

The Laodicean Church

by Manley Beasley

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual revival and the need to submit to the discipline of God in order to be refined and purified, resulting in a life that is rich in character and history.

Duration: 1:19:58

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Revelation 3:14-20

Topics: "Laodicea"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of submitting to the discipline of God in order to grow spiritually. He encourages the audience to seek a deep relationship with God and to rely on His guidance rather than their own efforts. The preacher highlights the need to focus on building character and a history of God's work in their lives, rather than material wealth or accomplishments. He references Romans 8 and 9 to illustrate the transformation that occurs when a person becomes more like Jesus and is willing to sacrifice for the salvation of others. The sermon concludes with a reminder that Jesus stands at the door of our hearts, ready to come in and have a personal relationship with us if we open the door to Him.

Transcript

Greetings my friend, it's certainly a joy and a privilege to be able to come to you again this month and share with you the burdens of my heart as well as share with you a message from my heart that I believe is from the heart of God. Last month I did a very unusual thing in that I shared with you about my condition physically and since then I have been able to have some update material on that condition and so I just right away I'll give you that and then introduce the message. The matter of the kidneys, it's definite at this point that they're only functioning about 19% and there seems to be a progressive deterioration and at this rate we do not know how long it will take for these kidneys to go down.

I will then have to go on a machine. I have made the decision that I will go on a machine and stay on the kidney machine and curtail a lot of my preaching engagements for a while. Now this may not happen, so I want you to hear all I've got to say and not run off quickly before you hear everything I have to say.

But at this point it's the kidney machine next and then at a point in time when it's possibly almost a set time we can look at a kidney transplant. Now that is what we look at if we look at the natural. Now in spite of that, on top of that, God has given us some promises and I'm still in the struggle of believing those promises.

Now I realize that when you set off out there and you have it all in theory, it's easy said, just believe. But when it gets down to where it's got to happen, if the faith is really there, it will happen. Now it's a different story.

And I remember working through this a number of years ago in a very realistic test in my life when I was supposed to have died and the Lord raised me up. And I'm in the midst of that right now. There are some things that I believe the Lord is saying to me that I need to correct and one is that I need to back up and slow down just a little bit.

I don't think that I'm supposed to quit doing what I'm doing but I'm supposed to slow down and do them at a different pace. I really appreciate you praying specifically about that matter. But the decision is being made, will be made by June about that matter.

As to how long these kidneys will last, the Lord knows and we've got it in His hand. And so all I can do until they play out is just go on day by day, just walking with Him. And frankly that's the way it is and that's where we're going and we know this is a whole new ballpark for us.

A new ball game, I've never been down this road before and I just appreciate having friends like you that I can share it with, talk with and get you to pray for me and let you see how God takes me through this experience. I can say thank you Jesus right now because He is sure being real to me at this time. Now this message this month is a message that when you first hear it, the first five minutes, you will say, oh, Brother Manley, I've heard that before.

You have preached that before. But believe me friend, you have not heard this message before. You may have heard some of the beginning of it, like how God initiates things and things like that, that I used at the beginning to introduce it but I have never preached this message before in my life.

And I have not ever come even close to preaching this message. And the night that I brought this message, God came down in mighty power and I started preaching about 715 and the service was over at about 1040 with people being saved and getting right with God, just a real revival spirit. And I'm sorry we can't get that whole thing in there.

And you can hear the whole thing but the message is on the church at Laodicea. For years I have been wanting to preach about the seven churches in the book of Revelation. And this is the first attempt I've ever tried.

And I realize when you first start hearing the message, you're going to say, hey, I'm used to some of this material. But just hold on because there are some that I have never shared with people before that I believe will really be a blessing to you because it definitely is being a blessing to me now. May God bless you.

We thank you so much for just literally responding to all the prayer needs. And we just praise the Lord for your goodness and His goodness in you. And we look forward to the Lord doing some great and mighty things among us.

If you have your Bibles, turn with me please to the book of Revelation, the third chapter. I'd like to begin reading in the 14th verse of the third chapter. I have always believed that the answer, the message, is found in the message to the seven churches.

You know, I've looked upon John, the beloved John, so much as the man that was so beloved of God, just the beloved John, that I never realized he was such a prophetic type person. To look at him in the light of first and Jesus called John is a man that understands this. This is one John right here dealing with the matter.

And for years I have... Now, let's start at the 13th verse even though that...the amen. So then because thou art warm, neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and mayest be rich with white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness mayest cease.

Be zealous, therefore, and repent. And then he has this tremendous verse. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man will hear my voice and open the door, he will be with me. Now, isn't that an invitation? But certainly, here's what I want you to see tonight. He's talking to the church at Laodicea.

Now, because of all that I want to say, he says that he knows our works. The most difficult person I have ever had to deal with as a father, the most difficult person I have ever had to deal with as a human being, is a person that does not want to be corrected. When a person gets to the place where they will not listen to be corrected, that person is heftless.

