

ENCOUNTERING JESUS AT

LAODICEA



A study of Revelation 3:14–22

by Scott Griswold

Dearest Laodicea,

I'm writing to any of you who are in some way like an angel to your church, a messenger who loves your church and wants to see it alive, on-fire, and in a close relationship with Me.

I am yours truly, the "Amen," your True Witness, writing as honestly as I can to show you what's gone wrong with you, My people. Don't be afraid, because I'm also your Faithful Witness; faithful to the death to find a way to fix every failure and sin.

Besides this, I write to you as the Originator of the creation of God. Since I made the whole world, I can surely remake your heart and our church into a beautiful new creation.

I have been looking carefully at your actions, taste-testing as it were. You are not a hot cup of tea or a cold soda. You are so middle-of-the-road lukewarm that I actually am overcome with nauseousness to the point that I'm about to throw up. I know it sounds awful, and I really want to keep you close to Me, but I'm about to lose you if something doesn't change.

The reason I'm so disturbed is because you think everything is fine, when you are in serious danger. It's like you're living in a dreamland of luxury and don't even know you're a naked and blind beggar, lying along the road, about to die. You say you are a child of the King, but you are bankrupt of love and faith.

Please, please listen to My counsel. I'm Your Heavenly Merchant, stopping by to sell you golden faith that works by love. I also have a gorgeous white outfit I made Myself. It's My best work, My character of love to cover you with a perfect fit.

Can you see how beautiful My merchandise is? Maybe not yet. Here's one more thing I'd like to sell you. It's eyesalve for your crusted-over eyes. It's the Holy Spirit speaking through My Word, and it will open for your view everything else I want to do for you.

It's because I love you so much that I'm telling you how things really are. You truly can buy all these things if with all your heart you turn in repentance and give Me yourself.

I'm not put off by your situation. I'm actually standing at the door of your heart, knock, knock, knocking. I'd really like to sit down and eat together, talk and share everything, but you'll have to turn the handle and invite Me in.

One last thing. Do you remember how I had to face a lot of battles with the enemy? Through dependence on My Father and by using God's word, I overcame and now I'm sitting right next to Him on His throne. You can do the very same thing. And guess what. When you take My victory and win these battles, I have saved a seat right next to Me just for you.

I close My love letter to you with an earnest appeal: Read it over and over. Listen carefully; the Spirit is calling every church member. We're calling you.

Love,

Jesus

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INTRODUCTION

A Letter from Jesus for the End-time Church

Do you sometimes feel disappointed with your church? Does it feel sleepy, lukewarm, maybe even a bit worldly? Do you sometimes worry about the same in yourself? Are you longing for a rejuvenating spirit to sweep over you and the church, fanning these feeble lights into a vibrant relationship with Jesus and into a blazing movement that will take the gospel to the whole world?

Jesus asked His disciple John to dictate a letter to the church called Laodicea 2,000 years ago. It is the last of seven letters to seven churches that Jesus shared with John in Revelation 2 and 3. Many people view these letters as a prophecy of what God's people would look like through the centuries from John's time to the very last days, starting with the first church and ending with the seventh.

In the mid-1800s, thousands of Christians devoted themselves to the cause of preparing themselves and others for the return of Jesus. The Advent movement was born, which later was organized as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At first, they saw themselves as the sixth of the seven churches, the devoted, love-filled Philadelphia Church. They viewed the nominal Protestant churches as Laodicea. However, shortly after the movement was born, James and Ellen White and other founders of the church saw that many people were

losing their zeal for God and their self-sacrificing love for people [1]. They became convinced that God's final people had moved into the stage of the last church, being lukewarm Laodicean. They earnestly began to warn people to respond to Jesus' loving and urgent message because of the great danger of being personally lost and prolonging His return.

These pioneers recognized that Jesus must know exactly what His people would need right before He returns. They saw that the message to Laodicea had the perfect instruction needed for the revival that would lead the churches to be on fire with the love and faith necessary to finish the Great Commission. The following quotes by Ellen White show clearly why this letter to Laodicea is so important for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which will lead to the readiness of God's people for Jesus' return and the proclamation, the Loud Cry, of the gospel message to the entire world.

The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.

Christ is spoken of as walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Thus is symbolized His relation to the churches. He is in constant communication with His people. He knows their true state. He observes their order, their piety, their devotion. Although He is high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on the earth. With untiring wakefulness and unremitting vigilance, He watches to see whether the light of any of His sentinels is burning dim or

[1] See *The Only Hope*, by Felix A. Lorenz, Teach Services, Inc., 2006.

going out. If the candlesticks were left to mere human care, the flickering flame would languish and die; but He is the true watchman in the Lord's house, the true warden of the temple courts. His continued care and sustaining grace are the source of life and light (*The Acts of the Apostles*, 585-586).

The Laodicean message is applicable to the church at this time. Do you believe this message? Have you hearts that feel? Or are you constantly saying, We are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing? Is it in vain that the declaration of eternal truth has been given to this nation to be carried to all the nations of the world? God has chosen a people and made them the repositories of truth weighty with eternal results. To them has been given the light that must illuminate the world. Has God made a mistake? Are we indeed His chosen instrumentalities? Are we the men and women who are to bear to the world the messages of Revelation fourteen, to proclaim the message of salvation to those who are standing on the brink of ruin? Do we act as if we were?

In a clear, determined voice the messenger said, "I ask you what you are doing? O that you could comprehend! O that you could understand the importance of the warning and what it means to you and to the world! If you did understand, if you were filled with the spirit of the One who gave His life for the life of the world, you would cooperate with Him, making earnest, self-sacrificing efforts to save sinners."

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4). A great awakening must come to the church. If we only knew, if we only understood, how quickly the spirit of the message would go from church to church. How willingly would the possessions of believers be given to support the

work of God. God calls upon us to pray and watch unto prayer....The light must go forth as a lamp that burneth. Those who bear the message to the world should seek the Lord earnestly, that His Holy Spirit may be abundantly showered upon them. You have no time to lose. Pray for the power of God, that you may work with success for those nigh and afar off” (*Selected Messages*, Volume 1, 92).

