would make the inspired writers of the Bible contradict themselves and do violence to the perfect spiritual harmony of Scriptures. Some of the earliest believers in the Advent message, having just come out from many deeply-ingrained papal errors, reached this conclusion, too. But the honest and humble abandoned it when shown the preponderance of evidence from the Word. Those who still insist in clinging to this error include those who subscribe to preteristic or futuristic interpretation of prophecy such as Antiochus Epiphanes is the “little horn power” of Daniel 8:9, 10, etc., etc.

“Greek *arche*, a word that has both a *passive* and *active* sense. Taken passively, it refers to that which is acted upon at the beginning. So interpreted here, it would mean that Christ was the first creature created. But this obviously could not be the correct translation, for Christ is *not* a created being. **Taken actively, *arche* refers to that which initiates an action, a first cause, a prime mover. So understood here, it declares Christ to be the Creator.** Such is plainly the meaning of the present passage, for Christ is portrayed repeatedly in this same role elsewhere in the New Testament (see on John 1:3; Heb. 1:2). The strikingly similar statement of Col. 1:15, 16 had been read by the Laodicean church many years before (cf. Col. 4:16).”-*Ibid.*

“I Know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.” Rev. 3: 15, 16.

“The tepid spiritual condition of the Laodicean church [is] *more dangerous* than if the church [is] cold. Lukewarm Christianity preserves enough of the form, and even of the content of the gospel, to dull the perceptive powers of the spirit and renders men oblivious to the earnest effort necessary to the attainment of the high ideal of a victorious life in Christ. The typical Laodicean Christian is content with the things as they are and [is] proud of the little progress he has made. It is *almost impossible* to convince him of his great need and of how far he is from the goal of perfection.” – “Footnotes,” *An Exhaustive E.G. W. Commentary on Revelation*, vol.2, p. 616.

The Terrible Condition of Spiritual Lukewarmness

Decreased alertness

“A lukewarm spiritual state results in decreased alertness, a slow response, and indecisive action. If the Laodicean church were cold, the Spirit of God might more readily convince it of its dangerous condition. The following statement throws light on why a ‘cold’ condition is preferable to a ‘lukewarm’ one.” – *Ibid.*

Continual weight and stumbling block

“It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had *never* named His name. They are a *continual weight* to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a *stumbling block* to unbelievers.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 188.

Conformed more to the world than to the Word

“Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are *becoming conformed to this world* and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since separated. *The words addressed to the Laodicean church describe their condition perfectly.* They are ‘neither cold nor hot’ but ‘lukewarm.’ And *unless* they heed the counsel of the ‘faithful and true Witness,’ and zealously repent and obtain ‘gold tried in the fire,’ ‘white raiment,’ and ‘eyesalve, he will spew them out of His mouth.’” – *Early Writings*, pp. 107-8.

Backslidden state

“Many are flattering themselves that they are right with God, when they have not the principles of the truth in their hearts. This class can be brought into working order only by seeking with diligent, persevering earnestness to heed the counsel of the True Witness. They are in a cold, formal, *backslidden* state. These are addresses by the True Witness [Rev. 3:15-19 quoted].”- *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 227-8.

Combination character so utterly worthless

“This is the condition of the Laodicean church. At first there seems to be some self and some of Christ. *But soon it is all self and none of Christ.* The root of selfishness is revealed. It continues to grow, striking its roots deeper and deeper, till its branches are covered with objectionable fruit. Christ looks with *pitying tenderness* of all who have *combination characters*. *Those with such a character have a connection with Christ so frail that it is utterly worthless.*” – *Letter* 105, 1893.

Satan can use as decoys

“Satan is willing that you should be a *Christian in name*, for you can suit his purposes better. You can have a form and not true godliness, and Satan can use you to *decoy* others in the same self-deceived way.” – *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 262 (1T 162).

“We are coworkers with Christ, or coworkers with the enemy. *We either gather with Christ or scatter abroad. We are decided, wholehearted Christians, or none at all.* Says Christ, ‘I would thou wert cold or hot [Rev. 3:15, 16 quoted].’- *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 126.

“The Lord Jesus demands that every soul make a reality of truth. Show that you believe that you are not half with Christ and half with the world.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 130.

Worse than infidels

“Half-hearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and noncommittal position lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The lukewarm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do.’ – *Letter* 44, 1903. (This is one of those rebukes whose sting burns!)

Inspid religion

“The message to the Laodicean church applies most decidedly to those whose religious experiences is inspid, who do not bear a decided witness in favor of the truth.”- *Letter* 98, 1901. (Inspid means, “without taste or savor; wanting in spirit; uninteresting; flat; dull”).

The word of God to them is a dead letter

“To those *who do not practice it*, the word of God is a dead letter.”- *E.G.W Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 963. Truth is no truth unless it is practiced!

Self-righteousness and pride

“Were you cold, there would be some hope that you would be converted; but where *self-righteousness* girds one about, instead of the righteousness of Christ, the deception is so difficult to be seen, and the self-righteousness so hard to put away, that the case is the most difficult to reach. An unconverted, godless sinner stands in a more favorable condition than such.”- *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 175-6.

Thus, all church members are instructed: “Read the whole of the third chapter of Revelation, and to make an application of it. *The message to the church of the Laodiceans applies especially to the people of God today.* It is a message to professing Christians who have become so much like the world that no difference can be seen [verses 14-18 quoted].”- *Review & Herald*, Aug. 20, 1903.

“I will spue thee out of My mouth.”

In the KJV **spue** is the Greek *emeo*, meaning, vomit. The English **spew** means “to eject from or as from the stomach; vomit; pour forth; that which is spewed; vomit.” -*Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth edition*. If we were to strictly go by these definitions without due regard to church history, as chronicled in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, we would easily conclude that all lukewarm Christians have *already been literally vomited out of the mouth of Christ*, thus, hopelessly lost! Is this true? Or is there hope still remaining? What is really meant by this phrase?

“The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.” - *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 408.

These are the five distinct things that we should store in our memory when studying what this “spewing out” of the mouth of Jesus means. They are as follows:

1. *He cannot offer up our prayers to the Father.* We are instructed to “pray without ceasing,” and some do, but find many of their prayer requests remain strangely unanswered—some for years. Others have simply given up not realizing that there is a science for answered prayers. One of that is found right here. We pray while cherishing a spiritually lukewarm lifestyle, and thus our prayers remain unanswered!

2. *He cannot endorse our expression of love for God.* How often the expression “We love God” is thundered in the very same pulpits that also declare that “the law has been done away with” and that “there is no judgment;” “that we are already saved by His blood.” Thus countless congregants openly enjoy the pleasures of this world with a false sense of security because they “worship God with their lips” but in fact the treasure of their heart is the things of this earth! Their expressions of love for God are in vain.

3. *He cannot endorse our teaching of His word.* This is perhaps why so much Bible teaching and preaching today have to be “spiced up” with entertainment-like trappings, and “new-modcled,” allegedly in order to be “relevant to the times and needs of the people”—which is but a vain attempt to lower God’s standards. Man, machinery, and methods have replaced the power of the Holy Spirit which alone can truly convict the heart and produce genuine transformation of character.

4. *He cannot endorse our spiritual works in any way.* This is self-explanatory whose answers are found among the other four.

5. *He cannot present our religious exercises.* All efforts to study the word of God, to do missionary work, to worship Him, particularly in public, even if we asked for His grace to perform such, will be in vain. Jesus will not simply endorse it.

Now this is a bleak condition and certainly most discouraging *until* we realize with great humility and relief that all these are *conditional*. **If**—the biggest small word in the Bible—**we zealously repent**, all these will be reversed! Jesus will lovingly offer up all our prayers enveloping them with the fragrant incense of His perfect righteousness. He will endorse all our humanly inadequate and flawed expressions of love with His perfect love, having presented by the Holy spirit “with groanings that cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26). He will endorse all our teachings of the Word, making them powerful through the convicting power of His Holy Spirit upon the conscience of the hearer. He will endorse, as in signing one’s name on a check, all our spiritual works. He will present all our

religious exercises with His enabling grace to the Father, causing the church in heaven and on earth to rejoice with praises and thanksgiving to God for His love, wisdom, mercy, and justice.

“Men and women professing godliness and expecting translation to heaven without seeing death, I warn you to be less greedy of gain, less self-caring. Redeem your godlike manhood, your noble womanhood, by noble acts of disinterested benevolence. Heartily despise your former avaricious spirit and regain true nobility of soul. **From what God has shown me, unless you zealously repent, Christ will spew you out of His mouth. Sabbath-keeping Adventists profess to be followers of Christ, but the works of many belie their profession.** ‘Ye shall know them by their fruits.’ ‘Not everyone 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.’ [See matt. 7: 20-23].- *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 482.

“**God brings against ministers and people the heavy charge of spiritual feebleness**, saying, [Rev. 3:15-18 quoted]. *God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.*” – *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 127-8.

“**The time has come when God requires a change in this respect. He calls upon young and old to be zealous and repent. If they continue in their state of lukewarmness, He will spue them out of His mouth. Says the True Witness, ‘I know thy works.’**” – *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 485.

