

Revelation 3:14:22

Sermon Intro

Intro

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Vernon Hills - one church

Feelings of self-reliance, apathy, and ignorance - I didn't need God

Series overview

Text Intro (Rev 3:14)

Rev 3:14a - Laodicea background

Picture of Map (from Mikes sermon on Philadelphia)

Founded by Antiochus II who named it after his wife

Known for (SLIDE)

Wealth -

Located at the meeting point of three great highways

Prosperous trading and financial center under Rome

Home of bankers, traders, and millionaires

AD 61 - destroyed by earthquake and refused help

Health / Medicine

Famous for producing a substance that worked as a remedy for weak eyes. They called it Phrygian powder

Power / Clothing - Textiles - black wool

Water Supply

Hierapolis - Hot Springs

Colossae - pure cold drinking water

Rev 3:14b - three titles for Christ

Amen, Faithful and True, Beginning of God's Creation

“Amen” -

“truly” or “so be it” - expresses assent or agreement

Only used twice as a name. Here and in Isaiah 65:17 “God of Truth” or literally the God of Amen”

What Jesus says is truthful

He is joining himself to God the Father, the father of truth

“Faithful and True Witness”

Jesus speaks the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth

“The Beginning of God’s Creation”

Source of and Lord over all created things

Especially the new creation and the church - Colossians 1:18

Problem (Rev 3:15-18) Apathy in works

Rev 3:15

“I know your works”

“Hot nor cold”

Healing for the sick (hot)

Refreshment for the weary (cold)

Rev 3:16

They are lukewarm

Why is Jesus mad?

Not because they have left their first love

Not because they have pursued idolatry

Not because they have believed false doctrine

Not because they have compromised with morality

What does it mean to be Lukewarm?

They are LUKEWARM. Complacent. Self-Satisfied

Obvious reference to the water supply

Also ...

Church of Smyrna - hot - full of zeal

Church of Sardis - cold as a corpse

Church of Laodicea - alive but apathetic and indifferent

How did the church get this way?

They must have lost the joy of their salvation. They stopped experiencing grace.

Application:

Questions?

Rev 3:17

1) "Need Nothing"

they are Self-Satisfied, self-reliant, complacent.

They assumed that material wealth also meant they were spiritually rich

They assumed that their wealth was due to their own inherent superiority

Those who thought they had all they needed are shown to be spiritually bankrupt

2) "Not Realizing"

they are Ignorant of their true condition

"Wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."

Wretched but thought they were blessed

Pitiable but thought they should be envied

Poor but thought they were rich

Blind but thought they saw clearly

Naked but thought they were clothed in good deeds

Jesus is disgusted and wants to spit them out of his mouth.

Application:

The church at Laodicea relied on their health, wealth, and power rather than God. Where do you look to for your security? What are you tempted to rely on instead of God?

Where are you self-sufficient? Where in your life do you say "I don't need God."

Where are you apathetic or indifferent in your walk with God?

2 examples for me: Finances in college. Church planting.

Rev 3:18

Buy from me with a currency you can't produce - Dependence

Refined gold - biblical image for life that has been purified from sin or a faith that has been strengthened through suffering

They need spiritual wealth. Buy gold from the Risen Christ who alone can purchase for you

White garments - purity and the reward of living for Christ

White - symbolizes righteousness.

Black - the textile wool that they had

Nakedness - symbolizes judgment, humiliation, and shame.

Reception of fine clothing - vindication and honor

Salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see" - a picture of the healing we need so that our natural spiritual blindness can be cured

The ability to repent of our sin and come to Jesus

They are to buy genuine gold to become truly rich, white robes to cover their humiliation with honor, and slaves to regain their spiritual perception.

Overall meaning - the great spiritual inadequacy in this community is to be redressed with by Gifts from God through Christ.

The Solution: Rev 3:19

Rev 3:19

What does God do?

God loves

God Discipline

We don't like discipline. Why? Because people see us as we are and are calling out our sin.

We want to hide, suppress, and deny.

But God "knows your works" - We can't hide anything from God. He already knows.

And the amazing thing is that he still desires intimacy with us!

Analogy - me with my son

What do we do?

Be Zealous - become boiling water! Change your Heart! ENERGY!

Repent - change your mind! Change your actions!

Repentance of self-reliance and complacency.

The lukewarm spiritual character is to be replaced with genuine spiritual enthusiasm and zeal.

God disciplines us because he loves us. We respond by devoting our heart, mind, actions to Him. We are dependent upon and desperate for Him.

Application:

God wants you

Receive the Discipline

Remember the love

Repent of the complacency

Resolve to be zealous

The church was complacent. Apathetic in their walk with God. Riches, Success, Fame left them ambivalent towards God. Worse yet, they didn't know it. God lovingly disciplines them so that they can respond with zealous repentance

What does it look like to combat self-reliance?

Reliance = Spiritual disciplines

Fasting - I need you and want you more than I want food

Prayer - seemingly does nothing but God I want you

Bible Reading - reading your word instead of facebook, pinterest, sports

Giving - they trusted their finances - God I want to trust and depend upon you

Sabbath - I cease to be productive and I delight in God

Ignorance = They didn't know = Community

Come to church: This isn't a convenience thing. It's not about you and what you get out of church. You come to worship.

Get in a small Group: You need others speaking into your life. Rafael talked about them during announcements. Tonya is at a table in the back so you can sign up right now in person, you can sign up online, or you can just show up on Wednesday nights at 7:00 pm.

Zeal? But let's be honest. Who is able to do that? Who is actually able to grow in energy, affection, and zeal on their own? I mean, it sounds nice, but it doesn't happen.

The Reason Why: Rev 3:20

The church was complacent. Apathetic in their walk with God. Riches, Success, Fame left them ambivalent towards God. Worse yet, they didn't know it. God lovingly disciplines them so that they can respond with zealous repentance

They had the wealth, health, and power of this world but spiritually they were missing Jesus.

God disciplines them out of love. He offers...

Gold for their spiritual poverty

Clothes for their spiritual nakedness

Salve for their spiritual blindness

But Jesus offers more than spiritual resources - He offers Himself!

Rev 3:20

Promise of Intimacy

Fellowship, communion, the gift of God's presence

He is waiting for us to put down our guard and let Him back in

We do all this for God's presence. He is knocking at the door. He wants to be with us.

Story of Christmas gifts with Scot

The Promise: Rev 3:21

Rev 3:21

Promise of conquest      Hupomeino - remain and endure

From the throne room to the dining room

What can we learn from the church at Laodicea? Don't let your pursuit of wealth, health, and power keep you from knowing God. He is knocking at the door. Will you let Him in?