This fearful message will do its work. When it was first presented, it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed, and the people of God were stirred everywhere. Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel. But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message. I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. It is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel. As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God. Angels were sent in every direction to prepare unbelieving hearts for the truth. The cause of God began to rise, and His people were acquainted with their position. If the counsel of the True Witness had been fully heeded, God would have wrought for His people in greater power. Yet the efforts made since the message has been given, have been blessed of God, and many souls have been brought from error and darkness to rejoice in the truth.

God will prove His people. Jesus bears patiently with them, and does not spew them out of His mouth in a moment. Said the angel: “God is weighing His people” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 186).

One day at noon I was writing of the work that might have been done at the last General Conference if the men in positions of trust had followed the will and way of God. Those who have had great light have not walked in the light. The meeting was closed, and the break was not made. Men did not humble themselves before the Lord as they should have done, and the Holy Spirit was not imparted. I had written thus far when I lost consciousness, and I seemed to be witnessing a scene in Battle Creek.

We were assembled in the auditorium of the Tabernacle. Prayer was offered, a hymn was sung, and prayer was again offered. Most earnest supplication was made to God. The meeting was marked by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The work went deep, and some present were weeping aloud.

One arose from his bowed position and said that in the past he had not been in union with certain ones and had felt no love for them, but that now he saw himself as he was. With great solemnity he repeated the message to the Laodicean church: “‘Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’ In my self-sufficiency this is just the way I felt,” he said. “‘And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ I now see that this is my condition. My eyes are opened. My spirit has been hard and unjust. I thought myself righteous, but my heart is broken, and I see my need of the precious counsel of the One who has searched me through and through. Oh, how gracious and compassionate and loving are the words, ‘I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.’” Revelation 3:17, 18.

The speaker turned to those who had been praying, and said: “We have something to do. We must confess our sins, and humble our hearts before God.” He made heartbroken confessions and then stepped up to several of the brethren, one after another, and extended his hand, asking forgiveness. Those to whom he spoke sprang to their feet, making confession and asking forgiveness, and they fell upon one another's necks, weeping. The spirit of confession spread through the entire congregation. It was a Pentecostal season. God’s praises were sung, and far into the night, until nearly morning, the work was carried on.

The following words were often repeated, with clear distinctness: “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.” Verses 19, 20. No one seemed to be too proud to make heartfelt confession, and those who led in this work were the ones who had influence, but had not before had courage to confess their sins.

There was rejoicing such as never before had been heard in the Tabernacle. Then I awoke from my unconsciousness, and for a while could not think where I was. My pen was still in my hand. The words were spoken to me: ‘This might have been. All this the Lord was waiting to do for His people. All heaven was waiting to be gracious.’ I thought of where we might have been had thorough work been done at the last General Conference, and agony of disappointment came over me as I realized that what I had witnessed was not a reality” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 8, 104-106, written in 1903).

Let's make this dream a reality. Let's dig deep to study and experience Jesus' love and salvation on a whole new level. Let's partner with Him to prepare for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit so we can soon be part of the Loud Cry and the coming of Jesus. Let's give Jesus the joy of seeing us change from lukewarm to on-fire with love and devotion to Him.

Written by Scott Griswold

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LESSON 1

The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness

Small Group Connector: Describe a friend you have had who was willing to tell you the truth about yourself rather than just compliment you to make you feel good and how that helped you.

In the seven letters in Revelation 2 and 3, Jesus reveals Himself differently to each of the churches in a way that perfectly matches what that church needs. Let's begin our study of Jesus' love letter to Laodicea by a quick glance at their problems and how Jesus is first described.

1. Read Revelation 3:14-22. What are Laodicea's problems?

2. Jesus describes the members of Laodicea as stumbling around blind and naked, in such a lukewarm stupor that they do not even know they are miserable and poverty-stricken. Jesus is so affected by the wretchedness of their situation that He is sick to His stomach to the point of throwing up. Read the following quotes by Ellen White to gain a clearer understanding of what it means to be lukewarm:

The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to our condition. How plainly is pictured the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the

Word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervor of the love of God is wanting in their hearts, but it is this very fervor of love that makes God's people the light of the world....

Here is represented a people who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God; and still He has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted His grace, abused His privileges, slighted His opportunities, and have been satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, hollow formalism, and hypocritical insincerity (*Selected Messages*, Volume 1, 357).

As I have of late looked around to find the humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, my mind has been much exercised. Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are becoming conformed to this world and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since separated. The words addressed to the Laodicean church describe their present condition perfectly (*Early Writings*, 107).

The message to the church of the Laodiceans applies especially to the people of God today. It is a message to professing Christians who have become so much like the world that no difference can be seen (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 959).

In what ways do think this matches your congregation and other Seventh-day Adventist churches?

3. In each lesson we will look closely at different descriptions of Jesus through which He presents Himself and the resources He has for Laodicea. Read Revelation 3:14. We usually think of “Amen” as a word to finish our prayers. However, Jesus used that word many times in a slightly different way that is often translated “truly, truly,” “verily, verily,” or “most assuredly.” Read some of the examples of this in John 8:34-36, 51, and 58. Why do you think Jesus takes the word He uses when speaking important things and turns it into a name by which He wants Laodicea to know Him?

4. Jesus taught many truths about His Father and about the abundant life He came to bring. Read John 14:6. What does it mean to you that Jesus is the truth?

5. Paul also spoke of the truth in Jesus. Look for the connections to the Laodicean message as you read Ephesians 4:17-24. In what ways is the truth as it is in Jesus a part of the solution for Laodicea’s lukewarm and compromised ways?

Here in Ephesians the truth in Jesus is much more than pointing out the darkness of a person’s worldliness. The truth as it is in Jesus is that He gives us power to put off our old ways, be completely renewed, converted, and become a new creation, righteous and holy.

In Revelation 3:14 Jesus is not only described as the Amen who tells us like it is, but also as the faithful and true witness. A witness serves in the court when judgment is taking place. This matches the name Laodicea. The name goes way back into Greek mythology. It was used for one of the daughters mentioned in Homer’s epic poem, *The Iliad*. The city where this church existed likely got its name

because it was founded by one of the rulers of the Seleucid dynasty, who likely named it after his mother, Laodice. The name Laodicea combines two words: *lao*, meaning people; and *dike*, meaning just or a judicial decision. Some people take it to mean the title, “Justice of the People.” Others say it implies “the people ruling” or “law-abiding people.” This specific church called Laodicea thinks they are law-abiding, while in reality they are a people under Jesus’ judgment [2].