I mean, that person is beyond heft. You just can't help them. A wise man is a man that always has the attitude that they can be heft.

That's a wise person. It fascinates me as I've met men like J. Edwin Orr, who died this past week, Oswald J. Smith, Bertha Smith, Ms. Cora Tinboon, people like that, James Alexander Stewart. It always fascinated me about them.

They always had the spirit of the learner. Not a one of those great men or women ever gave me the idea that they could not be corrected, even many times. Some of them were 80 and 90 years old.

And you know, the Bible tells us in Timothy that the word of God has been given to us, not only for instruction and inspiration and so on, but a person that cannot be corrected is a person that is beyond heft. Now, tonight, he says, I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. He said, because of this condition, that you're neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

Now, I want to identify, the best I can tonight, identify this type of condition. Which is the most dangerous? A clock that is off 5 minutes or one that's off 30 minutes? The most dangerous is the one that's off 5 minutes, not 30 minutes. The Lord is saying, he said, you're neither cold nor hot.

He said, you're not off so bad that everybody knows you're full of the devil. But you're off enough that you are. That makes an awfully deceitful person, doesn't it? To me, that's a person that's neither cold nor hot.

Now, here, he says, I know thy works. Now, you know what makes a person neither cold nor hot? The origin of their activity. And a person has two origins.

Now, you might break it down more than that, but basically, when you get to the bottom line, there are two origins of activity in a person's life. God or the devil. Now, you can break that down and say, the flesh and

the spirit of the world and the devil.

You can do that. But to keep it simple, we can just say, there's two origins, God or the devil. And that is technically right, and yet you would be technically right to say, just out of man you can do something, and that would be right also.

But here's what I want you to see. Do you know the difference between Christianity and religion? It's who initiates what you do. Not what you do, but who initiates what you do.

A few minutes ago, you just took an offering. You were either Christian or religious in that offering. To be Christian in that offering, you did what the Lord initiated.

To be religious in that offering, you did what? Ever. Just did it for religious reasons. Now, the origin determines whether you're hot or cold.

And lukewarmness comes out of man's work for God. Because you see, he's put his best together with religion, and it may be Christian religion, and he's operating on the basis of his own inventions with the help of Satan. And God is not initiating his involvement.

And so what he comes out with, you realize this immediately. What he comes out with is a form of godliness, but not the power thereof. He's going through all the forms, but there is not the person and the power and the dynamic of the spirit of the living God.

He's neither cold nor hot. He's lukewarm. He's got all the religious activity, even fundamentalism.

That's right. Legalism. All of his work can be defined by what he does, rather than who he is.

He says, I know your work. The Bible says, talks about the works of God. This is the work of God that you believe on him whom the Father has sent.

The work of God. There's a lot of difference, folks, between your works and the work of God, and my works and the work of God. You see, the work of God is the work that God initiates.

Paul said, I labor and I strive. But he said, you know what? It's according to his workings which worketh in me mightily. Colossians 1.29. He was not initiating his involvement.

He was simply cooperating. That's right. You see, the Christianity is so different than religion.

See, we have an empty tomb. The rest of the religions of the world don't, unless they've stolen. And we have an empty tomb.

And we also have a full heart. See, the Lord Jesus didn't only die for sinners, was resurrected, ascended, but when we get saved, he comes and lives in us to carry out his work. Not apart from us, but in cooperation with us.

We become co-laborers. He said, I know thy works, that you are neither cold nor hot. You see, you may be awfully fervent tonight for God and still be very, very much religious and yet not be walking with the Lord.

Jesus Christ was strictly Christian, wasn't he? He wasn't only Christian because he was the Christ Lord, but he was Christian because he was the Christ man. And as the Christ man, my dear friend, Jesus said, I do nothing except what I see my Father do. Yes, sir.

Jesus Christ allowed the Father to initiate his involvement. The Lord said here, I know thy works. I know thy works.

He said you're neither cold nor hot, you're just lukewarm. Yes, sir. He said you're lukewarm.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. That really depicts us in our day, doesn't it? I mean, we are extremely religious. In fact, Christian religion is possibly the most popular thing going today, especially in the last three weeks on television.

It's quite popular. But what I'm trying to say to you is the masses, I mean the masses, are just, I mean, go in the church. I see things happening today, 25 years ago, you never saw any churches just occasionally that would run over 1,000 in Sunday school.

I can take you to hundreds and hundreds, hundreds of them, a number of them, just dozens and dozens and dozens of them that run over 5,000 in Sunday school. For the continuation of this message, please turn the tape to side two. But, you know, we still do not see that mighty, mighty power of the New Testament church.

Do we? I can take you to at least two or three dozen of those. I mean, it's really something. But, you know, we still do not see that mighty, mighty power of the New Testament church.

