

Brothers and sister - this is the LUKEWARM GENERATION. You don't have to be a theologian to understand we have come to the Laodicean era which Jesus prophesied would arise in the very last days. Simply compare what Jesus said about the lukewarm Laodicean church with what today is called the Church of Jesus Christ. Jesus warns that he who has ears had best listen to what the Holy Ghost is saying about this religious system.

Jesus clearly warned that a church would evolve in the last days of civilisation which would boast that it was rich, growing and increasing in numbers, and self-sufficient. In other words, a church with great influence, gaining in visibility and power, while refusing all correction or scrutiny.

Jesus said of this church, *"It will say... I am rich, increasing with goods [wealthy], and in need of nothing..."* (REV 3:17). How sad that this particular church, arrogant and boastful, is being heralded by so many undiscerning Christians as the glorious last days church of power and dominion which will subdue the world and bring King Jesus back. It is Laodicean lie! One dear soul wrote the following, "Don't you realise, sir, that our next president will be a tongues-speaking, Spirit-filled man? Don't you know that all these great building projects by evangelists are ordained by God? The Lord is training leaders, raising up huge projects so they can move into government positions - having learned all about high finances and building. the church is going to take over government - Spirit-filled leaders are going to make the

The Laodicean Lie!

laws, doing away with abortion, pornography and crime. God has raised up powerful church to take dominion now."

The main element in the concept of *"the Kingdom of God on earth"* is that of a perfectly righteous rule, embracing all nations; under which rule all injustice, oppression and strife will cease, the evils of poverty be no more known, and all men dwell in peace and prosperity as brethren.

What alarms me is that many fundamentalists now share similar Pollyanna views about the role of the modern American church. It seems to me they are boasting, "We have arrived! We have 30 to 40 million evangelicals. We have charming, popular, articulate leaders. We have the money, the expertise and growing numbers who will join us - let's take dominion!"

I have heard pastors of large Charismatic churches boast, "I am going to build the biggest church in America, because numbers mean power, influence. We must have a church big and powerful enough to enforce morality and the will of God on our nation and our communities." It is that blatant, that boastful!

This proud, rich, arrogant church now covets power. Not the power of God - but political power. It covets the White House, congress and the Supreme Court. Since we have failed to bring about a Jonah-

like revival of repentance and a change of hearts of men, we will, according to some, take over the reins of government and legislate righteousness.

It sounds so pious, so spiritual and vital. Like Israel, many of God's people are crying for an Imperial pulpit - with a spiritual leader who will root out the entrenched powers of evil and legislate a new moral system. The pointed, accusing finger of thundering prophets and weeping watchmen is to be replaced by the refined pen of Christian congressmen enacting moral laws.

Believe it or not - this is the very church God is talking about in His word.

God is not at all impressed with this church's bloated estimate of itself. The Laodicean lukewarm church is not destined to dominion, power and authority of any kind. It is destined to judgement! It is the worst kind of spiritual blindness to line up with those who boast that the modern American church, Charismatic or otherwise, faces its finest hour. What an incredible lack of spiritual discernment. I, for one, must line up with what Jesus said of this last-day church.

Jesus rips off the facade and exposes the truth about the Laodicean church. It is not what it thinks it is - it is not what it says it is. It is not rich - it is poor! It is not on the increase - it is wretched and about to be forever cut off! It is not

strong and in need of nothing - but rather, it is naked, shameful! It is not a church with new revelation and deep Scriptural insights - Jesus said IT IS BLIND! It is not going to be the vehicle of Christ's dominion on earth, but rather the object of His wrath and abhorrence.

God's church is a triumphant, despised, persecuted remnant.

You can be sure God has a people for Himself in these final days, but they are a despised, holy and separated remnant. This holy remnant people walk in the light and enjoy great discernment. They see the modern Laodicean church through the eyes of Jesus and they will not be deceived by the pomp, bigness and outward grandeur of popular religion. The true church is invisible; it is repentant; it yearns for the return of Christ, the beloved One.

The true church cannot possibly enjoy the favour and good will of the world. Do we believe and tremble at God's Word or not? When will we ever face up to what Jesus warned was ahead for those who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him? Jesus said: *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than His Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me!"* (JN 15:18-21).

Speaking of what will happen to saints in the last days, Jesus said, *"They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prison, being brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake."* (LK 21:12).

Jesus went on to warn of betrayal, and *"...some of you shall be put to death... and ye shall be hated of all*

men for My name's sake." (LK 21:16,17).

Paul emphatically states, *"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."* (2.TIM 3:12).