6. Revelation 19:11 is the one other place in the Bible which calls Jesus both “faithful” and “true.” What is the context of this description of Jesus?

7. Read Revelation 3:14-17 again. As Jesus tells Laodicea how things truly are, what consequences does He say will happen if they don’t change?

Most translations make Jesus’ words sound very harsh: “I will vomit you out of My mouth!” However, the New International Version says, “I’m about to spit you out of My mouth.” This implies that there is still hope. We typically do not want to vomit and try to find a way to calm our stomachs, so we don’t have to have that awful experience. As we examine the whole letter, we can see that this is exactly Jesus’ attitude—He is doing everything He can to keep from losing His people. He counsels, rebukes, and knocks so He can come in and help. Ellen White added this encouragement about Laodicea:

[2] The following are some examples of the interpretation of the meaning of Laodicea’s name: “Tried by the people” <https://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Laodicea.html> “The people ruling” <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/248/Laodicea.html> “Justice of the People” <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g2993/kjv/tr/0-1/> “People of justice or law-abiding people” <https://www.denizlihotel.com/laodicea-on-the-lycus-turkey/>

Yet the case of those who are rebuked is not a hopeless one; it is not beyond the power of the great Mediator (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 966).

8. It is difficult for us to think of a witness who speaks in a courtroom as actually being on our side. It can be frightening to think of the judgment when we know there is a lot of sin on our records. Read 1 Corinthians 11:32. What do you find in this text which affirms that Jesus, as our witness in the judgment, is actively working to save us?

9. While Revelation 3:14 describes Jesus as the Amen, and the True Witness, who does His best to help us see our dangerous lukewarm condition, it also describes Him as the Faithful Witness. Read Hebrews 2:17-18. What do these verses say Jesus has gone through in order to be a faithful high priest who can help us when we are tempted?

10. Jesus faced every temptation as a human like us, yet lived an amazing life of love and righteousness. This reality can give us tremendous hope to believe we can become like Him and overcome. Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. Paul warns those who think they are standing securely, like the Laodiceans, to watch out or they will fall into temptation. What does he say God is faithful to do for such people?

11. Many believe the Laodicean church, as the last of the seven churches, symbolizes the final era of the Christian church that lives during the judgment in heaven and must be ready for the coming of Jesus. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24. What will God, in His

faithfulness, do for the people who are looking to Him for help at the end of time?

12. The Greek word for witness is *martus*, from which we get the word “martyr.” It is already used in this way in the New Testament in some places like Revelation 2:13 and 11:3. Read Revelation 1:4-6. What encouragement for lukewarm Laodiceans do these words have about Jesus, the Faithful Witness who became a martyr for them?

13. Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- In what ways do you feel lukewarm, compromised, and Laodicean?
- How does knowing Jesus as the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness give you courage in the face of your temptations?
- What can you do this week to cooperate with Jesus in moving yourself and others from lukewarm to on-fire for Jesus?

14. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 2

The Beginning of the Creation of God

Small Group Connector: Describe someone you know who you think is on-fire for God.

1. Read Revelation 3:14-22. Contrast the character and life of Jesus with the attitudes and lifestyle of lukewarm Laodicea. What do you think it means to be lukewarm and what does it look like to be on-fire hot?

Let's look closely at another description of Jesus. Verse 14 reads "the Beginning of the creation of God." At first glance this sounds odd. Other translations help to clarify the meaning including "the Origin of the creation of God" (NASB), "the Origin of God's creation" (NRSV), and "the ruler of God's creation" (NIV). These translations match the meaning of the Greek word *arche*, which by definition is "that by which anything begins to be, the origin, the active cause."

2. Read Colossians 1:15-18. This passage also describes Jesus as the beginning (*arche*). What do these verses teach about Jesus in relation to the creation of the world?

3. Read Jeremiah 32:17. How does your belief that Jesus created everything and sustains your life impact the way you think, feel, and live?

4. Psalm 33:6, 8-9. What do these verses teach about the speed and power of God's spoken word?

5. Read Mark 1:40-42. How does this story impact you as you consider Jesus' heart towards an apparently impossible and sickening situation and His ability to immediately transform this leper?

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13. Paul was so excited about the response of the believers in Thessalonica that he could not stop thanking God for them. What did they believe about God's word compared to what a human's word can do?

7. Read the following quote to consider further Laodicea's great need for the creative power of God:

Christ's plan is the only safe one. He declares, "Behold, I make all things new." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Christ gives man no encouragement to think that He will accept a patchwork character, made up mostly of self, with a little of Christ. This is the condition of the Laodicean church. At first there seems to be some of self and some of Christ. But soon it is all of self and none of Christ. The root of selfishness is revealed. It continues to grow, striking its roots deeper and deeper, till its branches are covered with objectionable fruit. Christ looks with

pitying tenderness on all who have combination characters. Those with such a character have a connection with Christ so frail that it is utterly worthless (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 6, 1101).

The same powerful word of God that created the universe and made a leper's skin beautifully clean can create a completely new heart in a selfish sinner. Read Ephesians 2:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:17. In what ways have you experienced the creative power of God's word to give you a new heart and life?

8. The promises of God are backed by the very creative energy of God to make them happen. Read 1 Peter 1:2-4. What are some Bible promises that are really important to you in the face of your temptations and struggles?

9. In Revelation 3:21 Jesus promises the Laodicean church that if they will overcome as He overcame, they will sit with Him on His Father's throne. Read Matthew 4:3-4. How did Jesus overcome temptation?

10. Jesus not only used promises to overcome the enemy, He also used scriptural commands. Read Deuteronomy 30:11-14. What do these verses say God's powerful word can do in our lives even through His commands?

11. Consider this quote:

The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the Word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the

soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature, and re-creates the soul in the image of God.

The life thus imparted is in like manner sustained. “By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” shall man live.

The mind, the soul, is built up by that upon which it feeds; and it rests with us to determine upon what it shall be fed. It is within the power of everyone to choose the topics that shall occupy the thoughts and shape the character (*Education*, 126).

12. Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- What are you spending time on that is keeping you lukewarm which you should replace with more time in God’s word?
- How has the good news about Jesus as the Origin of God’s creation encouraged you today?
- What can you do this week to cooperate with Jesus in moving yourself and others from lukewarm to on-fire for Jesus?

13. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 3

The Garment Seller

Small Group Connector: Describe a characteristic of Jesus that you especially appreciate, including a story from His life that illustrates it.

1. A child in a village may not notice the rags she wears if all the other children are dressed like her. The people of Laodicea think they are so well off that they don't need anything. Perhaps they have only been looking at each other like the children in the village. Read Revelation 3:17-18. What does Jesus, the Heavenly Merchantman, do to make them aware of their problems?

2. As Jesus the Heavenly Merchant reveals to us the beauty of His garments, gold, and eyesalve, we begin to feel our poverty and nakedness. Read Isaiah 6:1-5 and 64:6. How did Isaiah describe himself and any of his good deeds in comparison with God?

3. Read Genesis 3:6-11 and 21. What can we learn from the ways Adam and Eve responded when they realized they were naked and from the way God responded?

4. Read Isaiah 61:10. What did Isaiah call the garments that God can give us?

5. Read Zechariah 3:1-5. What does this passage teach us about how to go from being naked to having clothes on?

6. Read 1 John 1:9-2:2. What further meaning can you gather from these verses to fill out the picture of how we receive salvation.

7. Consider the following statement:

Every soul may say: ‘By His perfect obedience He has satisfied the claims of the law, and my only hope is found in looking to Him as my substitute and surety, who obeyed the law perfectly for me. By faith in His merits I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with His righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in Him who brings in everlasting righteousness. He presents me to God in the spotless garment of which no thread was woven by any human agent. All is of Christ, and all the glory, honor, and majesty are to be given to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world’” (*A New Life*, 27).

Now read Romans 4:5-8. What does it mean that God counts you righteous by faith?

8. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. What is especially meaningful to you about Jesus’ experience of becoming sin for us, bearing our shame and nakedness, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him?

9. Think deeply about the following quote:

Perfection through our own good works we can never attain. The soul who sees Jesus by faith, repudiates his own righteousness. He sees himself as incomplete, his repentance insufficient, his strongest faith but feebleness, his most costly sacrifice as meager, and he sinks in humility at the foot of the cross. But a voice speaks to him from the oracles of God's Word. In amazement he hears the message, "Ye are complete in Him" Now all is at rest in his soul. No longer must he strive to find some worthiness in himself, some meritorious deed by which to gain the favor of God" (*Faith and Works*, 107-108).

Read Romans 5:1-2. What kind of feelings can we expect to have as we focus our thoughts on the truth that we are declared justified only by grace through faith?

10. Read Revelation 19:7-8. Consider also this statement:

By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. To the church it is given "that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white," "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Rev. 19:8; Eph. 5:27. The fine linen, says the Scripture, "is the righteousness of saints." Rev. 19:8. It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, 310).

What are some areas in your life that you feel the need for Jesus' righteousness to be imparted, given to you?

11. For those of us who believe, God has promised to impute the righteousness of Christ, to put it on our accounts, covering up our debt of sin, forgiving us. He has also promised to impart the righteousness of Christ, bringing Jesus and all He is right into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Read Colossians 3:8-14. What kind of rags can we take off and what type of beautiful clothes can we put on as we surrender our old nature and become new creations by faith?

12. Read Job 29:14-17. How does Job describe his life after putting on a garment of righteousness?

13. Read Revelation 7:9-10, 13-14. What is our hope for having white robes?

14. Read this quote:

“The Laodicean message has been sounding. Take this message in all its phases and sound it forth to the people wherever Providence opens the way. Justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ are the themes to be presented to a perishing world”
(*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 964).

Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned in this study. Pray for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- What qualities of Jesus do you especially feel you lack and want more of?
- How has studying about Jesus as the Garment Seller encouraged you today?

- What could you do to spend more time with Jesus, thinking about who He is and what you can become?
- Who else can you encourage to do the same?

15. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 4

The Gold Merchant

Small Group Connector: Describe someone you know or have read about who you think is a person of great faith.

1. In Revelation 3:18 Jesus says, “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire.” Read 1 Peter 1:6-7. What does Peter say is more precious than refined gold?

2. Read Hebrews 11:6. Why do you think this kind of faith is the main thing that pleases God and is precious to Him like gold is to people?

3. Since Jesus is the One selling the gold to Laodicea, it is important to know what He taught and lived regarding faith. Read Matthew 21:21-22. What did Jesus say faith is able to do?

4. Read Matthew 8:5-11. What was it about the Roman centurion’s faith that Jesus thought was so great He had not seen any like it in all of Israel?

5. How would your life be different if you really prayed with faith and believed everything God's word says?

6. Read Matthew 6:28-30. What needs do you have in which you should trade your little faith for Jesus' big faith?

7. Not everything goes well just because we have faith. Jesus faced incredibly difficult times too. Read Matthew 8:23-27. Jesus had a big faith that could sleep in the middle of a storm. What storms are you facing in which you need to trust Him more?

8. We are often easily discouraged and worried. Read James 1:2-4. How can we better approach our difficulties in such a way that they refine our faith, like gold in the fire, to produce beautiful characteristics?

9. Galatians 5:6 speaks of a true faith that produces active love. Ellen White wrote:

The gold that Jesus would have us buy of Him is gold tried in the fire; it is the gold of faith and love, that has no defiling substance mingled with it" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

Read Hebrews 12:1-4. What does this passage teach us about how we can have Jesus' perfect faith even as we face great temptations and difficulties?

10. Consider the following quote:

Graces that endure the proofs of affliction and persecution, and evidence their soundness and sincerity, are the gold which is tried in the fire and found genuine. Christ offers to sell this precious treasure to man: “Buy of Me gold tried in the fire.” Verse 18. The dead, heartless performance of duty does not make us Christians. We must get out of a lukewarm condition and experience a true conversion, or we shall fail of heaven (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 478).