Those among us who nurse the belief that this fearful warning of the True Witness, the Holy Spirit, does not apply to them should take a second look again! Notice:

“I am commissioned now to say to our brethren, Humble yourselves, and confess your sins, else God will humble you. **The message to the Laodicean church comes home to those who do not apply it to themselves.** . . .”- *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 99-100.

I read this quote some time ago which proved invaluable in expanding my understanding regarding the remnant church, and its standing before God in these last days. I learned that the straight testimony to the Laodiceans, seemingly addressed to the church, is in reality addressed to **me!** It is addressed to **you!** It is addressed to **every individual member** of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

The great problem is that, much like the Jews in the time of Jesus, many of us do not care to fully comprehend what the state of being lukewarm means in the sight of God, perhaps, till now! That attitude is part of the terrible *blindness* pointed out in the Laodicean message! But that same moment we earnestly seek the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit through the written and spoken word, by our willing consent, the blindness begins to disappear. That first important first step is the realization that:

*If I do not personally accept the cutting reproofs and counsels that reveal my true spiritual condition, it simply means that I am guilty! Worse, I am grieving the Holy Spirit away! That’s how simple the matter is! I hope you **see** the point!*

“At this time the Laodicean message is to be given, **to arouse a slumbering church.** Let the thought of **the shortness of time** stimulate you to earnest, untiring effort. Remember that **Satan** has come down with great power, to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish [2 Thess. 2:10].”- *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 196. Satan works while we sleep!

As in all cases, these strong censure and rebuke of Jesus to His professed people, particularly members of His remnant church, *does not apply to the individual members who are quietly striving by God's grace, against all odds, to maintain the peculiarity of the faith and the purity of the truth in thought, word, and deed.* This must be constantly remembered as we study and apply all of the divine rebukes throughout the Bible and the *Testimonies*. They only apply to the guilty ones—a matter best determined between the *individual and the Word through the conviction of the Holy Spirit*. It is often the case that we hastily and presumptuously claim the merciful promises of the Bible for ourselves but quickly apply the painful and humbling reproofs and censures to others. That evil habit should be broken now!

It does, however, sadly apply to the prevailing *general* spiritual condition of the church. More accurately, the condition of the church may ultimately traced to the condition of the families and homes that make up the church, for, like society, the family is the basic unit of the church. What we are at home, we simply bring to the church. Before there was a church, as we know it, there was first a family in the Garden of Eden!

“The message to the Laodicean church is highly applicable to us as a people. It has been placed before us for a long time, but has not been heeded as it should have been. When the work of repentance is earnest and deep, the **individual members of the church** will buy the rich goods of heaven [Rev. 3:18 quoted]. **Oh, how many behold things in a perverted light, in the light which Satan would have them to see. You may manifest zeal in missionary effort, and yet because it is corrupted with selfishness, and tastes strongly of self, it is nought in the sight of God; for it is a tainted, corrupted offering.** Unless the door of the heart is open to Jesus, unless He occupies the soul temple, unless the heart is imbued with His divine attributes, human actions, when weighed in the heavenly balances, will be pronounced, ‘Wanting.’ The love of Christ would make you rich; but many do not realize the value of His love. Many do not realize that the spirit which they cherish is destitute of the meekness and lowliness of Christ, destitute of that love that would constitute them channels of light.”- MS 33, 1894.

In effect, the greatest amount of work that will have to be accomplished in these last days for the revival and reformation of the church will have to take place in the **homes**, in the **hearts and lives** of its inmates—**the individual—you and me!**

Throughout the Old Testament times when God, through His prophets, employed such strong words as “stubborn,” “hard-hearted,” “backslidden,” and even “a harlot,” to chasten backsliding Israel and Judah—His chosen people, He continued to plead with them, addressing them as “My people” in most instances. The strong words, mistaken by some as immediate rejection, were actually stinging censures and rebukes of divine love designed to awaken them to their true condition and bring them to genuine repentance, revival, and reformation. However, except for a “faithful remnant,” their corporate reaction was to ridicule, abuse, and even “stone and kill the prophets” sent of God to do the unpleasant and thankless job of trying to *save* them from self-deception and hardness of heart! Matt. 23: 37; John 10: 31, 32; 11:38; Acts 5:26; 7: 48, 59; 14: 19; 2 Cor. 11: 25; Heb. 11:37. Such is the last message of the Faithful and True Witness--Christ Himself in the Holy Spirit--to the remnant church today, that has become *almost totally spiritually blind* to its true corporate condition. *“This message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people”* (Review & Herald, Dec. 15, 1904).

Q. Will we also stone those whom God has called to give this unpopular yet soul-saving message and who, faithfully and courageously, proclaim the message by pen and voice, ignoring ridicule, censure, and loss of friends? We need not literally stone them with

rocks but we do exactly the same when in prejudice and hatred towards the truth that cuts like a two-edged sword, we cast aspersions on their work by blackening their reputation through evil-speaking, gossip, and evil-surmising. God forbid!

Moreover, this special message, particularly addressed and entrusted to the remnant church of prophecy must also be given to **all the other churches and denominations**, the nation of America, and from then on throughout the world as Providence opens the way! Why? Because this is also the very spiritual condition--in all its expanded phases and various applications--of America, the "lamb-like beast" of prophecy and the professed Christian churches, so soon to become the "image of the beast" of Revelation 13! They must be given the final opportunity of hearing the *antitypical* combined messages of Elijah and John the Baptist, i.e., the call to genuine repentance and to stop "halting between two opinions" as to who they will continue serving--the Lord of the Sabbath or the "god of this world" and his counterfeit Sabbath!

"The spirit of worldly conformity is invading the churches throughout Christendom [written over 100 years ago]. **Robert Atkins, in a sermon preached in London**, draws a dark picture of the spiritual declension that prevails in England: "The truly righteous are diminished from the earth, and no man layeth it to heart. The professors of religion of the present day, in every church, are lovers of the world, conformers to the world, lovers of creature comfort, and aspirers of respectability. **They are called to suffer with Christ, but they shrink from even reproach.....Apostasy, apostasy, apostasy, is engraven on the very front of every church; and did they know it, and did they feel it, there might be hope; but, alas! They cry, 'We are rich, and increased with goods, and stand in need of nothing.'**"- *Second Advent Library*, tract No. 39/*Great Controversy*, p. 388.

"Never were sadder words than Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and John, depicting the awful fate of God's children who departed from Him. It is infinitely sadder to think of **a church** to whom has come great light and privilege, and through whom God has worked mightily in the salvation of souls, turning from her trust, her opportunities, her privileges, from the great message which made her all that she is, and trusting in herself and her won charms, her own riches, her own beauties, in union with the world, go down to her destruction. **When that time comes, God's plea comes not to the church but to each individual alone.** 'If any man hear My voice, and opens the door [of his heart], I will come unto him and sup with him, and he with Me.'" - *Editorial, Signs of the Times*, Feb. 1, 1920, p. 499.

The very last call given to all the fallen churches and the world itself just before probation closes is the latter-rain powered final loud cry of Revelation 18, "Come out of her, My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues, for her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities, Rev. 18: 4, 5.

Q. Who has been divinely-appointed to give this message to the other churches? The remnant church of prophecy! Do the members realize this awesome responsibility?

"The Laodicean message has been sounding. Take this message **in all its phases** and sound it forth to the people **wherever** Providence opens the way. **Justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ are the themes to be presented to a perishing world.**" - *Letter 24*, 1892.

"The warning for the last church **also must be proclaimed to all who claim to be Christians.** The Laodicean message, like a sharp, two-edged sword, **must go to all the churches.** (Rev. 15-19). It is **our work** to proclaim this message. **Are we putting every effort that the churches may be warned?**" - *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 77.

Here is another area where overzealousness may cause some to make unkind thrusts at the churches identified in Revelation as “Babylon is fallen is fallen” with railing accusations and a combative spirit—which Christ Himself denounces.

“It is our work to speak the truth in love, and not to mix in with the truth the unsanctified elements of the natural heart, and speak things that savor of the same spirit possessed by our enemies. All sharp thrusts will come back to us in **double measure** when the power is in the hands of those who can exercise it for our injury.”- *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, p. 60.

“The Lord wants His workers to represent Him, the greatest Missionary Worker. The manifestation of rashness always does harm. . . .He who is careless and heedless in uttering words or in writing words for publication to be sent broadcast into the world, sending forth expressions that can never be taken back, is **disqualifying himself** to be entrusted with the sacred work that devolves around Christ’s followers at this time. Those who practice giving hard thrusts, are forming habits that will strengthen by repetition, and will have to be repented of. . . .Satan is standing ready, burning with zeal to inspire the whole confederacy of satanic agencies, that he may cause them to unite with evil men, and bring upon the believers of truth speedy and sever suffering. **Every unwise word that is uttered through our brethren will be treasured up by the prince of darkness.**” *Ibid*, p. 61.

“**To ridicule the position held by those who are in error, will not open their blind eyes, nor attract them to the truth.** When men lose sight of Christ’s example, and do not pattern after His manner of teaching, they become self-sufficient, and go forth to meet Satan with his own manner of weapons. The enemy knows well how to turn his weapons upon those who use them. Jesus spoke only words of pure truth and righteousness . . . **We grieve the Lord Jesus Christ by our harshness, by our unchristlike thrusts.**”- *Ibid*, p. 63.