It is absolutely impossible for the true church, or any of its leaders, to be approved or accepted by the world. A godly man, a godly church, will be persecuted and maligned by the world, by its kings and rulers. Jesus will permit no exceptions to this rule - for He warned, *"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their father to the false prophets."* (LK 6:26).

Woe to this Laodicean church and its political aspirations! If the world accepts you, it can only be the result of removing the reproach of the Cross. For nearly two thousand years the church of Jesus Christ has been rejected and persecuted by the world. The blood of millions of rejected martyr cries out from the ground. For centuries, Spirit-led men and women of God have been burned at the stake, sawn asunder, chased and hunted down like animals. Godly saints were beheaded; others were drowned; many were thrown to the lions. The Bible says they all died in faith and the world was not worthy of them. Am I now to believe that Jesus has changed His mind and has decided to close out the ages with a lukewarm, rich, pampered, boastful, self-centred church? Will the last army of God consist of precinct workers getting out the vote? Will the soul winners be replaced with petitioners going into the highways and hedges seeking signatures for some social cause?

God's Great Concern is With the Church That Claims to be Spirit-Baptised!

The dead, cold, liberal church has long ago been given up to its sinful ways - it is not God's prime concern in these last days. There are entire denominations that have turned heathen - the Spirit of God left them years ago. But God's focus is on both the organised and unorganised evangelical and Charismatic churches, fellowships and ministries. It is out of the Charismatic body of believers that

all prosperity preaching has sprung. Those who claim to be Spirit-baptised and led are the ones who go forth saying, "God wants you rich, increased with goods and self-sufficient in all things." It is out of this body that the new doctrines of earthly dominion have been birthed.

I have been a Charismatic preacher for over 30 years, and I can say with Paul, *"I speak with tongues more than you all."* But I grieve over the seductions and false doctrines that are now sweeping away so many undiscerning Charismatic believers. Multitudes of them are being duped, misled, swindled and carried away by doctrines of demons.

What God deplores is the MIXTURE being introduced in Charismatic circles. Mixture is synonymous with lukewarmness. You find this mixture everywhere you look nowadays. Attend a so-called Christian rock concert, for example. What an incredible mixture. They usually begin with, "We are here only to minister Jesus - to glorify Him." You will hear a sweet talk about holiness, repentance, and giving up all for Jesus. Then suddenly the spirit of Elvis Presley seems to fall upon them and they are transformed right before your eyes into rollicking, unabashed, sensuous hard rockers. Before the event is over, you will hear them boast. "We are going to take Jesus where the church never goes. Into bars, secular concerts, MTV! We are praying God will give us the ear of the world. We want to get the same crowd the world gets."

If I am to believe what Jesus said - they would be stoned with tomatoes and hooted off the stage by that worldly bunch - that is, if they truly ministered in the Spirit. The more they sang for Jesus, the more they would be hated and despised. Gospel singers who are being praised and accepted by the world have lost the presence of Jesus - the very thing that causes rejection. the gospel of Jesus Christ is an offence to the Jew and foolishness to the Gentile.

The Laodicean Lie Includes Rejection of Christ's Sudden, Imminent Return.

Can you believe what they are now preaching? They are saying, "Jesus can't come until we subdue the earth. He can't come until we take dominion and bring Him back to a world we have brought into submission." They mock the idea of an imminent, unexpected return of Christ.

Jesus says it is *"an evil servant"* who sayeth in his heart, *"My Lord delayeth His coming."* (MATT 24:48).

This kind of teaching is a direct result of spiritual declension, lukewarmness and weariness with cross-bearing. Where love for Jesus is on fire, there is a longing for His soon return - there is a yearning **"to be with Him, to behold His glory!"** But now, because sin abounds, the love of many waxes cold; self-sacrifice and self-denial are repudiated; and the church runs off to seek honour and power of this world.

They now scoff at the idea of believers being *"Changed in the twinkling of an eye."* (1.COR 15:51,52). They have put the coming of the Lord into the remote future and their primary concern is not what Christ is doing, but what the church is doing. The present interest is not internal, but external - to gather in new members, to grow in influence and to set up an earthly kingdom.

Jesus said, *"Behold, I come quickly."* (REV 21:12). Paul wrote, *"For yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night... but ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief..."* (1.THESS 5:2,4). Peter also confirmed the Lord's sudden return: *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night."* (2.PET 3:10).

Jesus warned the church at Sardis to be ever watchful and expectant - and to repent, or be caught unawares. *"Hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come to thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."* (REV 3:1-3).