Jesus alone can give us this true conversion and He is even the source of the faith we need to be converted. Read Galatians 2:16, 20-21. How does faith bring salvation into our lives?

11. Read Romans 4:16-25. What can we learn from Abraham’s experience to help us understand how to trust God for salvation when we are discouraged and wonder if He can really save us from our sins?

12. Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned in this study, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- In what ways do you think you need to exchange your little faith for Jesus’ great faith?
- How has studying about Jesus as the Gold Merchant encouraged you today?

- Since Romans 10:17 says reading God's word can increase our faith, what will you do this week to move you towards having greater faith like Jesus?
- Who else can you encourage to break free from lukewarmness by sharing what you have been experiencing?

13. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 5

The Eye Doctor

Small Group Connector: Describe a time when you were really sick. Who and what helped you get better?

1. Read Revelation 3:17-18. In this lesson we will examine the meaning of eyesalve and try to understand Jesus' answer for spiritual blindness. What attitudes and actions would you say are typical of people who consider themselves Christians but are spiritually blind?
2. Read Matthew 23:23-26. What did Jesus describe as spiritual blindness?
3. Read 2 Peter 1:5-9. What kind of things does Peter say spiritually blind persons are missing and what have they forgotten?
4. Read 1 John 2:9-11. What did John teach about blindness?
5. From these texts we can see that spiritual blindness is a very serious situation representing a hypocrisy that thinly masks hatred

and a religiosity that neglects the most important characteristics of Christ-like justice, mercy, and faith. The Laodicean Church is blind to the beauty of the gold of faith which works by love and the priceless robe of Christ's righteousness.

Consider also the implications of these quotes:

The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of their disease (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 476).

The Lord knocks at the door of your heart, desiring to enter, that He may impart spiritual riches to your soul. He would anoint the blind eyes, that they may discover the holy character of God in His law, and understand the love of Christ (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

In what ways do you feel you need Jesus to further open your eyes?

6. Read 1 Corinthians 2:9-12. What does Paul say can open our eyes to see the good things God has given us?

7. Read John 16:7-13. What did Jesus promise the Holy Spirit would do for the world and for His disciples?

8. The Holy Spirit works in our hearts and minds to help us see Jesus' righteousness in contrast to our own sin. The Holy Spirit not only shows us our sin, He shows us the beautiful things we can become through God's power. He wakes us up to the seriousness of our situation.

The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. Upon its correct view of things the spiritual healthfulness of the whole soul and being depends. The 'eyesalve,' the Word of God, makes the conscience smart under its application; for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that the healing may follow, and the eye be single to the glory of God. The sinner, beholding himself in God's great moral looking glass, sees himself as God views him, and exercises repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

Read Proverbs 6:23. What else does God use to help us see clearly and how has this helped you grow?

9. Read Luke 18:9-14. In what ways is the Pharisee in Jesus' parable like the Laodicean church?

10. Read Isaiah 57:15. This verse describes the attitude of the tax collector who went home justified. Why is it that God can forgive and live with such people?

11. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12. This passage describes a type of blindness that will happen to those who do not love the truth. How can we cultivate a love for truth and correction?

12. The blindness to our own needs can also blind us to the desperate needs of people all around this. Read and reflect on this quote:

Opportunities are opening on every side. Press into every providential opening. Eyes need to be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve to see and sense their opportunities. God calls now for wide-awake missionaries. There are ways that will be presented before us. We are to see and understand these providential openings (*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, 130*).

13. Read Psalm 139:23-24. Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned in this study, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- What things in your life keep you from feeling your need day-by-day? Consider accomplishments, busyness, a good upbringing, doctrinal knowledge, etc.
- How has studying about Jesus as the Eye Doctor and the Holy Spirit as the eye salve encouraged you today?
- What is the Holy Spirit convicting you of today?
- Who else can you encourage to break free from lukewarmness by sharing what you have been experiencing?

14. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 6

The Heavenly Merchant

Small Group Connector: What is one thing you would really like to buy if you had plenty of money?

1. Read Revelation 3:18-19 and the following quote:

The great Redeemer represents Himself as a heavenly merchantman, laden with riches, calling from house to house, presenting His priceless goods” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

Jesus is selling the incredibly valuable goods of faith and love, the Holy Spirit’s convicting and healing power, and the robe of His own righteousness. Since we often say that these things come only as a gift of God’s grace, what do you think Jesus means when He tells poverty-stricken Laodicea to buy them?

2. Read Matthew 13:44-46 and the following quotes:

In the parable the pearl is not represented as a gift. The merchantman bought it at the price of all that he had. Many question the meaning of this, since Christ is represented in the Scriptures as a gift. He is a gift, but only to those who give

themselves, soul, body, and spirit, to Him without reserve. We are to give ourselves to Christ, to live a life of willing obedience to all His requirements. All that we are, all the talents and capabilities we possess, are the Lord's, to be consecrated to His service. When we thus give ourselves wholly to Him, Christ, with all the treasures of heaven, gives Himself to us. We obtain the pearl of great price....

There are some who seem to be always seeking for the heavenly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits. They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do not find the precious pearl. They have not overcome unholy ambition and their love for worldly attractions. They do not take up the cross and follow Christ in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. Almost Christians, yet not fully Christians, they seem near the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot enter there. Almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 116-118).

What further insights do these two parables teach about Jesus’ invitation to buy from Him?

3. Since we are so spiritually poor, all we have to buy with is our sinful self. Read Matthew 16:24-26. What did Jesus say we must do in order to get to be with Him as His disciple and gain eternal life?

4. Read Mark 10:17-22. What did Jesus say was necessary for the rich young ruler to do in order to have eternal life?

5. Jesus loved this young man yet was willing to risk losing him by telling him that entrance into God's kingdom requires obeying God's commandments, not merely in form, but with a fully devoted life. Read Mark 10:23-27. In light of this high call to surrender, what do Jesus' words of encouragement to the disciples mean to you?

6. This focus on buying and obeying can make it appear that salvation is through our own works. Read Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-7. What does this passage teach about mercy and repentance in relation to buying salvation from God?

