

CPR FOR THE DYING LAODECIAN-

The answer is in “Christ Our Righteousness”

“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, “They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads” (Revelation 22:4), **the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,--man's uplifting,--the power of God, "which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."** 1 Corinthians 15:57. Education -PG- 125

So whenever we read the Bible we need to keep in mind that everything written there has to do with our redemption in some way. We err when we just view the Bible as a collection of abstract, unrelated history, stories and prophecies from the past. As we study the Laodecian message today, we want to see how it applies not only to all of us today but to each of us on an individual, personal level.

Turn with me to Rev. 3:14

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write;”

It’s interesting that in Tyndale’s translation it says ‘Messenger of the congregation’ This is more accurate to the original meaning.

“These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;”

Jesus was the source of all creation, He was the one who created. Why is He emphasizing that He is ‘faithful and true’? Because he is about to tell them something which they don’t believe and can’t discern themselves and they need to accept His word for it that it is true! He’s saying “I won’t lie to you!”

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

Their ways are disgusting to Him! It is interesting and shocking to see that the message to the previous church, Philadelphia, (Rev 3:7- this was the early Advent movement) had no rebuke given to it. Jesus had no bad thing to say about them and now only a few years later here is Laodecia of which He has nothing good that He can say about it! What a terrible contrast!

Take note also that lukewarmness is a very sad state of affairs to be in- it’s OK physically, but spiritually it is horrible. You see being lukewarm to God means being indifferent to Him. The worse insult you can give to anyone is to ignore him, to pretend that he just isn’t important to you at all! Even being angry with someone is not such an insult as ignoring them, this way you say that it’s not important to you that they even exist, they are meaningless to you. They don’t care about what God cares about.

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”

They Feel OK- in fact they feel GREAT! But are really a mess! And can’t see it! Here is self-righteousness in all its glory. They have everything they need. They don’t need rebuke or correction; they need no one to tell them anything- they have it all! We can see this attitude clearly today and most have seen it even in their own hearts. The tendency to look at the organization and institutions and ‘swell with pride’ over these external things is the same as the disciples in Jesus’ day when they said, “See what manner of buildings are here!”

They are full of pride and self satisfaction, they feel they couldn’t be any better and yet they couldn’t be worse off in the sight of God. What a terrible state of affairs! Even Jesus, who always compliments where ever He possibly can, can’t say any compliment about them.

“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 (Tyndale says-‘filthy nakedness’)do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”

This shows the love of Jesus, He is so tender and kind and loving. He is looking at these people and they are in such a terrible state and what does He say? Does He say- "Oh, I'm finished, I'm not even going to try to do anything with you guys!" No, He says, "I counsel thee."

They need the remedies from the heavenly merchantman.

Gold tried in the fire- The Faith and Love of Jesus!

This is not Faith and Love per se- it is Jesus own faith and love that was tried and proven in the fires of affliction when He walked this earth. Satan dogged His steps and tried in every way to get Him to fail but Satan lost! It has been proven and NEVER failed! He offers it to us, as we have none ourselves- this is the best faith and love- it is proven and we can depend on it. Jesus conquered every discouragement, temptation that we could ever be faced with and He gives us His victory!

White raiment- Jesus' spotless character!

Eyesalve- Spiritual discernment and teaching from the Holy Spirit!

Now, notice He says, "Buy of me." We have nothing- so how do we buy from Him? We simply have to surrender self; completely surrender our wretched selves to Him, this is the only way this heavenly merchandise can be obtained.

Real spiritual discernment only come to those who have surrendered fully to Christ and truly been born again. The Holy Spirit works with us as closely as He can and if we only surrender a little bit, He can only work with us a little bit. To be totally Spirit filled and Spirit led and taught, we must be totally surrendered.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Here He is saying, "I'm telling you this because I love you!" How can He love creatures like this? But He does. Here's something so encouraging in this- "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 will sup with him, and he with me."