“**We should not go out of our way to make hard thrusts at Catholics.** Among the Catholics there are many who are most conscientious Christians, and who walk in all the light that shines upon them, and God will work in their behalf. Those who have had great privileges and opportunities, and who have failed to improve their physical, mental, and moral powers, but who have lived to please themselves, and have refuse to bear responsibility, *are in greater danger and in greater condemnation before God* than those who are in error upon doctrinal points, yet who seek to live to do good to others. Do not censure others; do not condemn them.” - *Ibid*.

When the prophets declared their messages to backsliding ancient Israel, they minced no words for they were dealing with a people to whom the highest sacred truths were entrusted. They were not only more privileged; they were more accountable for “to whom much is given, much is required.” However, warning the *other* churches and denominations of their Laodicean condition is only through the God-chosen method of proclaiming all phases of the messages of *justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ*. Thus, we must first fully understand what genuine righteousness by faith means—not the popular counterfeits that resemble the true! If you don’t, you are running out of time and must make all efforts to learn it quick. Drop all that diverts your time and attention, pray for the Holy Spirit to teach you, get out your Bible and Spirit of Prophecy books and get started now! The Holy Spirit awaits our demand reception!

**“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods,
and have need of nothing. . . .” Rev. 3: 17.**

“We must not for a moment think that there is no more light, no more truth, to be given us. We are in danger of becoming careless, by our indifference losing the sanctifying power of truth, and composing ourselves with the thought, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’ While we must hold fast to the truths

which we have already received, *we must not look with suspicion upon any new light that God may send.*" – *Gospel Workers*, p. 310.

"I am rich." – "This may be understood both literally and spiritually. Laodicea was a prosperous town, and doubtless some of the Christians there were well to do. Apparently this church had suffered no serious persecution. Pride in its prosperity led naturally to spiritual complacency. Of itself wealth is not wrong. However, possession of wealth subjects its possessor to temptation to pride and self-complacency, and against these his *only* protection is spiritual humility." – "Footnotes," *An Exhaustive E.G. W. Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 622.

"Christians who are poor in earthly possessions feel themselves rich and increased with spiritual goods, yet are like the ancient philosopher who proudly proclaimed his 'humility' by wearing a torn and threadbare robe. The pride they take in their assumed spirituality shines forth through the holes in their garments. The possession of important truths held only on the level of intellectual acceptance but not allowed to permeate the soul, leads to spiritual pride and religious bigotry. Even the church of God, strong in the structure of its organization and rich with jewels of truth, can easily become a doctrinal bigot and immorally proud of its riches of truth. "The sin that is most nearly hopeless and incurable is pride of opinion, self-conceit. This stands in the way of all growth" (7T 199, 200). Humility of mind is fully as important in God's sight as humility of heart." – *Ibid.*

"Increased with goods." – "Literally, 'have become rich,' 'have prospered' (RSV). Not only does the Laodicean church claim to be rich, but she also makes the *fatal* mistake of considering that these riches are the result of her *own* labors (cf. Hosea 12:8). – *Ibid*, p. 623.

"Need of nothing." –

"The *climax* of the Laodicean boast is that their situation could *not* be improved. Such self-satisfaction is **fatal**, for the Spirit of God never enters where a need for His presence is not felt, yet without that presence newness of life is impossible." – *Ibid.*

- Compared to Cain and the Pharaisees: "In Cain's offering there was no confession of sin, no acknowledgement that he was in need of a Savior. To-day there are thousands and tens of thousands who are making the same mistake as did Cain, and as did the Pharaisees." – *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 11, 1893.

"Knowest not." – "He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is well-nigh hopeless. The ignorance of their true condition that characterizes the Laodicean Christians stands in sharp contrast with Christ's certain knowledge of the true condition of His churches, as reflected by His repeated assurance to each, 'I know thy works' (chs. 2:2, 9, 13, 19: 3:1, 8, 15)." – *Ibid.*

"Wretched. . . naked." – "The true picture, here presented, is exactly the opposite of the boast made by the Laodicean church. Instead of being rich [spiritually] to the point of needing nothing, *this church is, in reality, so much a pauper that she even lacks clothing.*" – *Ibid.*

This "clothing" is none other than "the garments of the perfect righteousness of Christ," the "wedding garment" in the parable that all must have, if they will be fit guests at the wedding supper in heaven.

"The spiritual banquet is set before us in rich abundance. The **wedding garment**, provided at an infinite cost, is freely offered to every soul. By the messengers of God are presented to us the [1] righteousness of Christ, [2] justification by faith, [3] the exceeding great and precious promises of God's word, [4] the free access to the Father by Christ, [5] the comfort of the Spirit, [6] the well-grounded assurance of eternal life in the kingdom of God. What could God do for us that he has not done in providing the great supper, the heavenly banquet?" – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 317.

“In my last vision I was shown that even this decided testimony of the True Witness had not accomplished the design of God. The people slumbered on in their sins. They continue to declare themselves rich and having need of nothing. **Many inquire: ‘Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the Testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and with grievous sins? We love the truth; we are prospering; we are in no need of these Testimonies of warning and reproof.** But let these murmurers see their hearts and compare their lives with the practical teachings of the Bible, let them humble themselves before God, let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the **scales** will fall from their eyes, and they will realize their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying *gold, which is pure faith and love; white raiment, which is a spotless character made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer; and eyesalve, which is the grace of God and which will give clear discernment of spiritual things and detect sin.* These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 254-55.

“Knowest not that thou art wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked.”

A startling denunciation

“The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a *startling denunciation*, and is applicable to the people of God at the present time. [Rev. 3: 14-17 quoted].” – *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 327-333.

Not a peace-and-safety message (see 2 Thess. 5:3)

“The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to His people by *ministers whom he has called* to warn the people *is not a peace-and-safety message*. It is not merely theoretical, but practical in every particular.” – *Ibid.*

Those who feel secure and superior because of spiritual attainments

“The people of God are presented in the message to the Laodiceans as in a position of *carnal security*. They are at ease believing themselves to be in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments.” – *Ibid.*

Honest self-deception is the greatest deception!

“What *greater deception* can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, *yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God.* While those addressed are *flattering themselves* that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. *The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake*, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and His testimony must be correct.” – *Ibid.*

Need deep and thorough work of self-abasement

“It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they deceived and in need of spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is ‘deceitful above all things and desperately wicked’ [Jer. 17:9]. I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience from themselves in the divine life. They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit.” – *Ibid.*

Spiritual Blindness gives Satan great power over lukewarm Christians

“I have been shown that the *greatest reason* why the people of God are now found in this state of spiritual blindness is that *they will not receive correction*. Many have despised the reproofs and warnings given them. The True Witness condemns the lukewarm condition of the people of God, which gives Satan great power over them in this waiting, watching time. The selfish, the proud, the lover of sin are ever assailed with doubts. Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and to quibble. Those who desire to doubt

will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence." – *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 254-55.

“The proud heart strives to earn salvation;

but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ. The Lord can do nothing for the recovery of man *until*, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he *yields* himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow. From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells. [Isa. 57:15 quoted].”- *Desire of Ages*, p. 300.

Laodicean Christians compared to the Pharisees & Jewish nation

“In the days of Christ the religious leaders of the people felt that they were rich in spiritual treasure. The prayer of the Pharisee, ‘God, I thank Thee, that I am not as the rest of men.’ (Luke 18:11, R.V), expressed the feeling of *his class* and, to a great degree, of the *whole nation*. But in the throng that surrounded Jesus there were *some* who had a sense of their spiritual poverty. When in the miraculous draft of fishes the divine power of Christ was revealed, Peter fell at the Savior’s feet, exclaiming, ‘Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord’ (Luke 5:8); so in the multitude gathered upon the mount there were souls who, in the presence of His purity, felt that they were ‘wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked’ (Rev. 3:17); and they longed for ‘the grace of God that bringeth salvation’ (Titus 2:11). In these souls, Christ’s words of greeting awakened hope; they saw that their lives were under the benediction of God.”- *Mount of Blessing*, pp. 6, 7.

Profess to keepers but are not doers of God’s Law

“The Laodicean message applies to all who profess to keep the law of God, and yet are not doers of it. We are not to be selfish in any thing. *Every phase of the Christian life is to be a representation of the life of Christ. If it is not, we shall hear the terrible words, ‘I know you not [Matt. 7: 21-23].’*”- *Review & Herald*, Oct. 17, 1899.

The truth is not allowed to sanctify (purify) their lives

“How plainly is pictured the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the Word of God, while the sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervor of the love of God is wanting in their hearts, but it is this very fervor that makes God’s people the light of the world.”- *Review & Herald*, July 23, 1889.

