

Sunday, April 7, 2024

1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

Title: Letter to Laodicea and Recap

Series: Revelation ... 7

Text: Revelation 3:14 - 22

Purpose: I want to INFORM my congregation of the concerns of Christ Jesus for the church at Laodicea.

Introduction:

This morning our devotional is from Revelation 3:14 – 22, the letter to the church at Laodicea. This is the last of the seven letters to seven churches located in what is now Turkey. It is evident from history that the seven local churches did not respond to the admonitions of Christ Jesus as the candle stick of all seven has currently been removed and the country is now Muslim.

~ As a general note the seven letters have a similar outline: 1. Name of the church which relates to the concerns; 2. the characteristic of Christ Jesus revealed to that assembly; 3. commendation to the believers; 4. the concerns of Christ Jesus; 5. exhortation from the Lord; 6. a promise to the saints; 7. closing

1. Letter to the Church at Laodicea:

~ Name of the church, Laodicea: meaning was "justice of the people." Laodicea was a prosperous center with a strong textile industry and medicinal industry (eye salve). Some scholars refer to Laodicea as the church without humility. Their major weakness was their water supply, archaeologists have established that their water supply came from a hot mineral spring some 5 miles south by way of an aqueduct. By the time the water arrived at Laodicea it was tepid.

Hebrew meaning of Laodicea is: "Place Of People Of Common Fairness"! Could we say they sought to be politically correct?

~ Name or Character of Christ Jesus revealed to the church of Laodicea – "the faithful and true witness," It is NOT human fairness that is the judge, it is the Lord Jesus Christ! In our modern world today we need to hold to the standard of Christ Jesus not the standard of mankind.

~ Commendation – there is NONE!

~ Concerns:

~ vs. 15 – 16, "*I know your works: you are neither cold or hot.*" We cannot hide from God!

~ vs. 17, "*For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*"

Do I trust my own gifts, talents and resources or do I diligently seek the power and direction of Christ Jesus?

~ Exhortation:

vs. 18 – 20, "*I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. (19) Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. (20) Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*"

~ Promise:

vs. 21, "*The one who conquers, I will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.*" Which throne is the throne of Christ Jesus?

~ Close: vs. 22, "*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*"

2. Letters to the Seven Churches:

~ Both Sardis and Laodicea have NO commendation.

~ Both Smyrna and Philadelphia have NO rebukes or concerns.

3. Letters by the Apostle Paul to Churches:

~ Paul wrote NINE letters to churches: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, and 2 Thessalonians

~ There were only SEVEN churches: Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians

~ Is there a correlation?

Ephesus – devotion, not just doctrine – Ephesus

Smyrna – had to endure persecution – Philippians

Pergamos – called to stand fast against worldliness – Corinthians

Thyatira – avoid pagan worship and practices – Galatians

Sardis – be diligently watchful – Romans

Philadelphia – love for others, missionary work – Thessalonians

Laodicea – trusted their own abilities and sought 'fairness' – Colossians

4. Letters and Their Application to MY Time and MY Life:

~ Ephesus: Do not neglect the priorities of DEVOTION and DOCTRINE

~ Smyrna: Remember you do not wrestle against flesh and blood

~ Pergamos: Be mindful that you do not settle for worldly compromise

~ Thyatira: Avoid pagan practices

~ Sardis: Develop a diligent watchful attitude

~ Philadelphia: Be a loyal ambassador of Christ Jesus

~ Laodicea: Accept discipline from the Lord and be committed to Him

Conclusion: It is Communion Sunday!