As human beings, if we knew somebody who was as horrible, obnoxious and also indifferent to us, would we want to go visit them? Certainly not! But here is Jesus, tenderly knocking and even calling out- "I'm here, I want to help you, I want to have loving fellowship with you. Any one of you- I'll come in, just open to Me!" Notice also that this message is the only one addressed specifically to individuals- there is no hope that the whole congregation will repent, He is calling out to the individuals, If Any Man! No willing one will be overlooked! This is a comfort as the faithful feel so alone at times these days. This is such a beautiful promise, Jesus has to come in, there is no hope if we keep Him out.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."(Congregations)

Understanding Victory-

"I will come in to him."

Christ in us – the hope of glory- that is what the Loud Cry is. God's Law is His Character- we must obey it to live, but we can't because we have No Righteousness of our own; None at all! No human on the face of this earth can be saved without a one-on-one relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit who will teach you everything and will teach you how to totally quit sinning, something no human can do. Christ kept the Law perfectly and when we surrender to Him, He gives that perfect obedience to us, in exchange for our wretchedness.

Notice, this is not just a credit to us of something that we don't really have, but He really gives it to us! He was tempted in all points like as we are but NEVER fell or sinned, His Victory is given to you if you choose to have it. When temptation comes, we have to choose, will I go the way my feelings are taking me? OR- Will I realize that this is Satan's temptation to take me away from my safety in Christ and so choose Jesus' Victory and see that temptation vanish through the power of the indwelling Christ.

Remember the story Jesus told of the debtor that owed a tremendous amount to the creditor? The Bible says he had NOTHING to pay. Now how much is nothing? Could he invest it

and hope gradually to earn interest and so pay the debt? No! He had nothing! No hope of ever paying at all. This is how we are with the Law. It is our creditor. We owe it our lives and we have nothing to pay. Even our best deeds are only filthy rags. Before any real change can occur in anyone's life, he must realize this. This is what it means to fall on the Rock and be broken. As long as we still feel that in some way we can 'make ourselves good' or 'just develop the good that is in us', we will never know the power of God to recreate in us Jesus' life!

Also when temptation comes, if we begin at all to excuse it, saying, "Oh, it's not that important" "Just this once won't matter," or "Well if that person did that to me, they deserve me to do this to them!" As soon as we begin to excuse sin, we will fall. Remember, they crucified my Lord, and He never retaliated except with loving forgiveness! That kind of mind, He offers to give to us. His Loving, victorious heart and mind.

Desire for the things of this world will go, only as we are 'willing to be made willing'. God pleads but never forces and His power comes in only as we want it and choose to have it. We must really desire to have the Victory, and seek God with all our heart and He will certainly be found and satisfy our every need. The miracle of re-creation will be ours as we surrender and choose to have it done for us. Never forget- This is a life and death matter! It is not a game.

The following are some thoughts in regards to recovery from the Laodecian disease. These are not to be regarded as another series of 'works' or magic formulas that if you do this then something will happen, no- Surrender is the only way! There are a million 'works' related plans in the church and the world- 'steps' to take, 'ladders' to climb, 'plans' to follow, 'programs' to carry out. It is all so much man made garbage- only complete, total repentance and surrender will save you! These suggestions relate to surrender-

1 – Admit it! God doesn't lie- so even if you can't see it, believe it and admit it.

Realize that when God says something, it is TRUE and He means what He says! Also He is 'no respecter of persons'; what does that mean? It means that He is just as willing to do something for you, as He is to do it for anyone else! Yes, just as willing to save and help you, as He was to help Daniel, Joseph, David or John! The Power that worked for them is just a willing to work for you. Admitting the truth of this message, that I am poor, blind, miserable and naked, admitting it in your heart and before God in your prayer, causes a change of attitude in the believer. It begins to open up the mind to spiritual reality.

2- Repent and ask for help to see- Plead before God- realize it is a matter of Life or Death! Ask for the personal teacher, The Holy Spirit to teach you. Repentance is a most misunderstood part of the salvation process. People seem to think that once they are baptized then everything that happened in the past is just to be forgotten, I'm forgiven and that's the end of it. Take a look at these inspired counsels-

Christ's Object Lessons -PG- 160

"At every advance step in Christian experience **our repentance will deepen**. It is to those whom the **Lord has forgiven**, to those whom He acknowledges as His people, that He says, "**Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight.**" Eze. 36:31. Again He says, "I will establish My covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou **mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame**, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." Eze. 16:62, 63. Then our lips will not be opened in self-glorification. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone. We shall make the apostle's confession our own. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:18. "**God forbid that I should glory**, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Gal. 6:14.

