

The Seven Churches of Revelation

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon explores the messages to the Seven Churches of Revelation, emphasizing the need for spiritual vigilance and genuine faith in today's context.

Duration: 1:02:29

Scripture: Revelation 1:1-2

Topics: "Churches of Revelation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the book of Revelation, specifically chapter 3, which is the second message in a series on the seven churches of Revelation. The book of Revelation is described as the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and it is emphasized that Jesus is the central figure in this book. The preacher highlights the importance of having a heart like John's, who saw Jesus in his purity and was deeply impacted by his presence. The sermon emphasizes that as believers, we are called to be kings and priests, chosen by God to represent Jesus Christ on earth and bring his presence to a lost and dying world.

Transcript

This is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, Post Office Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771, or by calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. We invite you to come, Lord Jesus, and walk in the midst of the candlesticks again tonight. Lord, let your manifested glory reveal in us, in each and every one of us in this house, in the area in our lives, O God, where we fall short of the fullness of what you have purchased for us on Calvary.

If our hearts be otherwise minded, O God, if we're looking in a wrong direction, if we're looking to things apart from you, Lord Jesus, to fulfill and to give strength and to give joy, let your manifested glory reveal these things. Let us cast them to the earth as filthy rags, O God, and put on the only righteousness, the only true joy, the only truth that is found in you, O God. Lord Jesus, we ask that you would clothe us with righteousness in this last hour of time.

To the prophet Isaiah, you said that in the midst of the fire there would be a bride that would burst forth with glory and with singing, strong singing in that day. God, make us of that bride, Lord, here in New York

City. Those who look heavenward in the midst of all destruction and say, There he is, here's our God, we have waited for him.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Jesus, walk in the midst of our hearts tonight. Walk in the midst of our hearts, Lord. God, I thank you for setting us aflame.

Thank you for the anointing of your Holy Spirit. Thank you, Lord, that you haven't saved us because we're wise or strong, but God, you truly choose the foolish and the weak of this world and the things that are despised and things that are not or nothing to bring to nothing things that are. I thank you, Lord God, that you promised that out of my belly would flow rivers of living water.

Speak to your church tonight, O God. Speak to your people tonight by the power and anointing of your Holy Spirit. Open every prison door.

Seek out every hiding place, O God, where those have sought refuge from your holiness and sought refuge from your truth. Lord, bring us out into your glory. Bring us out into the midst of where you are.

Hallelujah. Let us see ourselves in the light of your countenance. God, I ask, O Lord, for such a manifested glory to come upon your church in this last hour of time that all of New York City would have to stand up and take notice and say truly of a truth, their Lord is God, the Lord is God.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you for the unction to speak this message and thank you for the ability for the hearers to hear. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Revelation, the last book in the New Testament, please. Revelation, chapter 3. It will be the second message in a series of seven that I'm going to be speaking on the seven churches of Revelation. Now, the book of Revelation is a book of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

If you go back to chapter 1, verse 1, it's not a book, it's the revelation of Jesus. Jesus walking as John saw Him in the midst of the seven candlesticks. Now, we know in verse 13 the seven candlesticks represent the seven churches.

Jesus walking in the midst in His purity. John saw Him, he said, and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were as a flame of fire.

The eyes of Jesus are in this house tonight. He looks, nothing can be hidden from Him. He looks beyond our suits and our fine clothes.

He looks beyond all of the hairdos and everything that are found in this house. He looks beyond the yeas and the amens. He even looks beyond exuberance, if it be birthed in Him or not birthed in Him.

And His eyes go right into the very center of our inward being. And He's able to discern who and what we are. And that's what happened in Revelation.

You see, these churches had been established mainly by the missionary journeys of Paul. And about 63 years after Christ's resurrection, the Apostle John, who is the same John that leaned on His breast at the

Last Supper and loved Him and the disciple that Jesus loved, John was lifted up in a place of exile. He was lifted up into the presence of God.

And a fresh revelation of Jesus Christ was given to John. And that revelation of Jesus Christ brought to light things that were found in these respective churches that were good, but also brought to light things in the respective churches that were not good in the sight of the Lord. Now we know in Revelation the seven churches were literal churches.

They were actual church bodies that were founded at that time, that particular point in history. But traces of the key elements in each of these churches have been found throughout biblical history and also are found today. You can find individual churches throughout the whole world which would perhaps typify the Church of Philadelphia or churches that have gone through or are going through suffering, churches that you're sure that if Jesus were to appear today collectively that He would speak certain words to these churches.

And so traces are found both collectively and individually. In this house tonight there are traces of all seven churches that are mentioned in the book of Revelation. There are things that are good in each one of our lives and yet there are things that the very presence, the manifestation of Jesus would expose to be disapproved by the presence of God.

You have got to have the heart that John had. I'm sure that all of these churches thought they were doing well. However with the revelation of Jesus Christ pathways that they had begun to take which were a diversion from the high calling of God and the purity of that calling were revealed.

The Apostle John said in Revelation chapter 1 verse 4 in verse 6 rather, He has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

And so that's the high calling of God in Christ Jesus on each one of our lives. We're not made just to sit in a church. We're not made just to be partakers of some blessing.

But we are made to be kings and priests. The Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2 verse 9 says, You're a chosen generation. We're a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

A peculiar people called to what? To show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light. We are as a church, we are individually as well as collectively called of God to be the virtual representation of Jesus Christ here on this earth. We're called to be His body.

We're called to bring the manifested presence of Jesus to this lost and dying generation that we're living in. John said in Revelation 1, When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. The revelation of Jesus Christ brings an end to all flesh.