“The Laodicean message is applicable to the *church* at this time. *Do you believe the message? Have you hearts that feel? Or are you constantly saying, We are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing?* It is in vain that the declaration of eternal truth has been given to *this nation [America]* to be carried to all nations of the world? To them has been given the light that must illuminate the world. *Has God made a mistake?* Are we indeed His chosen instrumentalities? Are we the men and women who are to bear to the world the messages of Revelation 14, to proclaim the message of salvation to those who are standing of the brink of ruin? *Do we act as if we were?*”- (MS 51, 1901)

“To the **idlers** in the Lord’s vineyard the Laodicean message is sent.” – *Manuscript 26*, 1905.

“The message to the Laodicean church is highly applicable to us as a *people*. *It has been placed before us for a long time, but has not been heeded as it should have been.* When the work of repentance is earnest and deep, the individual members of the church will buy the rich goods of heaven. [Rev. 3: 18 quoted]. *Oh, how many behold things in a perverted light, in the light which Satan would have them to see. You may manifest zeal in missionary effort, and yet because it is corrupted with selfishness, and tastes strongly of self, it is nought in the sight of God; for it is a tainted, corrupted offering.* Unless the door of the heart is open to Jesus, unless He occupies the soul temple, unless the heart is imbued with His divine attributes, human actions when weighed in the heavenly balances, will be pronounced, ‘Wanting.’

The love of Christ would make you rich; *but many do not realize the value of His love. Many do not realize that the spirit which they cherish is destitute of the meekness and lowliness of Christ, destitute of that love that would constitute them channels of light.*"- MS 33, 1894.

"I tell you in the name of the Lord, that those who have had great light are today in a state described in His message to the Laodicean church. They think they are rich, and increased with goods, and feel that they have need of nothing. Christ speaks to you. Hear, O hear, if you have any regard for your soul, the words of the great Counselor, and act upon them [Rev. 3:18 quoted]."- Letter 5, 1897.

"If every man who has influence could ascend some mount of vision from which he could behold all his works as Christ beholds them when He declares, 'I know thy works'; if the laborer could trace from cause to effect every objectionable word and act, the sight would be more than he could bear." (E.G.W. *Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 963). This "mount of vision" is thorough self-examination by Christ's life, words, and works!

Q. What particular "**works**" does the True and Faithful Witness say He knows about the members of His remnant church in these last days?

Covetousness and selfishness. "*The greatest sin which now exists in the church is covetousness. God frowns upon His professed people for their selfishness. His servants have sacrificed their time and strength to carry them the word of life, and many have shown by their works that they prize it but lightly. . . . The True Witness declares; 'I know thy works.' The selfish, covetous heart will be tested. Some are not willing to devote to God a very small portion of the increase of their earthly treasure. . . . What have they sacrificed for God? Nothing. They profess to believe that Jesus is coming; but their works deny their faith. Every person will live out the faith he has. False-hearted professor, Jesus knows thy works. He hates your stinted offerings, your lame sacrifices.*"- *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 194-95.

Overreaching, spirit of fraud, and meanness among wealthy. "*Many Sabbath-keepers who are wealthy are guilty of grinding the face of the poor. Do such think that God takes no notice of their little acts of meanness? If their eyes could be opened they would see an angel following them wherever they go, making a faithful record of all their acts in their families and in their places of business. The True Witness is on their track, declaring, 'I know thy works.' As I saw this spirit of defrauding, of overreaching, meanness, even among some professed Sabbath-keepers, I cried out in anguish of spirit. This great evil, this terrible curse, is folding around some of the Israel of God in these last days, making them a detestation to even noble-spirited unbelievers. This is the people professedly waiting for the coming of the Lord.*" - *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 480.

They have left their first love—God. "The remnant church is called to go through an experience similar to that of the Jews; and the True Witness, who walks up and down the midst of the seven golden candlesticks [Rev. 1: 12, 13, 20], has a solemn message to bear to His people. He says, '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 its place, except thou repent' [Rev. 2: 4, 5, KJV]. *The love of God has been waning in the church, and as a result, the love of self has sprung up into new activity. With the loss of love for God there has come the loss of love for the brethren. The church may meet all the description that is given in the Ephesian church, and yet fail in vital godliness. Of them Jesus said, [Rev. 2: 2-4 quoted].*"- *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 387-88.

Spiritual declension in the home life. "Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, *do not educate yourselves in the line of vulgarity of action, word, or thought. Coarse sayings, low jests, lack of politeness and true courtesy in the home life, will become as second nature to you and will unfit you for the society of those who are becoming sanctified through the truth. The home is too sacred a place to be polluted by vulgarity, sensuality,*

recrimination, and scandal. Silence the evil word; put away the unholy thought, for *the True Witness weighs every word, sets a value on every action, and declares, 'I know thy works.'*

Low, cheap, common talk should find no place in the family. When the heart is pure, rich treasures of wisdom will flow forth. *Indulge in no foolish talking in your house.* Even very young children will be benefited by 'the form of sound words.' But idle and foolish words exchanged between father and mother will lead to the same kind of words among children; while right, candid, truthful, and serious words will lead to the same in all the household and will lead to right actions also." – *Adventist Home*, pp. 437-8.

Irreverence of the young, particularly in the place of worship. "Reverence is greatly needed in the youth of this age. I am alarmed as I see children and youth of religious parents so heedless of order and propriety that should be observed in the house of God. While God's servants are presenting the words of life to the people, some will be reading, others whispering and laughing. Their eyes are sinning by diverting the attention of those around them. This habit, if allowed to remain unchecked, will grow and influence others. Children and youth should never feel that it is something to be proud of to be indifferent and careless in meetings where God is worshipped. *God sees every irreverent thought or action and it is registered in the books of heaven.* Nothing is hid from His all-searching eye. If you have formed in any degree the habit of inattention and indifference in the house of God, exercise the power you have to correct it, and show that you have self-respect. Practice reverence until it becomes part of yourself." – *Child Guidance*, pp. 546-7 (*Messages to Young People*, p. 266)

"I counsel thee 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 eyesalve, that you may see." Rev. 3: 18, NKJV.

"Buy of Me." – "Without this much effort the Laodicean 'church' cannot attain the standard Christ would have her reach. The things He offers her are not without their price, yet salvation is ever free. [But] she must give up her old way of life to be truly rich, to be healed, and to be clothed. Even she who is penniless may buy. (sec Isa. 55:11)." – "Footnotes," *E.G.W. Exhaustive Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 631.

Jesus, Great Vendor of heaven's costly wares

"We must have the buyers and sellers **cleared out** of the soul temple that Jesus may take up His abode within us. Now He stands at the door of the heart as a heavenly Merchantman; He says, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' 'Open unto Me, buy of Me the heavenly wares; buy of me the gold tried in the fire.' **Buy faith and love—the precious, beautiful attributes of our Redeemer, which will enable us to find our way into the hearts of those who do not know Him, who are cold and alienated from Him through unbelief and sin.** He invites us to **buy the white raiment—His glorious righteousness; and the eyesalve, that we may discern spiritual things.** Oh, shall we not open the heart's door to this heavenly Visitor?" – *E.G. W. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 964-5.

"The great Vendor of spiritual riches is inviting your recognition. [Rev. 3:18 quoted]. The Savior comes with **jewels of truth of the richest value** in distinction from all counterfeits, all that is spurious. He come to every house, to every door; He is knocking, presenting His priceless treasure, urging, 'Buy of Me.'" – *Letter 66, 1894/ Ibid.*

"The wares of heaven are offered to our churches. Every **individual** needs to have a decided interest in the invitation of Christ. *Brethren and sisters, are your thoughts after this order? These sharp, decided words do not mean me; I am in a fairly good condition spiritually, though I may not have all the fervor and zeal that some have. I believe the truth. Those whom this message belongs may take it. I thin some may need it.*' You who think and reason thus, be

assured that you are the very ones to whom this message belongs. While the costly wares of heaven are open before you, draw nigh and buy that which you have lost—the gold of love and faith, and the white raiment which is the righteousness of Christ.”- *Letter 30a, 1892/Ibid.*

See Isa. 55:1; Rev. 3:7. “Salvation is a free gift, and yet it is to be bought and sold. In the market in which divine mercy has the management, the precious pearl is represented as being bought without money and without price. [Isa. 55:1]. In this market all may obtain the goods of heaven. The treasury of the jewels of truth is open to all. ‘Behold, I have set before thee an open door,’ the Lord declares, ‘and no man can shut it.’ [Rev. 3:7].”- *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 116-7.

“Gold.” – “The gold tried in the fire is faith that works by love. Only this can bring us into harmony with God. We may be active, we may do much work, but without love, such love as dwelt in the heart of Christ, we can *never* be numbered with the family of heaven.” -*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 158.

“Gold represents spiritual riches, offered as Christ’s remedy for the Laodiceans’ spiritual poverty. The figurative ‘gold’ may be interpreted as referring to ‘faith which worketh by love’ (Gal. 5:6; James 2: 5; cf. COL 158), and works that result from faith (see q Tim. 6:18).” – “Footnotes,” *E.G.W. Exhaustive Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 631.

“Tried in the fire.” – These are the fiery trials and bouts with affliction that all must have to experience for the development and perfection of faith. (See 1 Pet. 1:7; 4:12, etc.). But it is also the “gold” of the pure, first love of Jesus, the “saving salt.”

