**The Church That Made Jesus Sick**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday February 3rd, 2019

Text: Rev. 3:14-16

Intro

1. Despite the evil world we live in, saints are called upon to be “blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation” (Phil. 2:15).
2. We can read of a church that didn’t do that, but became hardly distinguishable from the world around it, and it made Jesus sick!
3. Rev. 3:14-16: "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. ' So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.” (NKJ: 3:16: “I will vomit you out of My mouth.”)
   1. “Spit” = *emeo <em-eh’-o> (G1692):* “to vomit; spit; (will) spue” (KJV).
   2. Jesus is saying, “You’re stale. You’re stagnant. You make me want to vomit.”
   3. Lukewarm is indifference. Hard to make a difference in the world when you don’t care.
4. Jesus expressed emotion on earth, but not like here:
   1. Christ expressed compassion both over spiritual weakness *(Mt. 9:36)* and over physical needs *(Mt. 15:32).*
   2. Christ expressed grief *(Jn. 11:33-35: Mourned with those who mourned, wept even).*
   3. Christ expressed anger *(Mk. 3:5; Jn. 2:14-15).*
   4. But in this text of Scripture we see Him as being sick to the point of vomiting!
      1. He is not just a little upset but rather he is so upset that he becomes literally nauseated.
5. Just who is it that Jesus is addressing here in this passage of Scripture?
   1. This is not a sinner or group of sinners, the alarming element of this passage is that we find him addressing the church in Laodicea! (Col. 2:1; 4:13, 15, 16 – Early 50’s AD)
   2. Sadly when Christ addresses them He has not one good word to say about them.
6. What went wrong to cause a church to make Jesus sick?!
7. Laodicea – What Went Wrong?
   1. Laodicea was founded about 250 B.C. by the Seleucid King Antiochus II of Syria, and was named after his wife Laodice who according to history later poisoned him.
   2. The city was located about 100 miles due east of Ephesus, 9 miles west of Colossae.
   3. It was in a fertile valley along with Colossae and Hierapolis. The great Roman road stretching to the inland of Asia from the coast at Ephesus ran straight through its center.
      1. This made Laodicea an important center of trade and communication.
   4. Laodicea was actually known for 4 things:
      1. Such was the great wealth of the city, that when it was destroyed by an earthquake in 61 AD it declined aid from Rome to rebuild, and used its own resources in rebuilding. *(Like if New Orleans or New York refused Fed aid)*
      2. Much of its wealth came from the production of a fine quality of famous glossy black wool (also dye) which would be exported throughout the known world.
      3. The medical school at Laodicea was distinguished for its eye salves and ointments for the ears, with particular interest in the use of *collyrium*, an ointment used in the treatment of eye diseases.
      4. For all its fame, Laodicea was also known for something else: Its horrible water supply!
         1. The water for the city was supplied by an aqueduct from the hot springs of Hierapolis, positioned about five miles across the Lycus Valley.
         2. The hot chemical water was lukewarm by the time it flowed into the city and was nauseating to the taste and to the smell as it flowed into the reservoirs in Laodicea.
   5. Other than some water problems it sounded like a fairly decent place to live and raise a family – in a lot of respects, they enjoyed comfort of living as we do in the U.S.
   6. We can determine that the problem wasn’t geographic, it wasn’t a slumping economy that was the problem; this was a “spiritual problem!”
      1. Jesus didn’t fault them for their organization, their doctrine, or immorality, but rather His gut-wrenching disgust came from their “Half-hearted commitment.”
   7. Jesus Christ condemned them for being “lukewarm,” indifferent! *(Later, “Laodicean” came to mean someone who was lukewarm in their attitude, indifferent or neutral)*
8. The Problem with Being “Lukewarm”
   1. The church being “Lukewarm” made Jesus sick – He would rather they were cold or hot.
      1. Why cold? If cold, then they wouldn’t even pretend to belong to Him, but they would admit they belong to the world.
      2. If hot, then they would be declaring to the world they belong to Christ!
      3. Lukewarm meant they were indifferent! *Not against Christ, but not for Him!*
      4. II Tim. 3:1-5: Evildoers “holding to a form of godliness” delude themselves into thinking they are fine in the eyes of God!
   2. Three reasons Jesus hates luke-warmness:
      1. He hates luke-warmness because it in itself is offensive to both God and man!
         1. No one cheers for the guy/team that does anything half-heartedly!
         2. Like the water supply that fueled the city, the church members became lukewarm, nauseating. *Indifference kills zeal!*
         3. Titus 2:11-14: We were redeemed to be zealous for good deeds! To be “zealous” for anything leaves no room for coldness or being lukewarm!
      2. He hates luke-warmness because it robs its victim of all possibility of progress!
         1. While Ephesus had there some who were active and hard-working, and Thyatira had some who were growing, the church at Laodicea was stagnant and nauseating!
         2. I Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:15: Growing and progressing, “always abounding” in the work of the Lord cannot be done if one becomes “lukewarm.”
      3. He hates luke-warmness because it kills our possibilities of usefulness!
         1. It means they were indifferent, complacent, and self-satisfied in their attitudes and conduct – useless! *(If arrived, nothing further to do!)*
         2. II Tim. 2:21: Saints must choose to become “useful to the Master.”
   3. For their being lukewarm, Jesus Christ would spit them out – Their souls were in danger!

Conclusion

1. Once a group or individual recognizes they are “lukewarm” and have made Jesus sick, is there a cure?
2. Jesus gave the cure to the church at Laodicea – “Be zealous and repent!” (Rev. 3:17-22)
   1. Gold refined by fire: They were spiritually poor, and needed the riches of God!
      1. Js. 1:2-3: Trials produce endurance.
      2. I Pet. 1:6-9: Our character, like gold tested by fire, results in glory and honor, and the end outcome is the salvation of our souls! *If found faithful till death.*
   2. White garments: Not the black the city was famous for, and that the church was spiritually wearing, but white; meaning they were morally pure – I Cor. 6:18; Col. 3:5
   3. Eye salve: So that they would see in the right perspective, to be alert and watchful!
      1. I Pet. 5:8-9: Be alert! They were in the grip of Satan and didn’t even know it.
3. There are congregations who take pride in the wrong things: material wealth, rather than their spiritual wealth; their numbers, rather than spiritual growth. They become lukewarm!
4. In a land of wealth and comfort, let us do all we can to not be a church that makes Christ sick!
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent & be baptized, and live for God!
6. If a Christian, examine your life to see if you have become lukewarm. Are you cold, or hot?
7. Let your requests be made known ***NOW*** while we stand and sing!