The revelation of Jesus brings an end to thinking and speaking and walking and doing things that are contrary to the very essence of who Jesus Christ is as the Son of God. These churches needed to desire that revelation to return to the purity of their calling. You remember the prophet Isaiah? I shared on it last time I spoke on Ephesus.

Prophesying to Israel for around 28 years, lifted up in the year that King Uzziah died into the presence of God. And the very manifested presence of Jesus brought an end to Isaiah. Brought an end to who He thought He was and what He thought He was doing.

In spite of all the prophesying, in spite of the fact that He was one of the few that were standing for truth, Isaiah said, Woe unto me, I'm undone. I'm a man of unclean lips. I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips.

For mine eyes have seen the King of glory. I've seen the Lord of hosts. Oh, it was Daniel that was drawn into the presence of the Lord and was left as a dead man, his breath gone from him.

And you and I tonight need that desire. We need it with all of our heart if we're going to be able to hear from the Lord. And you and I have got to say, Lord Jesus, come into the midst of my heart.

Walk in the midst of the candlestick that is within me. The Spirit of the Lord, the Scripture says, is the candle of man searching all the inward parts of the belly. Holy Spirit, Holy Jesus, come and walk within my life.

Could that be your prayer tonight? God, I have a zeal. Oh, this church, I've never been in a church anywhere in the world that has a zeal like this church. But there's still room for Jesus to walk in the midst of every heart.

There's still room for Christ to come and search the inward parts of our bellies. We are, I'm sure, alive in the things of God. But there's always room to come more alive in the things of God, that God can touch us.

We need that desire. Precious and holy Lord Jesus, we invite you tonight to touch our lives. I invite you to touch my life.

Oh God, as I preach this word tonight, Father, I'm not exempt from the word that's about to be spoken, for it's your word and it comes from your book. God, it doesn't come from my heart. It comes from your heart.

Lord, we're asking tonight, I'm asking that you walk in the midst of this house, collectively and individually, Lord God. Walk in the midst of our hearts, Lord. If there's anything that's in us that was found in the church of Laodicea, let it be revealed, oh God.

Let it be cast off like filthy rags and works of death. Let there be a shout of glory and a shout of victory, oh God, as we move on from image to image and glory to glory in Christ Jesus. Jesus, I ask above all things that you would birth your heart in my life and birth your heart in your church in this last hour of time.

Deliver us from our own hearts, oh God. Deliver us from our own ways of thinking and let your heart and your mind be birthed in us, oh God. May we be found alive and abridged, bringing honor and glory to your name in this last hour of time.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Glory to Jesus. I thank you, God, for what you're going to accomplish in this house.

I thank you that you're going to break the bondage of lukewarmness that may be found in any life that's in this house tonight. I thank you that by tape you're going to speak to hearts, not only in this house but across this nation. God, you will speak to hearts that have gotten into a trap of lukewarmness and are in danger of losing you, Lord God.

Oh, Jesus, speak to your church tonight. Speak to your church. Lord, I'm a frail vessel, oh God, but I don't stand in my own strength.

I stand in your strength. I stand in your victory and in your righteousness. Speak to every heart tonight.

I ask this in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. Revelation chapter 3, beginning at verse 14.

The last church age, probably most representative of at least Western society, the Laodicean church age, it's always been impressed upon my heart that this, if Jesus were to come back and speak, especially to the Western world, that this would be the words, the exact words that he would speak to much of what has happened to the church of Jesus Christ in Western society, especially since the Industrial Revolution. Now, unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans writes, 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 and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and of need of nothing.

And knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with me. To him that overcomes 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. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches.

The counsel of Jesus. Jesus said to this church, the Laodicean church age, He said, you are miserable. Here's a church that by their own testimony said, I'm rich and we're increased with goods and we have need of absolutely nothing.

I think Pastor David spoke this morning on some of the trace elements of that church that are so vividly found in this generation. These user-friendly churches that we're finding now all throughout the land. And he said, you're miserable.

The original word in the text is Elilios, which means you're full of misery and you're worthy to be pitied. You think you're rich and you think you're increased with goods, but the Lord is saying, I look down upon you and you're worthy of pity. You're naked.

The word is Gumnos. That means naked of spiritual clothing. That is the imputed righteousness of faith.

In other words, Christ is looking down on this church that says we're rich and we're increased with goods and have need of nothing. And He looks down upon this church age and He says unto this church age that you're worthy to be pitied from where I stand and from my perspective. Now, we're talking about the Son of God, the head of the church, walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks.

He says you're naked of spiritual clothing. You haven't got the full armor of God. You don't know how to put it on.

And the righteousness that's imputed by faith, you've lost faith and because you've lost faith you don't know what righteousness is. And even though you have a great and grand testimony of yourself, I look

down from heaven, saith the Lord, and I see something else. I see a pitiable naked people running around talking about riches and blessing.

If there were a word that describes the Laodicean church age, it would be the word lukewarm. Lukewarm. Every time you think of Laodicea, I'm sure if you've spent any time in the Bible at all or in any church, you're thinking of that word lukewarm.

Now, there's some characteristics about lukewarmness. Now, first of all, lukewarmness. Think about it now.

How many here like going home to a lukewarm supper? Neither hot nor cold. You would wish that your wife or your husband, whoever's making the dinner, had made up their mind either it was going to be a cold buffet or a hot lunch. But there's just something about a lukewarm meal or a lukewarm glass of water.

Have you ever tried eating a lukewarm ice cream cone on a summer's day? The best that it can do is drip all over your hand and make a mess of your clothes. Lukewarm. Think about lukewarm water.