“Literally, ‘fired out of fire,’ that is, gold that has come forth from the fire with its dross burned away. Doubtless the reference here is to faith that has been tried and purified by the fires of affliction (see on James 1: 2-5; cf. Job 23:10).” – *Ibid.*

“Ye are the salt of the earth.....**The saving salt is the pure first love, the love of Jesus, the gold tried in the fire. When this is left out of the religious experience, Jesus is not there; the light, the sunshine of His presence, is not there, What, then, is the religion worth? --Just as much as the salt that has lost its savor. It is a loveless religion. Then there is an effort to supply the lack by busy activity, a zeal that is Christless. There is a wonderful keenness of perception to discover the defects in a brother or sister, and make these prominent.** We are professedly commandment-keepers; then let us obey the commandments of God, the law that is love. Then like David we can say, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within my heart.’” – *Bible Echo*, Mar. 1, 1892.

“We are nearing the end of this earth’s history. . . present truth, from the first to the last letter of its alphabet, means **missionary effort.** The work to be done calls for sacrifice at every step of advance. **The workers are to come forth from trial, purified and refined, as gold tried in the fire.**”- *Evangelism*, p. 631-2/ RH Nov. 18, 1902.

“Every one needs a practical experience in trusting God for himself. Let no man become your confessor; open the heart to God; tell Him every secret of the soul. Bring to Him your difficulties, small and great, and He will show you a way out of them all. He alone can know how to give the very help you need. And when, after a trying season, help comes to you, when the Spirit of God is manifestly at work for you, **what a precious experience you gain!** You are obtaining faith and love, the gold that the True Witness counsels you to buy of Him. You are learning to go to God in all your troubles; and as you learn these precious lessons of faith, you will teach the same to others. Thus you may be continually leading the people to a higher plane of experience.”- *Gospel Workers*, pp. 418-19.

“The end is near! We have not a moment to lose! Light is to shine forth from God’s people in clear, distinct rays, bringing Jesus before the churches and before the world. . . . It is through the grace of Christ His people will become ‘new bottles;’ H will fill them with new wine.

God will give additional light, and old truths will be recovered, and replaced in the framework of truth; and wherever laborers will go, they will triumph. . . . 'I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: *for in these things I delight*, saith the Lord.' . . . **This what needs to be brought unto. . . all our churches.** God wants every soul to turn to the first love. **He wants all to have the gold of faith and love, so that they can draw from the treasure to impart to others who need it.**" – *Sons & Daughters*, p. 259.

"The pure and the base metal are now so mingled that only the discerning eye of the infinite God can with certainty distinguish between them. But the moral magnet of holiness and truth will attract together the pure metal, while it will repel the base and counterfeit." – *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 101.

"God and angels are watching with intense interest the development of character and are weighing moral worth. **Those who withstand Satan's devices will come forth as gold tried in the fire**" – *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 637.

"White garments or 'raiment,' (KJV). – The spotless character made pure in the blood of our dear Savior and Redeemer. This is accomplished by the work of sanctification, achieved through daily overcoming and gaining victory over our inherited and cultivated tendencies, propensities, and sinful habits by God's grace.

"Offered in contrast with the Laodiceans' nakedness, which stood out so hideously in the face of their own boast that they had need of nothing (v. 17). The white raiment may be understood as the righteousness of Christ (Gal. 3:27; see on Matt. 22:11; Rev. 3:4; cf. 4T 88.). This figure must have had special significance for the Christians of Laodicea, for their city was famous for its black woolen cloth." – *Ibid.*

"Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. **This covering—the robe of His own righteousness,** Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. . . . 'All our righteousness are as filthy rags.' Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God 'was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin' [1 John 3:5]. Sin is defined as 'the transgression of the law' [1 John 3:4]. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. . . . When on earth He said to His disciples, 'I have kept My Father's commandments.' [John 15:10]. By His perfect obedience He has made it for every human being to obey God's commandments. **When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us, He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah." – *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 311-12.

"God has not changed toward His faithful servants who are keeping their garments spotless. But many are crying, 'Peace and safety,' while sudden destruction is coming upon them. Unless there is thorough repentance, unless men humble their hearts by confession and receive the truth as it is in Jesus, they will never enter heaven. When purification shall take place in our ranks, we shall no longer rest at ease, boasting of being rich and increased with goods, in need of nothing. **Who can truthfully say: 'Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world'? I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath.** Then He said to me: 'Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? 'How is the faithful city become an harlot!' My Father's house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed! For this cause there is weakness, and strength is lacking." – *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 641.

"Shame of thy nakedness and poverty." – See Exo. 20:26; Lam. 1:8; Eze. 16:36; 23:29; Nahum 3:5.

"The True Witness has said. . . that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.' **What is the shame of this nakedness and poverty? It is the shame of clothing ourselves with self-righteousness, and of separating ourselves from God**, when He has made ample provision for all to receive His blessing."- *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of Seventh-day Adventists*, p. 139/Ibid.

"Eyesalve." - The grace of God through the Holy Spirit in the Word is that which gives clear discernment of spiritual things. It will detect sin in our hearts; it will distinguish the genuine from the counterfeits, between the workings of the Holy Spirit and fanaticism. It enables us to discern and understand the true fundamental pillars, the "great waymarks," "the firm foundation," of our faith.

"The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. Upon its correct view of things the spiritual healthfulness of the whole soul and being depends. The 'eyesalve'—the Word of God, makes the conscience smart under its application; for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that healing may follow, and the eye be single to the glory of God. The sinner, beholding himself in God's great moral looking glass [mirror], sees himself as God views him, and exercises repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."- *E.G.W. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 965/ RH Nov. 23, 1897.

"Heed the counsel of the True Witness. Buy gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, white raiment that thou may be clothed, **eyesalve that thou mayest see**. Make some effort. These precious treasures will not drop upon us without some exertion on our part. We must buy—'be zealous and repent' of our lukewarm state. **We must be awake to see our wrongs, to search for our sins**, and to zealously repent of them." - *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 633.

"It would be surprising is there were not some, who, not being well-balanced in mind, have spoken and acted indiscreetly; for whenever and wherever the Lord works in giving a genuine blessing, a counterfeit is also revealed, in order to make of none effect the true work of God. **Therefore we need to be exceedingly careful, and walk humbly before God, that we may have spiritual eyesalve that we may distinguish the working of the Holy Spirit of God from the working of that spirit that would bring in wild license and fanaticism.** 'By their fruits ye shall know them' (Matt. 7:20). Those who are really beholding Christ will be changed into His image, even by the Spirit of the Lord, and will grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus [see Eph. 4:13]. **The Holy Spirit of God will inspire men with love and purity; and refinement will be manifest in their character.**"- *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 143.

"Our people need to understand *the reasons of our faith and our past experiences* [as a denomination and church]. How sad it is that so many of them apparently place unlimited confidence in men who present *theories tending to uproot our past experiences and to remove the old landmarks!* Those who can so easily be led by a false spirit show that they have been following the *wrong captain* for some time---so long that they do not discern that they are departing from the faith, or that they are not building on the true foundation. **We need to urge all to put on their spiritual eyeglasses, to have their eyes anointed that they may see clearly and discern the true pillars of the faith.** Then they will know that 'the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are His' (2 Tim. 2:19). We need to revive the old evidences of the faith once delivered to the saints' [Jude 3]." - *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, pp. 25-26.

"The churches need to have their eyes anointed with the heavenly eyesalve, that they may see the many opportunities all about them to minister for God. Repeatedly God has called upon His people to go into the highways and hedges, and compel men to come in, that His house may be full; yet within the shadow of our own doors are families in which we have

not shown sufficient interest to lead them to think that we care for their souls.”- *Christian Service*, p. 39.

“The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory which is for every church that will love God and keep His commandments. We need to study, to meditate, and to pray. **Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple.** . . .Murmuring and complaining over little disappointments and difficulties will cease. As we apply the golden eyesalve we shall see the glories beyond.”- *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 368.

“In the hour of need we can gain no power by looking to ourselves. Our eyes need to be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve, that we may discern our spiritual poverty and lack of faith. God is declared in all His dealings with His people; and with clear, unclouded eye, in adversity, in sickness, in disappointment and trial, as well as in prosperity, we are to behold the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus, and trust to his guiding hand.”- *Signs of the Times*, Sept. 10, 1896.

As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. Rev. 3:19.

“The Lord reproves wrongs in His people, but is this evidence that He has rejected them?—NO. There are errors in the church, and the Lord points them out by His ordained agencies, not always through the testimonies. Now shall we seize these reproofs and make capital of them, and say that God is not imparting to them His light and love? —NO. The very work that God is trying to do for them shows that He loves them, and wants to draw them away from paths of danger.”- *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, pp. 81, 82.

“Proud hypocrites will triumph over our brethren because they [God’s people] are humble enough to confess their sins. God loves His people who keep His commandments, and reproves them, not because they are the worst, but because they are the best people in the world. ‘As many as I love,’ says Jesus, ‘I rebuke and chasten.’”- *Testimonies*, vol.1, p. 569.