7. Read Acts 2:36-39. What did Peter say it was necessary to do in order to receive forgiveness and the Holy Spirit?

8. Read 2 Corinthians 7:10-11. What does true repentance look like?

9. Read Acts 5:31. In what ways is it encouraging to you that God has promised to give you this kind of repentance?

10. God has promised to give us faith, love and righteousness in exchange for our sin as we repent and surrender. He even gives us the ability to repent, helping us to hate sin and turn from it. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17, and 21. What has Jesus done to make it possible for us to live for God instead of for ourselves?

11. Jesus told the Laodicean church that “as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.” Read Hebrews 12:4-11. How does the knowledge of God’s deep love encourage you to want to repent?

12. Read Romans 2:4. Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned in this study, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- In what ways has God been especially good to you?
- What is the Holy Spirit convicting you to surrender?
- Who else can you encourage to break free from lukewarmness by sharing what you have been experiencing?

13. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 7

The Dearest Friend

Small Group Connector: What various things have you done in Bible study, prayer, Christian fellowship, or worship that especially helped you have a closer relationship with God?

1. Read Revelation 3:20. Consider also this quote:

Without Christ the heart of man is cold. But when one feels his need of the Sun of Righteousness; when he comes to Jesus, saying, Lord, I am sinful, unworthy, helpless; save me, or I perish, he is accepted in the Beloved, and his heart is warmed by the rays of divine love. By this sincere coming to Christ, he opens the door to him who has long been saying: “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.” He is accepted, and he knows what it means to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. God says, Let there be light; and there is light. The soul possesses an abiding Christ, who is the light of life (*The Youth’s Instructor*, September 28, 1899).

What do the various parts of Revelation 3:20 mean to you, specifically that Jesus knocks, that we open the door, and that He invites us to eat together?

2. Read John 15:4-5, 15-16. What do these verses tell you about the kind of relationship Jesus wants to have with you?

3. Some scholars believe that Revelation 3:20 is taken from chapter five of the book Song of Solomon and that the husband represents Christ and the bride represents the church. Read Ephesians 5:25-32. What else do these verses show about the kind of relationship Jesus has given everything to have with us?

4. Read Luke 10:38-42. What do you think Jesus wants to teach you from this story at this point in your life?

5. Consider the warnings in the following quote:

I saw that many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove. Others have evil tempers, selfish covetousness, to remove before they can open the door. Others have rolled the world before the door of their heart, which bars the door. All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in.

Oh, how precious was this promise, as it was shown to me in vision! "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Oh, the love, the wondrous love of God! After all our lukewarmness and sins He says: "Return unto Me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings." This was repeated by the angel a number of times. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings" (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 143).

What types of things have sometimes made it difficult for you to have a close relationship with God?

6. Read Philippians 3:7-10. What can we learn from what Paul felt was necessary to do in order to have an intimate and growing relationship with Jesus?

7. Mary had many things she had to leave behind in order to find the “one thing that is needful.” Martha had to learn that it is not just sin, but busyness and perhaps pride of accomplishment that can separate us. It sometimes feels very difficult to have a close relationship with God. Read Ephesians 2:11-13. What has Jesus done in order to make our hearts a place where He can live and have a close relationship with us?

8. Read Ephesians 3:16-19. What else does God do through the Holy Spirit so Christ can live in our hearts?

9. Read and reflect on this quote:

As our physical life is sustained by food, so our spiritual life is sustained by the word of God. And every soul is to receive life from God's word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another's mind. We should carefully study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His word. We should take one verse, and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which God has put in that verse for

us. We should dwell upon the thought until it becomes our own, and we know “what saith the Lord.”

In His promises and warnings, Jesus means me. God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that I by believing in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. The experiences related in God's word are to be my experiences. Prayer and promise, precept and warning, are mine. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. As faith thus receives and assimilates the principles of truth, they become a part of the being and the motive power of the life. The word of God, received into the soul, molds the thoughts, and enters into the development of character.

By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven (*The Desire of Ages*, 390-391).

In many cultures, eating together is primarily for family members and close friends. Jesus invited the Laodicean church, with all of their problems, to eat with Him. Read Jeremiah 15:16. What methods of Bible study or devotional habits have you tried that have helped you enjoy God’s word like a delicious meal?

10. Read the following quote, then reflect quietly on what you have learned in this study, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

The True Witness says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” Revelation 3:20. Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth (*The Desire of Ages*, 489).

He is not repulsed by scorn or turned aside by threatening, but continually seeks the lost ones, saying, “How shall I give thee up?” Hosea 11:8. Although His love is driven back by the stubborn heart, He returns to plead with greater force, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” The winning power of His love compels souls to come in (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 235).

It is the sinner himself who has barred the door. Will he take down the barriers? Will he unbolt the door? The locks are all on his side of the door, not on the Saviour’s side” (*The Review and Herald*, March 5, 1889).

- Is your relationship with God an obedient and intimate relationship?
- What, if anything, is blocking you from being closer to God?

- What can you do to grow in your relationship with Him?
- Who else can you encourage to break free from lukewarmness by sharing what you have been experiencing?

13. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

LESSON 8

The Conqueror

Small Group Connector: Share a struggle with a habit or attitude that you have experienced. Talk about what has helped you overcome, even if the victory is not yet complete.

1. Read Revelation 3:21. What do you think it means to overcome as Jesus did and to sit with Him on His throne?

2. Read Luke 4:1-4. How did Jesus overcome and how can this help you in the temptations you face?

3. Reflect on the following quotes:

In the wilderness of temptation, Christ passed over the ground where Adam fell. He began the work where the ruin began, and on the point of appetite He overcame the power of the evil one in our behalf. Satan left the field a vanquished foe, and no one is excused from entering the battle on the Lord's side, for there is no reason why man may not be an overcomer if he trusts in Christ. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (*Temperance*, 282).

In the name and strength of Jesus every youth may conquer the enemy today on the point of perverted appetite. My dear young friends, advance step by step, until all your habits shall be in harmony with the laws of life and health. He who overcame in the wilderness of temptation declares: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (*Temperance*, 190).

How does it affect your thinking and feelings to know that Jesus overcame the enemy in the same way that we can overcome?

4. The Bible gives us clear direction on what is right and wrong. More than that, God’s word also has His power behind it to create in us the ability to do what He promises and what He commands. Read 2 Peter 1:2-4. How have the knowledge of God and His promises helped you in your battles with temptation and sin?