Lukewarm water is not good to give a stranger that comes to your door. I can imagine if somebody came to your door and they were thirsty and you went to the stove and you had a pot of lukewarm water and you gave them a glass and they'd take a half a sip and spit it out and say, if you've got something else, I prefer it with either hot or cold. That's what Jesus was talking about.

There's a lukewarmness that can settle in to people's lives that is really good for nothing. But I thank God with all of my heart that I saw something in here tonight. I want you to, next time that you put a pot of water on the stove and you turn the heat on high, watch what happens to that water.

There begins to be a stirring in it. Now, I'm not a chemist so please don't cast me down for not getting all of the technology right here. But all of a sudden there seems to be a stirring in that pot then bubbles, I don't know from where, begin to rise up from inside.

I know that water is made of three components. I got that far in school anyway. The oxygen begins to get heated up and the bubbles begin to come from, it seems like all it was was water but all of a sudden there seems to be life in there.

And the hotter it gets there seems to be a jumping up and down begins to happen in that pot. Seems to me I saw that in this house tonight. There seems to be a joy, an exuberance that's birthed from within.

It's not orchestrated by the flesh. It's born of the Spirit of God. And then all of a sudden you see the water level beginning to go down in the pot because in that joy there's an escaping.

There's such a heat that there has to be an escaping. There's a transformation from what they were into another form. Hallelujah.

And truly when God's Spirit is working upon a people there is a transforming power that comes upon our lives. We don't have to be brought into the house of God and have somebody as a cheerleader choreograph us and get us going and try to crank up the old machine and get the jukebox rolling in the house of God. When God's Spirit is working within a people there's a natural zeal for God that comes up from right down in the inward parts.

Hallelujah. Now one of the characteristics of lukewarmness the first one is loss of an outward focus. The loss of love for God equals the loss of compassion for the lost.

If you love God with all of your heart if we love Him with all our heart and our soul and mind and our strength then automatically we love our neighbor as ourselves. When that lawyer came to Jesus tempting Him saying what's the most important commandment in the law without hesitation Jesus said love the Lord your God with all your heart your soul your mind and your strength and the second is like unto it you shall love your neighbor as yourself. He said on these two hang all the law and the prophets.

When lukewarmness begins to set in there's a lack of love for God. There's a lack of love for the word of God. Pastor David said this morning from the scriptures it's because they receive not the love of the truth that God sent strong delusion upon them.

It's the beginning of apostasy when lukewarmness begins to set into the heart. All of a sudden there's a lack of outward focus and the whole focus is me and mine and what I can get and how God can bless me and what can happen to me when I come to church. There's a development of an inward focus when lukewarmness sets into the heart of any people.

You see that principle in Mark chapter 4. Turn there please with me. Hallelujah. Mark chapter 4. I want to show you a people who have an inward focus.

I think the scripture pretty well illustrates that. Hallelujah. Mark chapter 4 verse 35.

Now Jesus has been teaching. They've seen his miracles. They're excited about following him.

Now he says to his disciples in verse 35. Mark chapter 4. In the same day when the evening was come he said unto them let us pass over to the other side. In other words we're going on a journey.

You know it should have been sufficient for those disciples to hear the words of Jesus. We're going to the other side. I'll tell you brothers and sisters in Christ when God says you're going to the other side you're going to the other side.

Hallelujah. When they had sent away the multitude verse 36 they took him even as he was in the ship and there were also with him other little ships. In other words they took off in the boat they had the son of God with them and there were also other little ships heading across to the other side.

And there arose a great storm of wind and the waves beat into the ship so that it was now full. And verse 38 says he was in the hinder part of the ship asleep on a pillow and they awoke him and said unto him Master cares not that we perish and he arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea peace be still and the wind ceased and there was a great calm. Now listen to what he said to them and he said unto them why are you so fearful how is it that you have no fear in your faith? We need to understand this thing.

They were going to the other side and of all people I think these disciples were to be pitied at this particular moment in history. They had the son of God in the boat with them. And the scripture said in the storm there were also other little ships.

There's three words that sometimes we fail to pick up in the scriptures. They weren't the only boat going to the other side there were also other little ships. And in the midst of the storm they began to fear for themselves.

Their focus was inward. There was no concern. It wasn't they woke him up because you see they had God in the boat.

Hallelujah! If you've got God in your boat you've got absolutely nothing to fear no matter what kind of storm comes along. But something had happened. The heart of Jesus was not yet perfected in these early disciples.

And they woke him up and they said Master do you not care that we perish? There was an inward focus in their lives. They had God in their boat. Do you understand? Of all people they should have felt safe.

Their thoughts should have been woe be unto those other little ships that are out there trying to make it through the same storm. Thank God we have the Son of God in the boat with us. We don't have to fear drowning in this boat.

And that's the way it's got to be with the child of God once your eyes are open to who Jesus is. You and I are not to be focused on ourselves. We're not to live for ourselves.

We're not to pray always for ourselves. We have God in our boat. No matter how strong the wind gets.

No matter how big the waves are. God is with us. The Son of God is with us.

He's promised he's going to take us to the other side. Our focus has got to turn away from ourselves and to those other little ships that are out there. The moms, the single moms and their children.

The men and women in prison. Our sons and daughters in the streets committing suicide. Our focus has got to go out beyond ourselves to them.

Say Oh God they perish. Jesus they perish. God touch my heart with your heart.

An inward focus leads ultimately to a preoccupation with self. Pastor David spoke this morning about an anti-Christ spirit and that's what I've got written down here. A preoccupation with self is an anti-Christ spirit.