The Acts of the Apostles PG- 561

"So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our

repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle's confession our own: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Romans 7:18; Galatians 6:14.

You see that by bringing to our remembrance our sins of the past, we are taught by the Holy Spirit to become more humble and realize more fully the mercy of God to save such a one as we are. This spirit of gratitude and humility is what is of great value with God; this is a 'contrite' heart. It is directly opposite to the proud, self-sufficient Laodecian. It is sad that so many think when thoughts of some past sin come into their minds that this is the devil and should be rejected. Yes, if the thoughts tell you there is no hope and you are not forgiven, then reject them, but many times the Holy Spirit brings things to us for different reasons- to deepen repentance; to teach more lessons; to show us things that still need to be made right; to help us understand present trials; to remind us of the pit whence we were dug; and many other things. Even in heaven the saints, although they won't then remember their sins, will always be humble because they will always remember they needed a Saviour.

3- Immersion Course-Surround yourself with scripture- read and listen to as much as possible. It is helpful to obtain at least the KJV New Testament on audiotapes. The ones read by Alexander Scourby are the best and can be bought at ABC centers and other Christian Bible stores. Or read it to yourself and record it on audiocassettes. Play the Gospels and listen to them as much as you can, when you drive or work. Get a Walkman and listen while you ride busses or walk. Keep praying for the Holy Spirit to enlighten your understanding.

4- Get control of worldly entertainment! Chuck the games; Ditch the movies; Turn off the TV!! YES! Even the news! The news on the media is only what the controlling powers want you to know- it is often distorted, and slanted to twist and manipulate your thinking and opinions! The Vatican ultimately controls all media, including that source of infinite filth and corruption, Hollywood. Don't believe me? Well why is it that every religious scene ever shown in movies is always catholic unless the story is something negative about religion and then it is always protestant! Why is it that you will never see an outdoor scene in a movie where you do not at some point see some nuns strolling past? They made a deal with Hollywood long before real Christians even recognized its threat. When you have the Holy Spirit teaching you and dwelling in you and are in the school of Christ- you will know the news!! The real news!

5- Check diet and health habits! Are you obeying as much of the health reform as you know? Remember Daniel 1- is on health reform. Why? Because you can't learn in the school of Jesus if you don't adhere to the light on diet and clean living. That was a prophetic book, in it Jesus was going to be showing us prophecies to the end of time- that are being fulfilled right now! You can't indulge carnal appetite and still understand spiritual things! It's impossible. No Health reform- No Revival!

6- Get into SOP! Read Desire of Ages first at least 1 chapter per day.

Apply what you read to yourself today. Think about the parallels between the church back then and the church today and how they are following the exact same path! Always ask for Holy Spirit's guidance and teaching to show you personally what you must know.

Other good starting books in SOP are

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing.

Christ's Object Lessons

Early Writings helps to understand more about the SOP.

Steps to Christ and Sanctified Life- You can also get Spirit of Prophecy books on cassette tape and listen to them as the Bible above.

Get up early!! Private devotion is your lifeline to God. Get the older Spirit of Prophecy Books if possible as you will find them containing more insight and power. "Spiritual Gifts", the original "Spirit of Prophecy" set. You will also find the Testimonies to the church to be a goldmine. Always pray for guidance, take what you read as personal for you, as you learn repent, confess where you were wrong and pray for Christ to put into practice in your life what you learn.

Pray for Self to be crucified and Jesus to reign in you and place His righteousness on you and in you.

7- STOP COMPROMISING! You can't serve 2 sides, even 'small' compromises can sever you from the power of God to recreate you. Watch your appearance and attitudes, conversation and remember the Holy Beings that you want to be with you are offended by silliness or impurity.

8- Check your Home and belongings, praying to see anything that could be a snare to you or an invitation to Satan to hang around you. Remove all- videos, games music, magazines, book or novels, that you know Jesus would not use Himself. You may have to remove New Theology books by Venden, Sequera, Moore, and Also most recent denominational publications. Remember a bit of poison in food is more dangerous than a bottle of poison clearly marked. Don't Use "Devotionals" – read a chapter from SOP and Bible.