Why should any Christian watch and be on alert if Christ's coming is put off to some remote hour? Are we going to believe modern,

lukewarm preachers, or will we rest our faith on what Jesus said, *"Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh..."* (MATT 24:44).

Jesus warned us, *"Be on the alert, for you do not know the day or the hour."* (MATT 25:13 NAS). That is the way New Testament, apostolic Christians lived in the first century. They shared Paul's intense desire *"...to depart and be with the Lord."* They were busy doing the Lord's work, occupying and obeying His commands - but like Abraham, they looked for a city whose builder and maker is God.

The kingdom, dominion preachers spiritualise everything having to do with Christ's soon return. But how do you spiritualise this most practical commandment of Jesus - *"Therefore, be on alert - for you do not know when the Master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midday, at cockcrowing, or in the morning - lest He come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all, Be on the alert!"* (MK 13:35-37 NAS)?

The crown of righteousness which the Judge will give on that day is reserved only for **"THEM THAT LOVE HIS APPEARING!"** (2.TIM 4:8). I ask you, do you anticipate His soon return? Do you yearn for it? Is His coming to gather His elect still your hope? It was for Paul, who wrote, *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."* (TITUS 2:13).

The very last words of Jesus in the Bible are, *"Surely, I come quickly."* (REV 22:20). The Spirit and the bride say, *"Come!"* (REV 22:17). What do you say?

Who do you think it is that is putting doubts in the bride's mind about the soon return of her beloved? Who is it that seeks to get her mind earthbound - focused not on the glory of her Christ, but on her own dominion and place in this world? Who would make the bride to feel like a forsaken widow - abandoned by her Bridegroom because she is not yet assertive and domineering? Certainly not the Holy Spirit - because the Spirit

cries, *"Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"*

Has the Lord commanded His church to put off His coming and instead raise up an earthly kingdom of righteousness - or has He commanded us to put oil in our lamps, awaken, and get ready at any moment for His return? Let the Word answer that! *"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding: that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."* (LK 12:35,36). Then Christ added these words, *"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh find watching."* (LK 12:37). Why watch, why be alert, why gird up the loins, why be in a state of readiness, why look for it - if Christ's coming is put off into the remote future, awaiting the militant actions of the church?

The Lord knew what would happen to the church when it is said, "The Lord delayeth His coming." There would be carelessness; there would be eating and drinking, drunkenness; there would be urgency to prepare. *"But if that slave says in his heart, My master will be a long time in coming, and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him, and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers. And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes..."* (LK 12:45-47 NAS).

Such ignorance of her real spiritual condition is possible to the church only when the Holy Spirit has been grieved and His voice silenced. If the Spirit of God cannot speak, they cherish their delusions, and become obsessed with pride and become arrogant and boastful when the judgements of God are about to break forth.

Thank God, there is a sanctified, separated remnant hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit, and they cannot be deceived or caught unawares. They are the watchmen

who have detected the wiles of the enemy; they are bold to expose the frothy doctrines of demons. Those who hear what the Spirit is saying know what the Lord is about to do. they see the gathering storm - they hear the approaching thunder - they know God is already judging the house of God and their nation in particular.

The Laodicean church has self-elected itself, without any guidance of the Holy Ghost, not to light the world, but to due it. She has become the greatest teacher of lies in the universe. She is confident of her own strength and wisdom, while mingling anti-Christ falsehoods with the truth of the gospel. She has decided to break down the great distinction Christ put between the church and the world.

We Must Cleave to the Apostles' Concept of Christ's Kingdom.

The apostles saw in the supernatural person of the King a foreshadowing of the greatness and glory of His kingdom (2. Peter 1:16). As the incarnate Son of God, and having all power in heaven and earth, His kingdom though on earth could not be compared with earthly kingdoms. Its symbol was the Holy City, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. And, as the King was a man raised from the dead and made immortal, and so could be God's perfect ruler through all ages, so must all those be who would be His helpers in the administration of His rule. His kings and priests must be made like unto Him; and only under such a heavenly government could a perfect social order be established, and all nations dwell in peace under His sway.

The apostles always distinguished clearly between the Lord's present priestly work in heaven, beginning at His ascension, and His future kingly work on earth. He has gone to the Father to be made the great High Priest, ever interceding in the most holy place. When this work of intercession should be finished, and the church, His body, gathered and perfected, then and only then would He come forth to seat Himself upon the throne of His glory and begin His work as Judge and King (MATT 25:31). At His

ascension, He was invested with all authority, but His present exercise of it is providential and unseen. His authority even now is supreme - though the world has not yet known or recognised Him as the King. The sphere of His visible rule is now in the church itself, where His will is made known by the Spirit in the choosing of its ministers, and in its whole administration. Not until He returns and takes the Kingdom is His rule over the nations revealed, and all human rulers recognise Him as the source of all their authority. Then He "...takes to Himself His great power, and reigns." Till that time the church must be in the world as He was in it, its divine claims not recognised, rejected, and exposed to enmity and reproach. Not till He enters upon His kingly office can the church reign with Him.