Jesus said if any man will be my disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Pastor David spoke this morning. If you weren't here I would really encourage you to get that message.

One of the most powerful that I've heard in a long long time. Talked about the development of an anti-Christ spirit in this last hour and I believe that the open door to much of that thinking is self-preoccupation and doesn't that characterize this church age that we're living in? The testimony of the Laodicean church Jesus said in Revelation 3 17 you say you say I'm rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. You hear the testimony of this Laodicean church saying we've got Bibles of every translation on our shelves.

I'm going to look beyond just the natural riches. We are the richest generation that's ever lived on the face of the earth. I'm going to look beyond the carnal covetous preachers and their church congregations that have taken the word of God and virtually blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ by saying that he died so that we might inherit the treasures of literal riches here on this earth.

They're so lost in space that it's not even worth discussing their doctrines tonight. No, I'm talking about the church that says I'm rich. I've got a Bible of every translation sitting at home on my shelves.

We've got seminars for every appetite now all over North America. If you, whatever your personal problem is, whatever your personal quest is, we've got seminars to deal with it. You just have to pick up some of these brochures and you can pick and choose.

We're rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. But Jesus said, you don't realize that you're naked and blind. You've lost something.

You've lost something. The whole of Scripture cries out against the lukewarm approach to God. The prophet Amos, let me just read it to you, cries out against this in Amos chapter 6. He says, And it was woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, that trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came.

And in chapter 6 verse 4, he says, They lie upon beds of ivory. They stretch themselves out on their couches. They eat lambs out of the flock and calves out of the midst of the stall.

They chant to themselves of the violin and vent to themselves instruments of music like David. They drink wine in bowls. They anoint themselves with the chief ointments.

In other words, all of their quest is for themselves, all of the anointing is for themselves, all of the healing is for themselves. But he says they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. There's no grief in their hearts.

And in verse 7 he says, Therefore now they shall go captive with the first to go captive, and the banquet of them that stretch themselves shall be removed. The Lord says even they sit and they nurture themselves. And they're a totally egocentric people.

They are constantly looking to better themselves, and constantly looking to fill themselves, and constantly looking to pacify themselves. And there's no grief in their hearts for those that are out on the streets and those that are without God. There's no grief for the poor.

There's no grief for those that are suffering in the body throughout all of the world. There's no outward focus, the whole focus is inward. Lukewarm, Jesus says, lukewarm, lukewarm is the testimony against this church.

Isaiah, the prophet Isaiah, cries out against it. If you'll turn to the book of Isaiah please with me. Isaiah chapter 58.

All of scripture and history cries out against lukewarmness in our relationship with God. Listen, God speaks to Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 58. He says, cry aloud, verse 1, spare not.

Lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Well, God says to Isaiah, I want you to cry out. I want you to not spare, lift up your voice like a trumpet, shout it from the mountaintops Isaiah.

Show my people their sins. Now what sins? The list begins in verse 2, it says, They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness. Now here's the people going to conferences, and they have a pretense of wanting to know his ways.

They have an outward expression of righteousness upon their life, and they forsook not the ordinance of their God. They ask of me the ordinances of justice, and they take delight in approaching unto God. In

other words, there are people that are crying out, at least in some measure, or they're giving a pretense of caring about abortion issues and things in the land, and they want that justice of God to come into the nation.

They appear to have a delight in approaching unto God. They are a people who fast, and they do all kinds of things. But the Lord says, This, as in Isaiah's day, the Laodicean church, they had no doubt an outward semblance of seeking God.

But the error of it was, that all of their seeking was for themselves. Everybody today wants spiritual passion, with no cost and no cost. We have seminars on spiritual passion, we have conferences on holiness, you name it, all over the nation.

But everybody wants the passion with no cost and with no cost. And I will tell you this day, that you and I can't have God's heart until we're willing to share the heart of God, and to allow it to beat within us. All these people get, who seek for themselves, is ever deepening delusion, ever deepening darkness, ever deepening self-seeking, ever deepening lukewarmness, because their whole heart is for themselves, and not to allow the very spirit and nature of Christ to possess them and allow the works and heart of God to begin to beat through them and cry out through them.

In verse 6, the Lord says, Is this not this the fast that I have chosen? Is it not to loose the bands of wickedness? To undo heavy burdens? To let the oppressed go free? That you break every yoke? You see, the Laodicean church couldn't do this, because they didn't have the armor of faith. They didn't know what it was to be free themselves. So how could they take freedom they didn't possess to others around them? Things that are going on in the nation.

And what has it done? Brought a church that has to be designed around user-friendliness. I tell you brothers and sisters with all my heart, it's time that you and I get back to the good old fashioned power of God and trust Jesus to sanctify and set apart our lives. Hallelujah! We don't have to understand it, all we have to do is seek Him with all of our hearts.

God will set you free if you seek Him. He'll open every prison door. He'll heal the wounds in your heart.

You don't have to go back to your third and fourth grandfather. Go to Jesus with all of your heart. Is it not to deal your bread to the hungry and bring the poor that are cast out to your house or to this house? And you see the naked, you cover him and hide not yourself from your own flesh? You see, these people had a pretense of seeking God, but their pretense was bankrupt.

All they wanted was pleasure for themselves and strength for themselves. They had no intention of ever allowing the heart of God to be manifested in them. Hallelujah! I shared last week that the church of Jesus Christ has been built upon the foundation of sacrifice and you can't build anything else on that foundation.

God the Father sacrificed His Son. God the Son sacrificed His life. The apostles and prophets gave everything they were, they gave their lives, they gave everything they had upon that foundation of sacrifice and you can't build stones, you can't build wood, hay and stubble on that foundation.