“I love.” —“Greek *phileo*, ‘to love [as a friend, with all the warmth of personal affection]. Compare Christ’s love as expressed toward the Philadelphia church by the word *agapao* (v.9). For the difference between these words see on Matt. 5:43, 44; John 11: 3; 21:15). In fact, they the objects of His attention. His love for them is expressed in chastisement, through which He hopes to bring them to repentance (see Prov. 3:12).” —“Footnotes,” *An Exhaustive E.G. W. Commentary on Revelation*, vol.2, p. 641.

“I rebuke.” — “The aim of all true remedial discipline is to bring conviction to the erring one and to encourage to a new course of action.” — *Ibid.*

“Chasten.” — “Gr. *paideuo*, ‘to train children,’ ‘to punish,’ particularly as a parent punishes a child for the purpose of reforming and training him. Chastening come to the Christian when Christ’s rebuke is disregarded. Neither His rebuke nor His chastening is an expression of anger—as when a man loses His temper—but of vigorous love whose purpose is to bring sinners to repentance. It would appear that the church in Laodicea had not as yet endured persecution, as her sister churches had, for there is no indication of suffering already endured. **But Christ warns the church that it cannot continue in its half-hearted way without encountering remedial discipline.** A little more than half a century after John’s time it seems that the ancient Laodicean church did suffer persecution (see Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* iv. 26; v. 24).”- *Ibid.*, p. 641-2.

“Be zealous.” — “Greek *zeleo*, from the same root as the word *zestos*, ‘hot,’ which the Laodicean church had failed to be (v.15). The Laodiceans are called to experience the warmth and enthusiasm that comes with true repentance, consecration, and devotion to Christ.”- *Ibid.*, p. 642.

“Repent.” – “Greek *metanoeo* (see on Matt. 3:2). The verb is in the singular, *stressing the personal, individual nature of this admonition*. Repentance, like salvation, can never be accomplished en Masse. The spiritual experience of a relative, or a friend can be of saving value to himself alone. This new attitude of sorrow for the past and zeal for the future is Christ’s purpose for the Laodicean church.” – *Ibid.*

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” Rev. 3:20.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. . .’ **Thus the world’s Redeemer illustrates the work of the Holy Spirit upon the human heart.** The living agent, by an act of faith of his own, places himself in the hands of the Lord for Him to work in him His good pleasure in His time [Phil. 2:13]. . . This is a training process, a constant discipline of the mind and heart, that Christ shall work His great work in human hearts. Self, the old natural self, dies, and Christ’s will is our will, His way is our way, and the human agent becomes, with heart, mind, and intellect, an instrument in the hands of God to work no more wickedness but the righteousness of Christ.” – *That I May Know Him*, p. 55.

“The True Witness says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ **Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart.** It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit, if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. **Our condemnation in the Judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth.**” – *Desire of Ages*, pp. 489-40.

“We have no discouraging message for the church. Although reproof and cautions and corrections have been made, yet the church has stood as God’s instrumentality to diffuse light. The commandment-keeping people of God have sounded forth a warning to the world, to all languages, tongues, and kindreds. The church of God is a living witness, a continual testimony, to convince men if accepted, to condemn them if resisted and rejected.” – *MS 96*, 1893.

“The rebuke of God is upon us because of our neglect of solemn responsibilities. His blessings have been withdrawn because the Testimonies He has given have not been heeded by those who professed to believe them. Oh, for a religious awakening! The angels of God are going from church to church, doing their duty; and Christ is knocking at the door of your hearts for entrance. But the means that God has devised to awaken the church to a sense of the spiritual destitution have not been regarded. The voice of the True Witness has been heard in reproof, but has not been obeyed. Men have chosen to follow their own way because self was not crucified in them. Thus the light has had but little effects upon minds and hearts.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 719.

“The Holy Spirit waits to soften and subdue hearts; but they are not willing to open the door and let the Savior in, for fear that He will require something of them. And so Jesus of Nazareth passes by. He longs to bestow on them the rich blessings of His grace, but they refuse to accept them. What a terrible thing it is to exclude Christ from His own temple! What a loss to the church!” – *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 262.

“I saw that many have rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove. Others have evil tempers, selfish covetousness, to remove before they can open the door. Others have rolled the world before the door of the heart, which bars the

door. All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Savior in. . . . This was repeated by the angel a number of times, 'Return unto Me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all they backslidings' [Jer. 3:22]. Some, I saw, would gladly return. **Others will not let this message to the Laodicean church have its weight upon them. They will glide along, much after the same manner as before, and will be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Those only who zealously repent will have favor with God.**" – *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 141-44.

"When those sins which God hates are subdued, Jesus will come in and sup with you, and you with Him. You will then draw divine strength from Jesus, and you will grow up with Him, and be able with holy triumph to say, Blessed be God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had never named His name.** They are a **continual weight** to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a **stumbling-block** to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a **curse to the cause at home or abroad.** They draw near to God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him." – *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 226-7.

"I stand." – "The form of the Greek verb implies that Christ has taken His stand at the door and remains there. He never tires of offering His blessed presence to all who will receive Him." – *Footnotes, An Exhaustive E. G. W. Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 649.

"The door." – [This is not] the "door of proffered opportunity in v. 8, nor the door of salvation (cf. Matt. 25:10; Luke 13:25). These doors God shuts and opens. The door here referred to is under the control of man, and each person may open or shut it at will. Christ awaits each man's decision. This is the door to a man's soul. By His love, through His word, and through His providences, Christ knocks on the door of *emotions*; by His wisdom, at the door of the *mind*; by His Lordship, at the door of the *conscience*; and by His promises, at the door of man's *hopes*."

This passage may also be thought of as referring to Christ standing at the door of *human life*, and indeed, of *human history*, ready to enter in and bless His waiting people with His presence (see Matt. 24:33; Luke 12:36; James 5:9)." – *Ibid.*

"Sup." – "Greek *deipneo*, 'to eat a meal,' particularly the chief, or evening meal (see on Luke 14:21). This word may be thought of as favoring the application of this verse to the great marriage feast of Rev. 19:9. The Jews commonly compared the bliss of the future life to a feast (see on Luke 14: 15, 16). – *Ibid.*

"With him." – "Few acts are more indicative of fellowship and communion than partaking of food together. In these words Christ promises to share our experiences and invites us to share His (see Gal. 2:20; Heb. 2:14-17)." – *Ibid.*

"The church was [is] defective and in need of stern reproof and chastisement, and John was inspired to record messages of warning and reproof and entreaty to those who, *losing sight of the fundamental principles of the gospel, should imperil their hope of salvation.* But always the words of rebuke that God finds it necessary to send are *spoken in tender love and with the promise of peace* to every penitent believer. [Rev. 3:20 quoted]." – *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 587.

"Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is a free gift given to every soul *who hungers and thirsts to receive it.* [Isa. 55:1; 54: 17; Jer. 23:6]. No man can supply that which will satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. But Jesus says, [Rev. 3:20; John 6:35 quoted]." – *Mount of Blessing*, pp. 18, 19.

"The Savior is not repulsed by scorn or turned aside by threatening, but continually seeks the lost ones, saying, 'How shall I give thee up?' Hos. 8:11. Although His love is driven back by the stubborn heart, *He returns to plead with greater force.* 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' *The winning power of His love compels souls to come in.* And to Christ they say, 'Thy gentleness has made me great.' Ps. 18:35." – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 235.

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” Rev. 3:21

“Those who have a seat at the Savior’s side on His throne are only that class who have overcome as He overcame.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 38.

“Christ passed over the ground where Adam fell, overcame in our behalf. He endured every test that men will ever be called upon to endure. He met all the temptations which men will meet. He has traveled over the path in which he calls us to walk. ‘If any man will come after Me,’ He says, ‘let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’ [He says], ‘As I endured the test and trial, so you may endure it.’ He who is at last crowned conqueror must depend, as Christ did, upon divine power. Every step Christ took was taken in dependence upon God, and not in a single point did the enemy overcome Him. He declares, ‘Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ [Rev. 3:21 quoted].” – *Bible Echo*, July 23, 1900.

Definition of appetite. 1. an inherent or habitual desire or propensity for some personal gratification, *either of body or mind*; craving. 2. Desire for, or relish of, food or drink. – *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 5th edition, 1942. Take note of this full and true meaning of appetite; it does not mean merely food and diet—as some do! It includes everything and anything that the carnal heart craves and desires for—including appetite for sensual matters, violence, esoteric and spiritualistic ideas, gossip, rumor-mongering, etc.—all for personal gratification.

See Heb. 2:16-18; 3: 15, 16; Matt. 4: 1-11. “Many say that Jesus was not like us, that He was not as we are in the world, that He was divine, and that we cannot overcome as He overcame. But Paul writes: [Heb. 2: 16-18; 3: 15, 16; Rev. 3: 20 quoted].” – *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 409. Read these verses over and over, and internalize its truths!