Do we? Well, he said, I know thy works, which means he knows yours and mine. And it's either, our works is either a work of God or it's man's works. Now, he says, because thou sayest, I am rich, increased with goods, and have need of nothing, thou knowest not that thou are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

Now, he says, I'm just going to, because of the time, and put three things here that he says. He says, he says you're poor, but you think you're rich, but you're poor. He said, not only that, but he said, you think you're clothed, but you're naked.

And then he said, you are blind. Now, he comes right along and gives the answer. And he says, what you need to do, he said, I buy gold tried in the fire, that you might be really rich, and put on some clothes, the righteousness, that you might, your nakedness might be covered.

And have your eyes anointed, anointed eyes with eyes that thou mayest see. You see, the very three things he said is wrong. He said, I've got three answers for you.

Now, I want to look at those three things. I'm not going to talk about the, well, I have to mention both sides, but I won't talk about one side mostly. He said, you think you are rich, but you are poor.

He said, I want you to buy gold tried in the fire. Now, what is he talking about? He is talking about, I want you to realize that your wealth is a wealth that will not stand in the fire. In other words, you say you are rich, but when the fire comes, your wealth will not stand.

You see, I could take five million dollars in this hand, a paper, and take five million dollars in gold in this hand, and put those two in the fire, and one of them would disappear. The other one wouldn't. He says, now what you see out here, you call that wealth.

But he said the wealth is the wealth that when it's put in the fire, it will not burn and melt away and be gone. Why did he say that? Because, beloved, every child of God is only valuable to the sin for redemptive

purposes to the world to the degree that they are able to magnify Jesus in the fire. Now, I did not say that you're not valuable to God at any time, at any place you are.

But when it comes to the difference between temptation and trials, when a person is tempted, they get exposed for what's in them. But when they are tried, the world gets to see how they act in that trial. In temptation, the person himself gets saved.

In trials, the world gets saved. Why? Because in that trial, everyone sees what you really are made of. So he says, you buy of me gold that's tried in the fire.

Amen. How do you buy that? Are you sure you're ready for this? You buy it, my dear friends, by submitting to the discipline of God. Not your discipline.

You will come up, pray four hours a day, read ten chapters, and so many visits. And that's wonderful to do those things if God has initiated that in you. That's what I'm talking about.

That is your discipline. Discipline is you so submit to the lordship of Jesus that you allow him to say, whatever, Lord, it takes. And when you start allowing him to have that way, you come up rich.

Rich with what? A history of God's doing in your life. The reason there is so much poverty in the church tonight is that we have misinterpreted what is wealth. We have counted our bank account and our numbers instead of our character.

And our history of God's doing. If you want to see how wealthy a person is, look at his Ebenezer. You say, what do you mean by that, Brother Manley? God met me here and so changed my life.

We leave this monument for the world to read the rest of our day. Amen. Look at those Ebenezers.

That's gold tried in the fire. Yes, sir. That's awfully heavy.

I mean, it's not heavy. It's not deep heavy. It's just the fact that it's challenging.

Amen. For you and me to be willing to submit ourselves to the discipline of God, but that's how we buy gold, tried in the fire, to where we have a history with God. If you hit a time of suffering, would you go to some person that's never suffered? Or would you go find you a book by this girl, Joni? That Joni Erickson, somebody like that, that suffered so much? What would you do? You say, Brother Manley, you know what I'd do.

Sure I'd do. You know why? Because my friend, she has been through the fire. He said, not only buy you gold tried in the fire, but that thou mayest get white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.

What's he talking about? He definitely is talking about something more than a positional righteousness of Christ. He said, get you a white raiment, that your nakedness might be clothed. You see, a lot of times we are improperly dressed and we don't know it.

And he's telling the church at Laodicea, he said, you are improperly dressed and don't know it. He said, boy, you don't mind a prophet. He said, listen, you are improperly dressed.

He said, you need to buy your robe, a white robe that will cover your nakedness. He's talking about more than a positional righteousness. He's talking about a righteousness, a holiness, that is acquired by being rightly related in fellowship with the Lord, by having our sins.

Try me, prove me, and see if there be any wicked way in me. And if God brings that ungodliness to the top and let us see that wickedness in us, we confess it and put it under the blood and be filled with His Spirit. And by that Spirit we get clothed in His righteousness.

Amen. And when we walk in, people see Jesus. Right? Yeah, you know, have you ever noticed a person dressed and you recognize them more than what they've got on? But have you ever noticed some people dressed and you're so caught up with what they have on, you never pay attention? The Lord wants us so clothed in His righteousness, folks, that there's not an imbalance between who we are and what we've got on, that we do not draw attention to ourselves, but we're clothed in the righteousness of Him.