The church of Jesus is built upon sacrifice. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! The Lord says through Isaiah, He says, If you will do these things, then your light will break forth as the morning, your health will spring forth speedily. If you will allow my heart to be produced in you, your light will break forth as the morning, your health will spring forth speedily.

You won't have to go to any more seminars on inner health. You understand this? If you will just do it the way it's written in the book. Seek God with all of your heart.

Let the heart of Jesus be manifested in you and develop an outward focus. That's the only focus is of God. He says, And your righteousness will go before you.

The glory of the Lord will be your rear ward or your rear protection. You will call and the Lord will answer. You will cry and He will say, Here I am.

If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the putting forth of the finger and speaking vanity and draw out your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, your light will rise in obscurity and your darkness will be as the noon day. Listen to the promises of God. The Lord will guide you continually.

He will satisfy your soul in drought. He will make fat your bones. Hallelujah.

You will be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. Hallelujah. If you will do these things, if you will allow the heart of Jesus to be birthed within you and move in that anointing power, if you will stop seeking for yourself, Laodicea.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

It's my personal opinion that the preoccupation with self and the loss of God's heart had produced in this church age a multitude of counselors. A multitude of counselors. Take a trip to any Christian bookstore today and you'll see the preoccupation with self just by the titles on the books.

I don't even have to explain it anymore. Self has interwoven itself into the titles. How to help yourself.

There's one out there called Helping Yourself. Do you realize that self can't help self? Self-actualization. Self-improvement.

Self, self, self, self, self, self. A multitude of counselors trying to build up the old nature that Jesus wants to destroy. Somebody asked me one time, Pastor, do you know any good books on self? I said, yes, the book of Romans by the Apostle Paul.

Talks about crucifying yourself, putting off yourself, dying to yourself. Jesus had come down in the day of John to a church that was supposed to be a glorious representation of Christ on the earth. That's the only call for you and I as the church of Christ were to be a glorious representation of Jesus.

Representation of His heart, of His freedom. That song we sang tonight that Jesus dropped the charges were to stand forth and declare not so much by our words but our life by who Christ has become in us. But Laodicea had become just another chronic care hospital with a spiritual emphasis.

And it's sad to say that many of our churches in North America today are chronic care hospitals with a spiritual emphasis. Places of incessant counseling. Counsel, counsel, counsel, counsel.

It's all you ever hear. Now I'm not railing on counseling. I agree that there are times that we need to talk some things out.

We need to get back to the Word of God. We need to find somebody that knows the Word and pour our heart out. There's nothing wrong with that.

But when we begin to depend more on counseling and counselors than we depend upon the revealed Word of God, something is wrong. Jesus uses these three words to the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3.18. He says, I counsel thee. Hallelujah.

Go to Revelation. It's the only time that he uses the words I counsel to any of the churches. And I feel with all of my heart that it's because of all the counselors that had developed in this church age.

I counsel thee, Laodicea, to buy of me gold tried in the fire. You're a church that's pursuing all kinds of individuals. You're pursuing all kinds of materialism.

You think that you're going to find wholeness in the things that you've been offered. But I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire. The psalmist David says in Psalm 12, verse 6, the words of the Lord are pure words.

As silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. In other words, he's saying, I counsel you to get back into this book again. I counsel you to turn away from these things you've been looking to.

You've been looking in the wrong place. You've been looking in buckets that are full of holes. Get back into the Word of God again.

Ask the Holy Spirit to make it alive in your life. Come into the presence of the Lord. Doesn't Jesus say, those who do truth, come to the light, that it may be proven that their deeds have been wrought in God.

Hallelujah. Buy the truth, Proverbs 23, 23, and sell it not. Also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

Buy the truth, Jesus is saying. Get back into this book again. Let's look at the book of Proverbs, please.

Chapter 8. Proverbs chapter 8. It's a promise of the Lord for those that will get back into the Word of God again. Verse 10. Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I, wisdom, dwell with prudence and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

Pride and arrogancy and the evil way and the froward or the crooked mouth do I hate. Do you hate these things yet? Truly, do you have the fear of the Lord in your heart tonight? Counsel is mine and sound wisdom. I am understanding, I have strength.

By me kings reign and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.

Riches and honor are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

My fruit, now he's talking about the Word of God, is better than gold, yea, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Oh, dear Christian brother and sister, in all you're seeking, in all you're getting, make sure that you're seeking Him and make sure you're getting Him. Seek Him as you used to seek silver and gold before you came to the Lord.

Look away from those things that are diverting you from the pureness of Christ. Open this book, and as Pastor Dave said this morning, don't say, Oh God, speak to sister so-and-so or speak to brother so-and-so from this passage of Scripture. But oh God, reveal my heart in this book.

Lord, walk in the midst of my heart. Speak to me, oh God. Let me yearn for Your Word, for I know that in the love of Your Word is freedom.

I know that there's deliverance in the love of Your Word. Oh God, help me to be a man or woman that receives the love of the truth in my inward parts, that I may be saved. Hallelujah.

And White Raymond, he says, I counsel you to get of me, White Raymond, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. Now, the word shame in the original text means that feeling that leads to the shunning of what is unworthy out of an anticipation of dishonor. And where Jesus said that the shame of your nakedness does not appear, in other words, that your nakedness would not be made known by divine revelation.

What Jesus is saying to this church is that you would shun what is unworthy by allowing the divine revelation of the Word of God to touch your life anew and afresh. That you would open your heart and say, Jesus, touch my life. I'm not barring any part of my life.

