

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA?

Two times in the New Testament we read about “*the church of the Laodiceans*” (Col. 4:16; Rev. 3:14). Paul also mentioned “*the brethren which are in Laodicea*” (Col. 4:15). Laodicea was a city located in Asia Minor. The congregation of the Lord’s church there was included in the expression “*the seven churches which are in Asia.*” They are the ones to whom the Book of Revelation was addressed (Rev. 1:11).

What do we know about the church of the Laodiceans? It existed when Paul wrote the Book of Colossians (A.D. 62/63). From what Jesus said years later to the saints in that locale through the apostle John, it is plain that something awful had taken place in the church there. From a spiritual standpoint, the church of the Laodiceans was a disaster at the time John penned the Revelation of Jesus the Christ (Rev. 3:14-22). What went wrong?

Were the people who made up the church in Laodicea ever really converted in the first place? Was it ever a true church of the living God? Go back to the Book of Colossians. Again, Paul referred to the members there as “the brethren which are in Laodicea” (Col. 4:15). Yes, they were real brethren in the Lord. What did Paul instruct the saints in Colosse to do with the letter that he wrote to them (the Book of Colossians)? First, they were to read it among themselves. Second, they were to make sure that it was also read in the church of the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16). It is obvious that the Holy Spirit spoke of the church in Laodicea as a real church.

But what happened to the church there? Know this: the brethren there did not go astray because they lacked proper instruction. There was an epistle that someone

wrote to them (Col. 4:16), they were to be given access to the epistle that Paul wrote to the Colossians, and Jesus sent them a letter through John (Rev. 3). That is at least three letters of instruction to guide them.

Neither could anyone in the church at Laodicea rightfully say that no one really cared about them. Jesus rebuked them alright, but He explained why He did so: “*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten...*” (Rev. 3:19). Let us take a deep breath right here and tell it like it is. No one, and I mean no one, becomes unfaithful to the Lord because there is not ample guidance available. Folks, every true child of God has the Bible for divine guidance! Second, no one, and I mean no one, wavers in his faith because no one cares about him. If every other person in the church becomes a cold-hearted snob, this fact remains: God cares for every one of His children (1 Peter 5:7).

What did Jesus say to the church of the Laodiceans that reveals what their spiritual status was in His sight? It is not a pretty picture, but consider these facts (references are from Revelation chapter 3).

1) *The Laodiceans had become lukewarm (3:16).* They so disgusted the Christ that He was prepared to vomit them out of His mouth! Could their condition be cured? Yes! By whom? By them. How? By becoming zealous. That is exactly what the Master told them to do: “...be zealous...” (3:19).

2) *They were proud and trusted in their own self-sufficiency (3:17).* They considered themselves as rich, having need of nothing. Jesus, however, lets all men know: “...without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

3) *They were spiritually poor, spiritually blind, and spiritually naked (3:17).* Jesus said so. He also said they did not know such was the case. They either had become so spiritually dull they did not recognize what they were

truly like, or else they refused to see themselves as they really were (James 1:23,24).

4) *They needed to repent.* Jesus commanded them to do just that (3:19). Their apostasy shows plainly that a child of God can sin and stand in need of repentance. Jesus’ words also show that it is possible for a child of God in sin to come to his senses and “make things right.” His words further let us know that a whole congregation can get to the point that it needs to repent. He who thinks that every modern-day congregation of the church of the Christ is doing just fine and dandy is lacking proper spiritual discernment, just like the brethren in Laodicea did.

5) *The Laodiceans needed to come back to Jesus to be blessed by Him (3:18,20).* Our loving Lord has graciously provided a way out of the muck of sin.

The Lord’s message to the spiritual train wreck known as the church in Laodicea, is a reminder to every congregation in the body of the Christ: what happened to them can happen to one or all, so we had best beware and be on guard (1 Cor. 10:12). If I had to choose, I would rather hear about the faithfulness of the ancient church in Philippi, but if I will open my eyes, I can also learn valuable lessons from the church of the Laodiceans.

Roger D. Campbell from *Seek The Old Paths*

“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.” **Revelation 3:19-20**

ANNIVERSARY

David and Joy Parish, 06-14.

ILL

Wednesday: John James

John James is scheduled to start chemo-therapy at Olathe Medical Center on Tuesday. Bill Nelson is in a rehabilitation center in Newton, KS.

Those battling cancer: Ledgia Campbell, David Cole, Shauna Heck, Betty James, John James and Cleo Stone. Please remember these in your prayers.

HOME BOUND

Kathleen Camp is in Room 101 at the Royal Terrace Nursing Home in Olathe. Ralph Franklin is in Room D3 at the Evergreen Center. Barbara James' Aunt, Evelyn Marquardt is at Sharon Lane in Shawnee. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

Chris Edwards is in California on business. Monica Nemechek was in Chicago on business on Wednesday. George Thomas was in Iowa on business on Wednesday. Debra Gragg was in Nashville, TN on vacation last week. The Nelsons were on a cruise last week. The Stillwells left Sunday afternoon to vacation in Florida. Ted and Julia Thrasher were in Springfield, MO last Sunday.

MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING

Our monthly Men's Business Meeting will be held this Sunday, June 13 following our AM worship. All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 36; Sunday PM, 24; Wednesday PM, 17.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." **Psalms 1:1-2**

Those To Serve

June 13, 2010

BUILDING AND COMMUNION.....Thrasher (2)

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS.....Trent Thrasher
SONG LEADER.....Joel Nelson
OPENING PRAYERJared Nelson
PRESIDE.....Jeff Nemechek
ASSIST.....John Cody Carter
ASSIST.....Dave Parish
CLOSING PRAYER.....George Thomas

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYERJohn Dodson
CLOSING PRAYER.....Chris Edwards
LORD'S SUPPER.....Jeff Nemechek

WEDNESDAY 16th

SONG LEADER.....George Thomas
INVITATIONJeff Nemechek

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study..... 9:30 AM
Morning Worship..... 10:30 AM
Evening Worship..... 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study..... 10:00 AM
Bible Study..... 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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