This is the apostolic concept of Christ's kingdom. This differs greatly with those who teach that Christ commissioned the church to administer the kingdom in His absence, and to bring all nations under obedience - to bring Him back as King to a world in which all enemies are already put under His feet. They teach that Christ can return only after all nations believe in Him and righteousness and peace fill all the earth. This is a radical departure from what the apostles taught.

Rome fully developed this doctrine of dominion centuries ago. It was formulated by Augustine in his "City of God." The church then laid claim to rule in Christ's behalf in His absence. They carried the teaching through to its logical conclusion by asserting the absolute supremacy of its bishop - the Pope.

When first love grows cold and the return of the Lord indefinitely delayed, the Laodiceans become weary of cross-bearing and begin to ask, "Are not these disheartening words of the Lord and of the apostles to be limited to their own day? Is this hostility of the world to the church to continue to the end? How is this consistent with its heavenly mission and its gospel of love? Has He not said that the gospel should be as leaven leavening the meal, and as a mustard seed growing up into a

tree? Did He not say that "*all power is now Mine*"? Does He not call Himself "*the Prince of the kings of the earth*"? Must not the strong man, Satan, be bound before we can spoil his goods? And when in the fourth century Constantine, the Roman emperor, became a believer and Christianity had the Imperial power behind it, it become almost the universal belief that the day of suffering and persecution was past. From all Christian quarters the jubilant cry went up, "Satan is bound; the day of triumph is come; Christ is reigning through His church!" Now the prophecy can have their fulfilment: "*All nations will come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising.*" What a delusion it proved to be!

The Laodiceans do not recognise Satan as god of this world!

There is a practical denial of the power of Satan as "*the prince of this world.*" They cannot deny his existence, for it has been most clearly testified to by the Lord and the apostles. Nor can they say that his power has been overthrown and that he is no longer to be feared. St. Paul called him "*the god of this world*" (2.COR 4:4), and St. John said, "*the world lieth in the wicked one*" (1.JN 5:19 RIV). In the Revelation (12:3), he appears under the symbol of the dragon as the active enemy of God and of His Christ, and this down to the overthrow of the antichrist, and till he himself is bound (Revelation 19:20). But in spite of all these clear declarations and the continued recognition of various forms of Satanic activity in individuals, the Laodiceans now say, "Satan no longer reigns: he is bound; he can offer no effectual opposition to our unity or to our missionary activity and to our establishing the kingdom." There is little agreement as to the time when he was bound. They argue, "How can the kingdom of God be set up as long as Satan and his angels still have their power in the earth?"

Believing they are no longer exposed to the attacks of this subtle and powerful adversary, they see no need for special watchfulness. the strong man being bound, the church can

securely spoil his goods; being cast out of the earth, the church can now take possession of it. What a subtle perversion of truth!

With incredible arrogance, they boast that her bishops can even now take their places among the princes of the earth. The church ceases to be a pilgrim and stranger; she is the bride of the Ruler in heaven, exalted to sit with Him in His throne, the world is to be subject to her and therefore all distinctions and honours belong to her leaders as the nobles of the King. what arrogance!

**Christ's Kingdom Never Has -
and Never Will Be - "of this
world!"**

Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world... my kingdom is not from thence..."* (JN 18:36). that settles it for me, as it should for all

believers who tremble at His Word.

As for me, I choose to be seated with Christ in heavenly places, and to be among those Enoch prophesied about, *"Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of saints."* (JUDE 14).

The Laodiceans can have this present world and all its kingdoms and glory. It is destined to burn, according to Peter. *"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto the fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men."* (2.PET 3:7). How clear can it be? *"The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."* (2.PET 3:10).

Let the overcoming church proclaim with Peter, *"We, according to*

His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2.PET 3:13).

Church of Jesus Christ - let no man deceive you concerning our Lord's return! Draw comfort from our Lord's promise: *"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of god: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord... Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* (1.THESS 4:16-18).

By David Wilkerson

Copyright © by World Challenge, Lindale Texas

CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES INTERNATIONAL, P.O. BOX 888, COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450, AUSTRALIA