1st Gospels, 2nd epistles and rest of NT. 3rd Psalms and proverbs, 4th. OT prophets. Especially take a look at Jerimiah- you will find that is the Laodecian message all through! Always use King James Version as it is the most accurate and also, believe it or not, easiest to understand despite claims to the contrary. Remember, children of 5 and 6 used it in the 1800s to learn to read!

9- Install Family Worship- include the 'old hymns', KJV Bible, Earnest Prayer with and for your family. Family won't join? Do it yourself and keep sweetly inviting them to join you. Prayer for boldness and stand like a rock- be loving as Jesus was. Let them see that Jesus gives you the real Joy of Life!

10- Remember that as you learn, seek to share what you learn with whoever is interested. This will quicken your interest in learning and only those who 'give out' will receive more- a stream must flow or else it becomes a swamp.

What about avoiding Deception?

Every wind of doctrine is blowing out there in these last days of earth's sordid history. Adventists are being swept in every direction out there; so how do we avoid deception? In order to recognize counterfeits, does that mean that I have to go out there and study everything that comes along? No! It has long been said that one must study the true and then you will see clearly the deviation when it comes along. Spend much time reading and listening to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy books, as you read in large amounts, you will get the broad picture and will easily spot ideas and so called 'new light' that is really old darkness because it just doesn't ring true. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and follow me and a stranger they will not follow." How do you get to know His voice? By hearing it a lot in the Bible and SOP.

Here is a word of warning to be heeded, if you find something that seems to 'have a lot of truth in it' but you can see it is off in certain aspects, then discard it ALL! Light has no fellowship with darkness and a mixture of truth and error is just what Satan's deadly cocktails are made of.

We have promises that guarantee us not to be deceived if we keep ourselves in a right relationship to God.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or [whether] I speak of myself.

John 8:31,32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, [then] are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

You will notice in these texts that it is clear that the key is to have an honest and willing heart- if we are trying to exalt self or in any way play games with God, then we will not be protected against being deceived, but if we honestly surrender and seek Him with all our heart- He has pledged Himself to teach us and lead us right!

Another key to getting new light is to first double check it, praying for understanding and then make sure that as you learn new truths from God's Word, that you repent and ask for

victory on that new thing and by Jesus' power, put it into practice right away. Just as a wise teacher will not allow a pupil to go onto to a new learning task before the old one is mastered, so God only leads and teaches us new things when we have put into practice the light we already have. Note that when I say 'New' here, I mean new to you, there is nothing "New" under the sun really, it's only new to you.

As one looks at the lives of Bible characters, martyrs, reformation heroes and other Godly persons, it becomes apparent that the secret of their power is always the same, much time spent in God's Word and in prayer and meditation!

Is there hope for Laodecians??

Yes, as individuals there is certainly hope- look at Jesus Words!

"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 will sup with him, and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The answer lies in these words-"**be zealous therefore, and repent**" This is an emergency condition! The patient is about to go into a coma and die! If you don't rouse up and allow Christ to do what He wants so very much to do for you, you will perish. But with all that heavenly power and all the efforts of angels and the three persons of the Great Godhead anxious and able to save you to the uttermost, willing to make every effort needed, you will be more than conqueror through Jesus Christ Who loves you!

In closing I read a wonderful promise found in 'The Desire of Ages' 429

"If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." How many a sin-burdened soul has echoed that prayer. And to all, the pitying Saviour's answer is, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." It is faith that connects us with heaven, and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. In Christ, God has provided means for subduing every sinful trait, and resisting every temptation, however strong. But many feel that they lack faith, and therefore they remain away from Christ. Let these souls, in their helpless unworthiness, cast themselves upon the mercy of their compassionate Saviour. Look not to self, but to Christ. He who healed the sick and cast out demons when He walked among men is the same mighty Redeemer today. Faith comes by the word of God. Then grasp His promise, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. Cast yourself at His feet with the cry, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." You can never perish while you do this—never!"

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