I'm not pre-assuming anything. But I invite you, Jesus, to touch my life. I invite you to touch my heart.

I invite you to touch those areas where I have resisted you. When's the last time you prayed a prayer like that? God, those areas where I have resisted you, I invite you to come and touch. I invite you to challenge me.

I invite you to walk in the midst of the candlesticks of my life, oh God, and reprove me. And show me, oh God, where I have fallen short of the high calling you have upon my life. Jesus said through Paul in Romans 2, 4, Do you despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? It's the goodness of God.

It's the treasure of Christ. It's the true riches of the Word that leads you and I to a place of repentance. You know, to try and make it simple, there are so many people running around wanting counseling for marriages that are out of order in the church.

And all I can... And they run from this counselor to that counselor and some will take you back and say, well, it's because of your grandfather that you're not able to relate to this person. Or because your mother and father didn't buy you a dog. Or it just gets as stupid as the human mind can make it.

I'm serious about this. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

I exhort you with all my heart, if you've got a marriage problem, get into the book of Ephesians chapter 5 and find out what the problem really is. Husbands, are you loving your wife as Christ loved the church? Are you willing to give to her? Are you willing to make all of your decisions that she may profit and that your children may profit? Have you put yourself last before your family? Begin there. Begin in the Word of God.

Wives, have you learned what it is to reverence your husband? Oh, but pastor, you don't know what kind of a man he is. But it doesn't say that in the Word of God. Have you learned to respect him just because of

who God made him? Just because of the place God has put him in? When we begin to get back into the Word of God again and stop trying to look to blame somebody else for the way we are.

That's what the Scripture is talking about. That you would get back to a place of getting gold that's been tried in the fire. And bring your life under the blood of Jesus Christ again.

That's what repentance is all about. Get of me gold tried in the fire and white raiment that your nakedness would not appear. When we get back into the Word of God, the very first thing that happens is Christ reveals to us the areas in our life and nature that are against him, that are contrary to his will, contrary to his Word.

And when God's Spirit has full access to our heart, we say, Lord, I repent of this. God, put it under the blood. Change me, transform me in this area.

That's what Jesus is saying to the Laodicean church. The way out of lukewarmness is to get back into the Word again. And let the Word prove you and let the Word examine you.

And when God's Spirit exposes something that's not right in your life, bring it back again under the blood if we confess our sins. He's faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That's where your healing comes from.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, God has had to heal me over the years. There were things in my life that only God could take out of my life when I came to the Lord. But I thank the Lord that I was stuck way out in the boonies somewhere on a sheep farm.

I had nothing to turn to and nobody but the Word of God. And I turn to Him with all of my heart and He has set me free from all of my fears and delivered me from every power of hell. I can stand here tonight a free man in Christ Jesus declaring plainly to you that the Word of God and the Spirit of God and the blood of Christ are sufficient to set you free.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. And He says in Revelation 3.18, And anoint your eyes with eye salve that thou mayest see.

The writer of Hebrews says, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. That's where we need to be today. Looking unto Him.

Looking unto Him as John did, as Isaiah did, as Daniel did. Looking unto Jesus. Look away from yourself, Church of the Living God.

Look away from your dependency on other people. Look away from all the places that you're looking to for satisfaction and you're looking to for freedom and you're looking to for wholeness. Look away from these things and look unto Him, the author and finisher of our faith.

Hallelujah. His blood is sufficient to cleanse you from all sin. His Word is sufficient to open your eyes and be a lamp for your feet and a light for your path.

His Holy Spirit is sufficient to empower you to have victory over sin and over the devil and over hell itself. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Anoint your eyes with eye salve. Jesus said that you may see the book of Ephesians chapter 1. Please turn there with me. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Jesus wants to give us a revelation of Himself. An absolute, absolute revelation that brings us into revival.

That brings us into a place of absolute, unspeakable glory in Christ Jesus. Ephesians chapter 1, verse 17. Listen to what God says to the Apostle Paul.

God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. In the knowledge of Him. That the eyes of your understanding be enlightened.

That you may know what is the hope of His calling and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. This is the end of side 1. The Lord is saying to Paul, your eyes need to be opened. You need to understand Him.

You need to see Him high and lifted up. You need to know where He sits. You need to understand that His Word has preeminence over every situation, every hurt, every past thing in your life.

Jesus Christ is sufficient to heal you. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

You need to understand that you're seated tonight with Him in heavenly places. He is the head of all principality and power. Every name that is named is in subjection to His name.

No power of hell has a right to your life tonight if you're a child of God. Jesus said, Anoint your eyes with eye salve that you may see again. That you may understand.

That you may turn away from the beggarly things of this world that you've been looking to for freedom. That you may see Him again. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe according to the working of His mighty power.

That you would see how He longs to pour out of His Spirit upon all who call upon Him. That you would see He stands before every prison door tonight with a key in His hand. All you have to do in honesty is cry out to Him.

In honesty ask Him to reveal what causes you to be behind that door. Repent of your sin and Christ will open it and fling it off its hinges and let you go free. Hallelujah.

I thank God with all of my heart that you guys in Timothy house and girls in Hannah house that you weren't birthed into the kingdom of God in some place that's preoccupied with simply counseling. I thank God that you're learning to seek God with all of your heart. You're learning that freedom comes when you're on your face before God.

You're learning. You're learning that He is sufficient to meet every need. You don't have to understand it all and neither did I. There are circumstances in your life that are pain beyond pain in the past.

You don't have to go back and blame somebody for what happened to you. You lay it down and forgive all that have wronged you. That's what the word of God says.

