

The SEVEN Series

HE DISCIPLINES THE ONE HE LOVES

Today we have come to the seventh week, Seven series and seventh church. God has been speaking to our church and to us through these churches.

We have seen the 6 churches — Ephesus, Smyrna, Sardis, Thyatira, Pergamum, Philadelphia and what God has been speaking to us through them. Two out of these were good churches — Smyrna and Philadelphia — the rest had few problems.

This week it is about the last church named **Laodicea**. Dear children of God, **He disciplines those who He loves**. If God is correcting us, disciplining us, molding us, giving us some tests, it means that He loves us. I am sure as parents, would we go and correct our neighbour's children? Or have our parents gone and corrected other children? No. They do this because we are born to them and they love us.

Similarly, today if the Lord is correcting you and me and disciplining us it is because He loves us. Many a time, we would've thought other people commit many treacherous mistakes and get away with it but for a small mistake God is upset with me. That is because He loves us.

Background of Laodicea

- 1. This city was founded by Antiochus II some time before 253 BC. He named this city after his wife "Laodice".**
- 2. The city was situated on a high plateau and was very secure from the enemy attack.**
- 3. Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake in 66 AD, but the city was very wealthy and self-sufficient.**
- 4. The city was famous for three things: Finances — centre of Banking and finance and throughout the Roman empire, it was known for its wealth and financial power; Fashion — the city used to manufacture a soft black wool that was well sought after; newest styles originated from Laodicea; Pharmaceuticals — it was famous for a medical school in Laodicea that produced a tablet and was sold over the Roman empire. This tablet was crushed and mixed with water to form a salve and it was used as a cure for eye problems.**

Though Laodicea had so much importance, it was the worst church of all. Christ called it the lukewarm church.

How is God introducing Himself?

Revelation 3:14: "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ...'"

What is God saying about this church?

Revelation 3:15–16: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth."

Beloved children of God, many Christian believers are in this state. All of us have friends, sometimes during a fight they talk for us or against us. We may tell them to take either one side. We find such people in the church and in our household as well.

We can't serve two masters. God says He will spew us from His mouth. There are many people like that. We want to serve God and money at the same time. But God says either one else He will vomit us out. This kind of church is very difficult for a pastor. This is a kind of church that is very hard for God to move and misrepresents Him. This type is a very wrong representation of Him.

Dear Christians in Christ, are we becoming a wrong example of Christ? It's high time that we think.

Revelation 3:17–18: Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

God shows a contrast here. He says you think that you are rich, happy and in good state but you are not! You think that your riches, education, fame will rescue you. But none of these will help you. If you think that all the things that you have acclaimed from the world is your security then you are highly mistaken. You may think you are rich but you are poor. Hence, He says come to me and get your refined gold, clothing and your eye salve.

The city of Laodicea is famous for all these but God says that all these are untrue, useless and lies and to come to Him to get the actual elements.

Hence, dear children of God, don't think that all that we possess will come and save us. Suddenly in some circumstances all these will disappear. But you know what? God says, come and get these things from me and they will stay with you and establish you for eternity. Don't be envying the people around us who are wealthy. Don't think of money as security.

Revelation 3:19: As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Even then God says to the worst church, I still love you and turn your hearts and repent.

"The job of a football coach is to make men do what they don't want to do to achieve what they always wanted to be."

Today, is God making you do things that you don't want to do? It means God is going to make you what He wants you to be. Sometimes, you would've watched movies where the football team is being trained. The team players get tremendously angry. But when the team gets onto the field and plays, the results would be astounding.

God is saying today, you may get upset with me or may dislike my correction but it is for your good. Don't we do the same for our children? We do it for their best.

Revelation 3:20: Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

There are 5 good characteristics of Christ here.

- He stands outside the door of the sinner who He says He will spew out of His mouth.
- He knocks on the door of the sinner and searches for him.
- He pleads with us sinners to come in.
- He penetrates and comes in.
- He is our companion and dines with us.

Today, I want to ask you is Christ still standing at the door or have you invited Him inside?

He loves us and says do not be like the church of Laodicea neither too hot not too cold.

Finally, He says,

Revelation 3:20–21: To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

He says, you can sit with me as I sat with my father. He says this to the church that He wanted to vomit out from His mouth. Today God says, do not trust in all the things that you have achieved in this life.

Look at the heart of Christ. Though He is so angry with this church and wants to vomit them out of His mouth, He still wants to correct them and dine with them because He loves them. He is asking us to take the refined gold, garments, and the eye salve that He gives.

Dear children of God, if God is correcting you, it is because He loves you. If you are going through many tests, I want to tell you God loves you. Amen.