“Those who claim that it was not possible for Christ to sin, cannot believe that He really took upon Himself human nature. But was not Christ actually tempted, not only by Satan in the wilderness, but all through His life, from childhood to manhood? In all points He was tempted as we are, and because He successfully resisted temptation under every form, He gave men the perfect example, and through the ample provision Christ has made, we may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which in the world through lust. . . . Jesus was free from all sin and error; there was not a trace of imperfection in His life or character. He maintained spotless purity under circumstances the most trying. True, He declared, ‘There is none good, but one, that is, God.’ but again He said, ‘I and My Father are one.’ Jesus speaks of Himself as well as the Father as God, and claims for Himself perfect righteousness.” – *MS 141*, 1901.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom’ [Ps. 11:10]. Those who overcome as Christ overcame will need to constantly guard against the temptations of Satan. **The appetites and passions should be restricted and under the control of enlightened conscience, that the intellect may be unimpaired, the perceptive powers clear, so that the workings of Satan and his snares may not be interpreted to be the providences of God** [!]. Many desire the final reward and victory, but are not willing to endure toil, privation, and denial of self, as did their Redeemer, **It is only through obedience and continual effort that we shall overcome as Christ overcame.**” – *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 59,

“Christ entered upon the test upon the point of appetite, and for nearly six weeks resisted temptation in behalf of man. That long fast in the wilderness was to be a lesson to fallen man for all time. Christ was not overcome by the strong temptations of the enemy, and this is encouragement for every soul who is struggling against temptation. Christ has made it possible for every member of the human family to resist temptation. All who would live godly lives may overcome as Christ overcame, by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

That long fast of the Savior strengthened Him to endure. **He gave evidenced to men that He would begin the work of overcoming just where the ruin began--on the point of appetite.**" – *Medical Ministry*, p. 264.

"The crown and the throne are the **tokens of a condition attained**; they are the **tokens of self-conquest** through our Lord Jesus Christ." – *Desire of Ages*, p. 549.

"[**Rev. 21:7, 7, quoted**]. Here, also, **conditions are specified**. In order to inherit all things, we must resist and overcome sin." – *Great Controversy*, p. 540.

"**Christ overcame temptation as a man**. Every man may overcome as Christ overcame. He humbled Himself for us. He was tempted in all points like as we are. He redeemed Adam's disgraceful failure and fall and was conqueror, thus testifying to all the unfallen worlds and to fallen humanity that men could keep the commandments of God through the divine power granted to him of heaven. Jesus the Son of God humbled Himself for us, endured temptation for us, overcame in our behalf, to show us how we may overcome; **He has thus bound up His interest with humanity by the closest ties, and has given the positive assurance that we shall not be tempted above that we are able.**" – *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 112.

"**We need not place the obedience of Christ by itself as something for which He was particularly adapted, because of His divine nature; for He stood before God as man's representative, and was tempted as man's Substitute and Surety. If Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of a man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter. But the work of Christ was to take from Satan his control of man, and He could do this only in a straightforward way. He came as a man, to be tempted as a man, rendering the obedience of a man. Christ rendered obedience to God, and overcame as humanity must overcome.** We are led to make wrong conclusions because of erroneous views of the nature of our Lord. To attribute to His nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, is to destroy the completeness of His humanity. The obedience of Christ to His Father was the same obedience that is required of man. Man cannot overcome Satan's temptations except as divine power works through humanity. **The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what God in His own divine person could do, but what He could do through humanity.** Through faith man is to be a partaker of the divine nature, and to overcome every temptation wherewith he is beset. It was the Majesty of heaven who became a man, who humbled Himself to our human nature; it was he who was tempted in the Wilderness and who endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself." – *Signs of the Times*, Apr. 10, 1893.

"**Let us overcome the hasty words which mar the happiness and peace of mind of those about us. Let us overcome our impetuous tempers.** Let us be kind and patient, accommodating pleasant, thinking evil of no one. If we resist the devil, he will flee from us. Around every tempted soul there are angels of God, ready to lift up the standard of righteousness, if the tempted one will only show a spirit of resistance to evil." – *Review & Herald*, Aug. 8, 1907.

"**Courage, energy, and perseverance (we) must possess.** Though apparent impossibilities obstruct (our) way, by His grace we are to go forward. Instead of deploring difficulties, we are called upon to surmount them. We are to despair of nothing, and to hope for everything. With the golden chain of His matchless love, Christ has bound us to the throne of God. **It is His purpose that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the Source of all power, shall be (ours).** (We) are to have power to resist evil, power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell, can master, power that will enable (us) to overcome as Christ overcame." – *Gospel Workers*, p. 39.

Health Reform Practiced by Overcomers

"Paul declared that he kept his body under, lest after he had preached to others, he himself should be a castaway [1 Cor. 9:27]. **Those who in ancient times ran for a prize realized the importance of temperate habits, and how more should we, who are running a**

race for a heavenly crown. We should put forth every effort to overcome evil. Christ came to set an example of how to overcome. He endured a fast for forty days, and He has made it possible for man to overcome on the point of appetite. The battle is before us. We must fight valiantly. If we are successful, we shall one day realize the fulfillment of the promise, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His throne.' – *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 116.

"But Jesus overcame on the point of appetite, and so may we. **Let us move on then, step by step, advancing in reform** until all our habits shall be in accordance with the laws of life and health." – *Review & Herald*, Apr. 19, 1887.

Various "Warring Lusts"

See Biblical list of these lusts in **1 Pet. 2:11; Rom. 2: 21-32; Rev. 21; 7, 8.**

Food, drinks, any and all perverted desires

"The word of God plainly presents us this truth, **that our physical natures will be brought will be brought into warfare with the spiritual.** The apostle charges us to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul [1 Pet. 2:11]. **Every perverted appetite becomes a warring lust. Appetite indulged to injury of the physical strength causes disease of the soul.** The lust which the apostle mentions is not confined to the seventh commandment ["Thou shalt not commit adultery"], but every indulgence of the **taste** which lessens physical vigor is a warring lust. The apostle declares that he who would gain special victories and make higher attainments in righteousness must be 'temperate in all things' [1 Cor. 9:25]. **Temperance in eating and drinking at our tables, as well as the exercise of temperance in every aspect, is essential if we would overcome as Christ overcame.** God has given us light, not to be treated indifferently, but to be our guide and help." – *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 215.

Narcotics and Stimulants (alcohol, drugs, caffeine, tobacco, etc).

"It is not an easy matter to overcome the appetite for **narcotics and stimulants.** But in the name of Christ this great victory can be gained. His love for the fallen race was great so great that He made an infinite sacrifice to reach them in their degradation, and though His divine power, finally elevate them to His throne. But it rests with man whether Christ shall accomplish for him that which he is fully able to do. **God cannot work against man's will to save him from Satan's artifices. Man must put forth his human power to resist and conquer at any cost; he must be a co-worker with Christ.** Then through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become and heir of God, and a partaker with Christ of His glory. **No drunkard** [or any person addicted to any of the Biblical list of "warring lusts" above] **can inherit the kingdom of God;** but 'to him that overcometh [Rev. 3:20 quoted]." – *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, p. 40.

SUMMARY

I. The Laodicean Church

God's' own view of the Laodicean condition, and the divine remedy prescribed for it by the Faithful and True Witness, i.e., Christ Himself through the Holy Spirit, is summarized below. References are provided for the reader to do further reading lest one falls into either one of the two great errors regarding this message: (1) making light of it and presumptuously continuing in self-deception until *total* blindness sets in, or (2) turning it as a weapon against the yet-defective remnant church and misinterpreting it as a rejection of God, as He did to the Jewish nation, and therefore, reason for separating from the church and starting *another* church, denomination, or movement.

1. Laodiceans are those honestly deceived. "*Knowest thou not that thou art. . .*" (Rev. 3: 17, KJV). However, a Christian who is honestly deceived, when he sees the truth he will cease to be

deceived or else he ceases to be honest! He then becomes willingly deceived, which is the greatest of deceptions!

“Self-sufficiency is the fatal danger of a lukewarm state. The Laodiceans boasted of a deep knowledge of Bible truth, a deep insight into the Scriptures. *They were not entirely blind, else the eyesalve would have done nothing to restore their sight, and enable them to discern the true attributes of Christ.* Says Christ, By renouncing your own self-sufficiency, giving up all things, however dear to you, you may buy the gold, the raiment, and the eye-salve that you may see.” – *Review & Herald*, Nov. 23. 1897.