Positionally in Christ we have His righteousness tonight. But, folks, there is a practical everyday righteousness that comes from keeping our sins confessed up to date, staying right with each other, staying right with God the Father. And He said, I want you to have your robe on.

I want you to be clothed properly by that. And He said, I want you to do that. You're talking about revival.

When God comes in mighty power, the least little sin in our hearts gets exposed. And that fire is turned on, I mean, it just floats to the top. And I mean things have to get out, get put out.

One time in my life I was in a meeting where God just showed up. He didn't just show up, but when He showed up, the singer had started singing something like, holy, holy, holy, something. It was so out of order, just out of place.

It was just, it just so totally contradicted everything that night. I turned to the preacher, and I said, I wish I had picked out the psalm service. I'm sure God let that happen for me to see what was in me.

And the moment I said that to the pastor, I realized that there was something coming out of me out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaking. And I realized what was coming out of me was not of God. So I asked the preacher to forgive me, but I got up and preached, and the glory was not there.

And the Lord said, you have resented that boy all week, and now it's come out. And see, I was standing there naked all week and didn't know it. Yes, sir, I didn't know it.

And that week, I mean, God had not shown up. And this was the last night of the meeting. So I wanted to learn, and I said, Lord, if you mean to tell me that just an attitude like that in my heart has kept the glory of God away from this church.

I said, Lord, teach me something tonight, because I was not aware of how God scrutinizes the ungodliness in the life of a believer like I was supposed to know. And so I said, Lord, do something, because I'm going to get right whether you do anything or not. Amen.

But I tell you, if you'd do some confirming the truth to me, it'd help. And I confessed. I went over and put my arm around that boy, and I said, Listen, I'm sorry.

I have had a critical spirit in my heart towards you all week. And it came out tonight, and I saw it. And I said, I want to be forgiven, and I've asked the Lord to forgive me.

And a man they'd been praying for for 17 years got up out of his seat, walked down the aisle, and the preacher had his head turned the other direction, grabbed the preacher's coat tail and said, I want to get saved. And 28 people followed him that night. I mean, God moved in.

Yes, sir. Seriously. But you see, I've been standing there naked all week with that unrighteousness in my heart.

And he said, You need to get your row bone. You need to get your row bone. Someone asked Charles G. Finney when he was a lost man, a lawyer, a lost man, Don't you want us to pray for you? He said, No.

I wouldn't care for you to pray for me. They said, Well, why? He said, I've been watching you pray for so many months. And he said, I have not seen you get an answer to your prayers yet.

I don't think you ought to waste your time. See, those people were naked and didn't know it. But that shocked them, obviously.

That literally opened their eyes some way because it wasn't long before he was saved. Amen. Yes, sir.

He said, Not only get you a robe and be clothed that your nakedness may be covered, but anoint thine eyes with eyesight that thou mayest see. And I believe he's saying that we are supposed to have the Lord to anoint our eyes that we may see lost people and we may see people, save people like he sees them. Folks, there's no way that we can care like he wants us to care until we see people like he sees them.

And I think sometimes saints may even doubt where they can see people like he sees them. But if you will follow the life of Paul all the way through Romans 1 right on through Romans 8 as he steps from one step of victory to another, one step of victory to another from salvation into sanctification into that walk of glory with God having all victory, be confident that nothing can separate him from the power and the person of the Lord. The very next chapter, Romans 9, you hear that man saying he would be willing to go to hell for his kinsmen.

And that's a human being, folks, simply saved by the grace of God, right with God, willing to die down his life for people to be saved, his kinsmen. Can you imagine someone in this human body getting so much like Jesus he's willing to change his heavenly home for a fire grave for his kinsmen? Yes, sir. The Bible teaches us that we should have our eyes anointed by the Spirit of God that we might see lost people as he sees them.

Recently I made a statement that we need to be willing to pay any price for lost sinners. A more neo, a new teaching type of theology person was there that night and they said, hey, Jesus has already paid the price. You never have to do that anymore.

He has. But I'll tell you when you get your eyes anointed with the Spirit of God and see lost sinners as he sees them, we see them as he sees them, we will be willing to pay any price to get them saved by the grace of God. Pay any price.

And then on top of all of that, you know what he says? He said, behold, I stand at the door and knock. I like that. If any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come unto him and I will sup with him and he with me.

Has God in any way tonight spoken to your heart? Has he in any way? You know, there could have been a little more detail. Name sins keep us away from the righteousness of the Lord. We could, you know, deal in detail how we're so cold and callous and indifferent even at our best about lost sinners.

We could talk about our poverty because we're unwilling to be disciplined of God into his fullness. But some way, somehow, I'm trusting tonight that the Lord has dealt with your heart and just showed you that you may be involved in the work of your own doing rather than being involved in his doing. And all of this is the religious work has to go.

Now, when you're Christian in your religious work, there's no problem. But when your religious work takes the place of being Christian, then there's a real problem.

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