5. Read 1 John 4:4 and 5:3-5. What does John say makes it possible for you to overcome the world?

6. Read the following quote:

Some, I saw, would gladly return. Others will not let this message to the Laodicean church have its weight upon them. They will glide along, much after the same manner as before, and will be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Those only who zealously repent will have favor with God.

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died

to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him.

It is our privilege to have faith and salvation. The power of God has not decreased. His power, I saw, would be just as freely bestowed now as formerly. It is the church of God that have lost their faith to claim, their energy to wrestle, as did Jacob, crying: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Enduring faith has been dying away. It must be revived in the hearts of God's people. There must be a claiming of the blessing of God. Faith, living faith, always bears upward to God and glory; unbelief, downward to darkness and death (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 144).

How does faith help people change their habits?

7. Read Hebrews 12:1-4. What are the results of focusing our attention on Jesus' victory?

8. Read James 4:4-10. What additional insights can you gain from these verses on how to overcome wrong desires and friendship with the world?

9. Read Hebrews 8:1-2, 6, and 10-12. What did Jesus do when He sat down at the right hand of God's throne?

10. Jesus works constantly to bring the New Covenant into our lives. He forgives us; He works to write His law right on our hearts and minds; He makes us His own people, with the hope of an

eternal relationship with Him! Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. As we are brought into the New Covenant with God, what privileges does He give us in His work?

11. Jesus promised the Laodicean church that they could join Him at His throne if they overcome. Read Revelation 7:9-17. What encouragement do these verses give you that help you want to be there and believe it is possible you will make it?

12. Over what do you think God is asking you to fully gain the victory as you wrestle with God regarding certain temptations and sins?

13. Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. Take a moment to reflect quietly on what you have learned in this study, praying for the Holy Spirit to convict you.

- What have you learned in this lesson that has given you greater wisdom and courage in the face of your temptations?
- What habit or attitude is God convicting you for which He wants to give you complete victory now?
- What steps will you take for greater victory?
- Who else can you encourage to break free from lukewarmness by sharing what you have been experiencing?

14. If you are in a small group, share anything you want to from your quiet reflections and pray for each other.

POSTSCRIPT

THE SPIRIT-SENDER

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Revelation 3:22).

The following is a collection of quotes by Ellen White arranged under the different phrases in Jesus’ message to the Laodiceans. May God guide us as we continue to study and respond to Jesus warning regarding our lukewarm condition and His perfect solution.

Why is this message so important?

“Oh, what a description! How many there are in this fearful condition. I earnestly entreat every minister to study diligently the third chapter of Revelation, for in it is portrayed the condition of things existing in the last days. Study carefully every verse in this chapter, for through these words Jesus is speaking to you” (*Manuscript Releases*, Volume 18, 193).

“The message to the Laodicean church affects every way, in every sense and every where. The church here is rising. God is working for us. We feel the necessity of working with energy. This message to the church calls for more than common efforts, on our own part. A deep interest in our own cases should we feel. We should afflict our souls on our own account, turn our eyes within and mourn and pray and beg for our salvation” (*Ellen White Letters and Manuscripts*, Volume 1, 514).

“Many, I saw, were flattering themselves that they were good Christians, who have not a single ray of light from Jesus. They know not what it is to be renewed by the grace of God. They have no living experience for themselves in the things of God. And I saw that the Lord was whetting His sword in heaven to cut them down. Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize the clean work that God is about to make among His professed people! Dear friends, do not deceive yourselves concerning your condition. You cannot deceive God. Says the True Witness: ‘I know thy works.’ The third angel is leading up a people, step by step, higher and higher. At every step they will be tested” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 189).

“Yet the case of those who are rebuked is not a hopeless one; it is not beyond the power of the great Mediator” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 966).

“This fearful message will do its work. When it was first presented, it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed, and the people of God were stirred everywhere. Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel. But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message. I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. It is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel. As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God. Angels were sent in every direction to prepare unbelieving hearts for the truth. The cause of God began to rise, and His people were acquainted with their position. If the counsel of the True Witness had been fully heeded, God would have wrought for His people in greater power. Yet the efforts made since the message has been given, have been blessed of God, and many souls have been brought from error and darkness to rejoice in the truth.

God will prove His people. Jesus bears patiently with them, and does not spew them out of His mouth in a moment. Said the angel: ‘God is weighing His people.’ If the message had been of as short duration as many of us supposed, there would have been no time for them to develop character. Many moved from feeling, not from principle and faith, and this solemn, fearful message stirred them. It wrought upon their feelings, and excited their fears, but did not accomplish the work which God designed that it should. God reads the heart. Lest His people should be deceived in regard to themselves, He gives them time for the excitement to wear off, and then proves them to see if they will obey the counsel of the True Witness” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 186).

“I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale, and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. Firmness and great earnestness was expressed in their countenances; large drops of perspiration fell from their foreheads. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God’s approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look would settle upon them.

Evil angels crowded around, pressing darkness upon them to shut out Jesus from their view, that their eyes might be drawn to the darkness that surrounded them, and thus they be led to distrust God, and murmur against Him. Their only safety was in keeping their eyes directed upward. Angels of God had charge over His people, and as the poisonous atmosphere of evil angels was pressed around these anxious ones, the heavenly angels were continually wafting their wings over them to scatter the thick darkness.

As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, to encourage their hearts, and light up their countenances. Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left these, and went to the aid of the

earnest, praying ones. I saw angels of God hasten to the assistance of all who were struggling with all their power to resist the evil angels, and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But His angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them.

I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people.

I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it, and be purified" (*Christian Experience and Teachings*, 176).

"One day at noon I was writing of the work that might have been done at the last General Conference if the men in positions of trust had followed the will and way of God. Those who have had great light have not walked in the light. The meeting was closed, and the break was not made. Men did not humble themselves before the Lord as they should have done, and the Holy Spirit was not imparted.

I had written thus far when I lost consciousness, and I seemed to be witnessing a scene in Battle Creek.

We were assembled in the auditorium of the Tabernacle. Prayer was offered, a hymn was sung, and prayer was again offered. Most earnest supplication was made to God. The meeting was marked by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The work went deep, and some present were weeping aloud.