2. Unfaithful Laodiceans are not spewed out in a moment – 1T 186. see also 2 SG 225.
 3. Though a cutting reproof, this message is full of encouragement – 7BC 966.
 4. The duration of this message and work is not short, as some think—1T 186-7.
 5. This blindness is not yet complete blindness --4T 88; 7BC 965.
 6. A promise of peace accompanies this divine rebuke – AA 587.
 7. General description given – 2SG 222-3; 1 SM 357-8; 1T 141-6.
 8. Given to a cold, lifeless, and Christless church – 1SM 357
 9. Symbolism of – AA 585-6.
 10. Warning – CW 33
 11. Called “the straight testimony to the Laodiceans”– EW 270.
 12. Not a peace-and-safety message –3T 252
 13. Not a smooth message – 3T 257
 14. Time to heed, now is –5T 214-5.
 15. Began sounding in 1892 – 7BC 964
 16. **God’s purpose in giving** – TM 23
 - Designed to arouse God’s people—2SG 224
 - from dangerous deception – 3T 259.
 - to action and confession of sins—3T 259
 - to zealous repentance and putting away of sin—3T 260
 17. To arouse a slumbering church –1 SM 196
 18. God would restore by means of --TM 23
 19. Promise of peace accompanies –AA 587
 20. Christ’s condescension in giving – 2T 224.
 21. To discover to His people backslidings –2 SG 224
 22. Encouragement brought to a backslidden church—7BC 966.
 23. Is not to lead brother to judge brother – 2SG 223
 24. **Designed to rid church of fanatical influences** – 7BC 962
 25. Work to be accomplished by – 1 T 186; 3T 260
 26. Idlers sent to the vineyard by the message –7Bc 961
 27. Church condition portrayed by – 7BC 961; 5T 101
- To whom specially applicable?**
- Last church, the Seventh-day Adventists – 6T 77
 - To the church – 7BC 961-2; 1SM 92
 - To church members – 2SM 69; 6T 426
 - To God’s people – 7BC 959; 1T 186; 3T 252
 - To our ourselves – 2SG 222-3
 - Church members tested individually by—1T 187
 - To those who do not apply it to themselves – CW 99
 - Adventists who have had great light but do not walk in it – 2SM 66
 - Wealthy Sabbath-keepers who oppress the poor – 1T 480
 - Persons who are unwilling to do self-denying work – 5T 265
 - Youth who profess to be Christians – 1T 162
 - To those who profess to believe in present truth – 4T 87-9

II. The Seven Churches of Revelation

“The order in which the churches are listed both here and in chs. 2; 3 represent the geographical sequence in which a messenger carrying a letter from Patmos would reach these seven cities in the province of Asia. . . . For further information on each church named see the individual messages to the churches in chs. 2; 3 [as we just covered in this series].

The seven churches are the first in a series of sevens in the Revelation. Thus there are also seven Spirits (v.4), seven candlesticks (v. 12), seven stars (v.16), seven lamps of fire (ch. 4:5), a book with seven seals (ch. 5:1), the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb (ch. 5:6), seven angels with seven trumpets (ch. 8:2), seven thunders (ch. 10:4), a dragon with seven heads and seven crowns (ch. 12:3), a beast with seven heads (ch. 13:1), seven angels having seven vials containing the seven last plagues (ch. 15: 1, 7), and the beast with seven heads, which are also said to be seven mountains and seven kings (ch. 17: 3, 9, 10). This repeated use of the number seven with so many different symbols implies that it, too, is to be understood in a symbolic sense. Throughout Scripture the number seven, when used symbolically, is generally understood to indicate completeness, perfection.

As applied to the seven churches, then, this number may be expected to have a specific purpose. That there were more than seven churches in the province of Asia is clear from the fact that two other churches in the region, those at Colossae and Hierapolis, are also mentioned in the New Testament (see Col. 1:2; 4:13). *Consequently it is reasonable to conclude that the Lord chose the seven churches here name because they were typical of the condition of the church as a whole—both in apostolic times and throughout the Christian Era . . .* (cf. AA 583, 585).

The messages to the seven churches applied to conditions in the church in John’s day. Had this not been so, these messages would have mystified and discouraged the Christians in the churches of Asia who were to read them (see on Rev.1:3). John would have proved to be a false prophet if the messages he addressed to his churches had not revealed the true situation in those congregations and had not been appropriate to their spiritual needs. These messages were sent at a time when the Christians of Asia were suffering great tribulation. . . , and their firm reproof, reassuring comfort, and glorious promises must have been designed to fill those needs (see AA 678-588). Accepting and heeding these messages, the Christian churches of Asia would be prepared spiritually to understand the drama of the great controversy portrayed in the remainder of Revelation, and to maintain a steadfast hope in the ultimate triumph of Christ and His church.

Although the various messages to the seven churches must have applied in the first instance to the churches of Asia in John’s own time, they were also relevant to the future history of the church. . . . *A study of history reveals that these messages are, indeed, applicable in a special way to seven periods that cover the entire history of the church.*

Inasmuch as the number seven implies completeness, as noted above, it appears reasonable, also, to understand these messages as, in a sense, descriptive of the whole church at any given time during its history, for doubtless every individual congregation throughout Christian history could find its characteristics and needs described in one or more of these messages. Accordingly, they may be said to have universal application, in addition to the local application in John’s day and the historical application in successive periods. A Christian writer about A.D. 200 wrote that ‘John writes to the seven churches, yet he speaks to all’ (Latin text in S.P. Tregelles, ed., *Canon Muratorianus*, p. 19). Although, for instance, the message to the Laodicean church is particularly appropriate to the church today, the messages to the other churches also contain words of admonition by which it may profit (see 5T 368, 481, 538, 612; 8T 98, 99).” – *Footnotes, “An Exhaustive E. G. White Commentary on Revelation, Vol.2, pp. 493-4.*

II. Both Wheat and Tares Grow Within the Church until the Harvest! **(See first Matt. 13: 3-10, 18-23, 47-50; 7: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rev. 22: 1012).**

“We have abundant evidence that tares grow with the wheat in the church of God. There are sincere Christians in the church, and there are also lukewarm Christians. These [lukewarm Christians] have opportunity to know the truth. The Word of God is presented to them; they come to the banquet, as Judas came to the Passover, but like Judas, they do not eat the word of life. No one can compel them to eat the Word of eternal life—to make through work of repentance, that they may obtain a Christian experience, and become rooted and grounded in the truth. . . .

"We must not be overwhelmed with discouragement because good and bad are gathered into the church. Judas was numbered among the disciples. He had every advantage a man could have, but although he heard the truth, and listened to the principles so plainly laid down, yet Christ knew that he did not receive the truth. He did not eat the truth. It did not become a part of himself. His old habits and practices constantly sought to assert themselves. But Christ did not take forcible means to cut Judas away from the disciples. . ."-- *Upward Look*, p. 35.

"The casting of the net is the preaching of the gospel. *This gathers both good and evil into the church. When the mission of the gospel is completed, the Judgment will accomplish the work of separation.* Christ saw how the existence of false brethren in the church would cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of. The world would revile the gospel because of the inconsistent lives of false professors. Even Christians would be cause to stumble as they saw that many who bore Christ's name were not controlled by His Spirit. Because these sinners were in the church, men would be in danger of thinking that God excused their sins. *Therefore Christ lifts the veil from the future, and bids all to behold that it is character, not position, which decides man's destiny.* Both the parable of the tares and that of the net plainly teach that there is no time when all the wicked will turn to God. **The wheat and tares grow together until the harvest. The good and bad fish are together drawn ashore for final separation.** Again these parables teach that there is to be no probation after the Judgment. **When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed** [Rev. 22: 10-12]."- *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 123.

"Christ's servants are grieved as they see true and false believers mingled in the church. *They long to do something to cleanse the church.* Like the servants of the house-holder, they are ready to uproot the tares. But Christ says to them, 'Nay;' lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest.' Christ has taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church [Matt. 18:15-17]; **but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive. He knows our nature too well to entrust this work to us.** Should we try to uproot from the church those whom we suppose to be spurious Christians, we should be sure to make mistakes. Often we regard as hopeless subjects the very ones whom Christ is drawing to Himself. Were we to deal with these souls according to our imperfect judgment, it would perhaps extinguish their last hope. *Many who think themselves Christians will at last be found wanting. Many will be in heaven who their neighbors supposed would never enter there.* Man judges from appearance, but God judges the heart [1 Sam. 16:7]. The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; **and the harvest is the end of probationary time.**" -- *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 71, 72.

Take note! In the parable "the harvest is the end of probationary time!" And God has never entrusted to *any* human being any information as to when earth's probationary time will end! **Not even Satan knows when!** Consider the following vital quotes:

"The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state---men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, **all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above.** Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in, and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. 'So,' says the Savior, 'shall also the coming of the man be.' Matt. 24: 39. **Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.**"- *Great Controversy*, p. 491.

"**When God's presence was finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation, priests and people knew it not.** Though under the control of Satan, and swayed by the most horrible and malignant passions, *they still regarded themselves the chosen of God.* The ministration in the temple continued; sacrifices were offered upon its polluted altars, and daily the divine blessing was invoked upon a people *guilty* of the blood of God's dear Son and seeking to slay His ministers

and apostles. **So when the irrevocable decision of the sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitant of the earth will know it not. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God!**" – *Ibid*, p. 615.

"As **Satan** influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people **in the time of trouble**. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. he numbers the world as his subjects; nut the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees the holy angels are guarding them, and infers that their sins have been pardoned; **but he [Satan] does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above.**"- *Ibid*, p. 618.

The only hope for lukewarm Christians

"The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of their disease. They are neither cold not hot. They occupy a neutral position, and at the same time flatter themselves that they are in need of nothing. The True Witness hates this lukewarmness. He loathes the indifference of this class of persons. Like lukewarm water, they are nauseous to His taste." – *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 87.

"Only those who zealously repent will have favor with God."- *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 144.

"Repent ye therefore and be converted; that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord!" Acts 3:19, 20 (KJV).

"Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness. . . ." Heb. 3: 7, 8, 12-15.

(End of our 7-part study of the Seven Churches of Revelation)

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