Turn to Him with all of your heart. Begin to pray for those that despitefully used you and God sends freedom and healing into your soul. That's what the gospel is all about.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. That your eyes would be opened.

That your eyes would be opened. Oh, listen to what the Lord says through the apostle James. Let me just turn it there.

I agree. Some would say, Pastor Cullen, do you have to shout all the way through your message? Yeah. Hallelujah.

That's just the way God made me. He says through James, draw nigh to God. James chapter 4 verse 8, and He will draw nigh to you.

Cleanse your hearts, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. In other words, if you've been looking to anything other than Jesus, purify your heart. Be afflicted and mourn and weep, and let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. Let your eyes salve. The Lord is saying, I want to give you an eye salve of tears.

Let your tears no longer be for yourself. We heard Pastor Ritchie speaking about this today at 3 o'clock. But let your tears be for the shame of what you have lost in Christ.

Let a new heart be given you, and let tears of sorrow be turned into tears of joy. The scripture says that weeping endures for a night, but joy will come again in the morning. The Psalmist David says, O God, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.

Restore unto me, O God, the joy. Is that your cry tonight? My covenant God. Laodicea, let the heart of Jesus within you produce tears again for the lost.

You see, Laodicea doesn't weep for the lost because Laodicea doesn't have the heart of God. Psalm 126, please. It'll be our last scripture.

Hallelujah. Did you know in this house that we're going into revival? Did you know that here at Times Square Church? We're moving into revival. Revival is a revelation of Jesus Christ.

That's what it is. It's not a carnal exuberancy. It's not some new thing.

It's Jesus being revealed in the hearts of His church. Revival is not an exterior thing that you walk into. Revival is an interior thing that bursts forth in your own life.

Revival is the heat of God being turned on under lukewarm water. And all of a sudden a bubbling starts to happen. And it gets very uncomfortable and you begin to sweat a little bit first.

But all of a sudden you can't contain it anymore. You cry out to God and surrender and begin to repent. And all of a sudden you find yourself leaping out of that pot.

Hallelujah. There's been a transformation in your life. There's been a new joy.

And all you want to do is leap into the very heart of God. And have the very heart of God leap into your earthly body which is the temple of the Holy Ghost. You become an earthly ambassador of Jesus Christ.

And the way He feels is the way you become to feel. Where He would go is where the places that you and I go. And all of a sudden it's not all just joy, but there are tears of sorrow begin to come into your life.

I've become a strange creature since I came to Jesus Christ. There are times that I feel the burden of the Lord to get up and go down into my living room. And I would perhaps think sometimes that it's going to be just a time of quietness before God or a time of worship or maybe a time of joy.

But sometimes great heaving sobs come right from the depths of my very bowels. I can't even explain it. It's a groaning that comes upon me.

And I'm beginning to think of those in this house who don't know Him. I'm beginning to think of all the sheep all over the world that are not hearing the Word of God. I'm beginning to think of the people in New York City that walk these streets and never had an opportunity to hear about the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I begin to think of the students in the schools all over our cities that are yearning for truth and longing for truth. And a great heave starts to come from within. And great tears.

And sometimes it's a crying with such agony that I virtually feel that my guts are literally going to come out. That's the way I feel. I know that's not necessarily the best way of putting it, but that's the way I feel.

Because it's the Spirit of God within me sharing something with me for that moment. It's not something I conjure up in the flesh. I don't go down to my living room and bring a box of Kleenex and say, now I'm going to cry for the lost.

And take an onion and start squeezing it. Boo-hoo, boo-hoo. No.

It's the Spirit of God within me. It's not something you anticipate. It just happens.

Over the years, at times I've been sitting at the dinner table. Sometimes even at other people's houses. And I'll be sitting there and all of a sudden a brokenness begins to come upon me.

Because of something somebody says. Or a thought that's come into my mind. Or I hear of another marriage that's broken up in the house of God.

And all of a sudden a brokenness. I was... A couple of nights ago I went to pick up my daughter at a school and I parked the car outside of the school. And all of a sudden this brokenness started to come upon me again.

And I was sitting with my dog behind the wheel of the car. And I started to cry and cry. People coming out of there must have thought that I was trying to hide it.

I was turning my face away. So that they wouldn't think I was losing my mind. But it was the Spirit of God.

I had heard about a church that had a really wicked pastor over them. A wicked hearted man. Who cared nothing for the people.

Now that sounds hard. And some dear friends of mine that had suffered or were beginning to suffer because of this. And something welled up inside of me.

And I began to cry out to God. Because I desire to share His heart. The heart of Jesus will produce within you tears for the lost.

Laodicea had no tears for the lost. Their testimony was, I am rich. I am increased with goods.

I have need of nothing. I, I, I, I. A totally inward focus. That it produced a lukewarmness.

There were no more tears for the lost. If you're here tonight and you don't have tears for the lost. You better let the Holy Ghost begin to examine your heart.

If you have the heart of Jesus. I'm not saying you walk around with some kind of long face all over New York City. But there are seasons when weeping will come upon you.

There have been seasons in my life when weeping has come upon me for days. I just can't seem to get out of the, the weeping mold. Because God's speaking to me about something.

But I've been down in my living room praying. And then after the tears have been cried out. And then I've been holding my stomach until I feel like my stomach is going to burst open.

Then all of a sudden joy starts to come over me. I start thanking Him. Oh God, you're going to save the lost.

Oh God, thank you for every sinner that's going to come into Times Square Church this Sunday and be saved. Thank you for every drug addict you're going to set free. Thank you for every marriage you're going to heal.

Thank you for every young person you're going to save. And I begin rejoicing as He reveals His heart of salvation. And how He's reaching out.

And how the Kingdom of God is still going forward. In the midst of all the darkness and blackness of our society. Weeping comes for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

In the day of Nehemiah's revival under Ezra. The Word of God was opened. And Ezra began to explain it to the people.

And a strange mixture of weeping and joy came upon that congregation. That's what revival is all about. There's a sorrow, there's a weeping for the things that we've lost.

There's a shame that comes upon us. When we say, Oh God, I have left off of the purest things that You have for me. And I have begun to look to the beggarly things of this world to satisfy the needs of my heart.

Oh shame, shame upon my own heart. And a sorrow begins to come when Ezra made the Word known. A sorrow came into the hearts of the people.

But yet that sorrow was mixed with a very strange anointing of joy that came upon them. As people broke free. As the glory of Christ, the countenance of Jesus began to come upon their lives.

And people broke free. There was a mixture of joy and sorrow in that day of revival. Hallelujah.

There is no genuine revival when there's no sorrow. When there's no brokenness. When there's no repentance for sin.

When the lost are not convicted. There is no revival. It's just a manifestation of a carnal Laodicean heart.

That's all it is. We're seeing the result now throughout all of the western world of the self-seeking carnal church. Being given over to their own lusts.

Seeking their own pleasure. And seeking their own gain. Seeking their own relief in the midst of a world that is dying and going to hell.

Shame, shame, shame on this church age. Shame on this church generation through the western world. I say shame.

I stand here and testify against it all. All of the carnal self-seeking in the house of God. Would be to God we'd get the heart of Christ once again in His church.

And begin to shed tears for the lost. And begin to ask Jesus for such a manifestation of His glory. That one lost sinner coming into our midst could not sit in their sin anymore.

But they would run to Him. Run to Him as the only Savior that can save them from their sin. Hallelujah.

Psalms 126 says, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed. God is about to turn away our captivity. Do you understand that tonight? I speak prophetically to you tonight.

God is about to turn away the captivity. He's about to wash away the things in His house that have captivated the hearts of His people. And He's preparing unto Himself a holy remnant bride in this last hour of time.

A bride that's going to love Him. A bride that will serve Him. A bride that will share His heart.

A bride that will minister to His children. A bride that will meet His needs more than running around to have her own met. Hallelujah.

When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed. Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. They said among the heathen, The Lord has done great things for them.

The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Hallelujah. He that goes forth weeping, bearing precious seed, that's the Word of God, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing in his sheaves with him. Hallelujah.

Glory to God. Glory to God. With the manifestation of Jesus comes a weeping and a sowing.

The heart of God. We heard it last weekend also in this sanctuary when two missionaries who traveled the world revealed to us the heart of God for this and every other generation. It's not for self.

It's for the will of God to be done in the lives of others. Hallelujah. Would it be to God that you and I would consider ourselves dead that the purposes of God might be fulfilled in us and through us in this last hour of

time.

Now, Leslie in Revelation 3, he says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. He said, I love you. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.

Be zealous and repent. Be zealous. Jesus is saying, get up and run back to me again.

Those that are backslidden in heart, run back to me again with all of your heart. Be zealous, Laodicean church, and repent of what you have lost. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I'll come in to him and sup with him and he with me. That word sup means, refers to the evening meal. It's a long time of lingering time of intimate fellowship over the longest and most intimate meal of the day.

He's saying, I'll come in and it will be a virtual feast. I'll reveal to you the treasures of heaven. There'll be a joy in your life and heart that you've never known.

There'll be purpose in your step that you've never had before. I'll come in and speak with you and you will speak with me. Hallelujah.

And to him that overcomes, I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in His throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. He that overcomes, lukewarmness.

That's the whole message tonight. He that overcomes, lukewarmness. Would you stand please.

He that overcomes, lukewarmness. My prayer tonight for my life and for your life is, Oh God, never, never, never let me get lukewarm. Keep me on fire.

Whatever you have to do. Whatever you have to do. Whatever valley you have to take me through.

If that's what has to happen, God do it. But keep me dependent upon you. Keep me aflame for you Lord Jesus.

May I never, ever get to the place of self-seeking. Get to the place where you look upon my life and say, You say I'm rich. Increased with goods.

But I see another thing. Now I've almost felt guilty preaching this message in this church tonight. There's such a zeal for God.

There's a holy zeal. In so many of your lives. But others, God's Spirit has spoken to you tonight.

And even though you appear to be on fire for God tonight, There's always room for improvement. In each and every one of our lives. I want to give an altar call tonight for those who would firstly say, I am in danger.

I sense as this message is going forward tonight, That a lukewarmness wants to settle in my heart. Wants to get a hold of me. I'm seeking for myself all the time.

That's one of the first signs. An introspection. I'm always thinking about myself.

I think more of myself than I do of God. And that I do of others. That's a danger sign.

That's something that God's speaking tonight. I want to open this altar in the balcony and down below as God speaks to your heart. Would you come? And there are others here tonight that the Lord would say, That you would say to the Lord rather, Jesus deliver me from lukewarmness.

May it never get a hold of my heart. God I want to stay on fire for you all the days of my life. And Lord I invite you to use my life for your purposes and for your glory.

I invite you to come into the very inward recesses of my heart and reveal. You're inviting now Jesus to come in and reveal things in your heart and life that are displeasing to Him. Now this is not a one hour process.

God will begin to speak to you from this pulpit and begin to speak to you in your devotions. As you come we'll wait in the balcony as God speaks to you. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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