One arose from his bowed position and said that in the past he had not been in union with certain ones and had felt no love for them, but that now he saw himself as he was. With great solemnity he

repeated the message to the Laodicean church: “‘Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’ In my self-sufficiency this is just the way I felt,’ he said. “‘And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ I now see that this is my condition. My eyes are opened. My spirit has been hard and unjust. I thought myself righteous, but my heart is broken, and I see my need of the precious counsel of the One who has searched me through and through. Oh, how gracious and compassionate and loving are the words, “‘I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.’” Revelation 3:17, 18.

The speaker turned to those who had been praying, and said: ‘We have something to do. We must confess our sins, and humble our hearts before God.’ He made heartbroken confessions and then stepped up to several of the brethren, one after another, and extended his hand, asking forgiveness. Those to whom he spoke sprang to their feet, making confession and asking forgiveness, and they fell upon one another's necks, weeping. The spirit of confession spread through the entire congregation. It was a Pentecostal season. God's praises were sung, and far into the night, until nearly morning, the work was carried on.

The following words were often repeated, with clear distinctness: ‘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.’ Verses 19, 20.

No one seemed to be too proud to make heartfelt confession, and those who led in this work were the ones who had influence, but had not before had courage to confess their sins.

There was rejoicing such as never before had been heard in the Tabernacle.

Then I aroused from my unconsciousness, and for a while could not think where I was. My pen was still in my hand. The words were spoken to me: ‘This might have been. All this the Lord was waiting to do for His people. All heaven was waiting to be gracious.’ I thought of where we might have been had thorough work been done at the last General Conference, and agony of disappointment came over me as I realized that what I had witnessed was not a reality.

God’s way is always the right and the prudent way. He always brings honor to His name. Man’s only security against rash, ambitious movements is to keep the heart in harmony with Christ Jesus. Man’s wisdom is untrustworthy. Man is fickle, filled with self-esteem, pride, and selfishness. Let the workers doing God’s service trust wholly in the Lord. Then the leaders will reveal that they are willing to be led, not by human wisdom, which is as useless to lean upon as is a broken reed, but by the wisdom of the Lord, who has said: ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.’ James 1:5, 6” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 8, 104-106, written in 1903).

How not to use the message

“When men arise, claiming to have a message from God, but instead of warring against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, they form a hollow square, and turn the weapons of warfare against the church militant, be afraid of them. They do not bear the divine credentials. God has not given them any such burden of labor. They would tear down that which God would restore by the Laodicean message. He wounds only that He may heal, not cause to perish. The Lord lays upon no man a message that will discourage and dishearten the church. He reproveth, He rebuketh, He chastens; but it is only that He may restore and approve at last. How glad my heart was made by the report from the General Conference that many hearts were softened and subdued, that many made humble confessions, and cleared away from the door of the heart the

rubbish that was keeping the Saviour out. How glad I was to know that many welcomed Jesus in as an abiding guest. How is it that these pamphlets denouncing the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon were scattered abroad everywhere, at the very time when that church was receiving the outpouring of the Spirit of God? How is it that men can be so deceived as to imagine that the loud cry consists in calling the people of God out from the fellowship of a church that is enjoying a season of refreshing? Oh, may these deceived souls come into the current, and receive the blessing, and be endued with power from on high” (*Testimonies to Ministers*, 22).

“Christ knows the spirit we cherish. The faithful Witness says, ‘I know thy works.’ [Revelation 3:15.] The thoughts of the heart are not hid from Him. And by our words and deeds we shall be judged in the last great day.

God will not vindicate any who, in associating with opposers to our faith or with our own brethren, manifest toward them a harsh, denunciatory spirit. Those who do this may appear to have a zeal for the truth, but it is not according to knowledge. To be unkind and denunciatory and to entertain evil thoughts and harsh, severe judgments is never the fruit of that wisdom which is from above, but it is the sure fruit of an unsanctified ambition, such as caused the condemnation of Jesus” (*Manuscript 11*, 1888).

“The design of the message to the Laodiceans was to rid the church of . . . fanatical influences; but the effort of Satan has been to corrupt the message, and destroy its influence. He would be better pleased to have fanatical persons embrace the testimony, and use it in his cause, than to have them remain in a lukewarm state. I have seen that it was not the design of the message to lead brother to sit in judgment over his brother, to tell him what to do, and just how far to go, but for each individual to search his own heart, and attend to his own individual work” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 962).

These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness

“Let only pleasant words be spoken by parents to their children, and respectful words by children to their parents. Attention must be given to these things in the home life; for if, in their character building, children form right habits, it will be much easier for them to be taught by God and to be obedient to His requirements.

Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, do not educate yourselves in the line of vulgarity of action, word, or thought. Coarse sayings, low jests, lack of politeness and true courtesy in the home life, will become as second nature to you and will unfit you for the society of those who are becoming sanctified through the truth. The home is too sacred a place to be polluted by vulgarity, sensuality, recrimination, and scandal. Silence the evil word; put away the unholy thought, for the True Witness weighs every word, sets a value on every action, and declares, ‘I know thy works’” (*Adventist Home*, 437-438).

“The True Witness declares: ‘I know thy works.’ The selfish, covetous heart will be tested. Some are not willing to devote to God a very small portion of the increase of their earthly treasure. They would start back with horror if you should speak of the principal. What have they sacrificed for God? Nothing. They profess to believe that Jesus is coming; but their works deny their faith. Every person will live out all the faith he has. Falsehearted professor, Jesus knows thy works. He hates your stinted offerings, your lame sacrifices” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 195).

I know your works, that you are neither hot nor cold

“It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had never named His name. They are a continual weight to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a stumbling block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home or abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 188).

“They are neither cold nor hot; they occupy a neutral position, and at the same time flatter themselves that they are in need of nothing. The True Witness hates this lukewarmness. He loathes the indifference of this class of persons. Said He: ‘I would thou wert cold or hot.’ Revelation 3:15. Like lukewarm water, they are nauseous to His taste. They are neither unconcerned nor selfishly stubborn. They do not engage thoroughly and heartily in the work of God, identifying themselves with its interests; but they hold aloof and are ready to leave their posts when their worldly personal interests demand it. The internal work of grace is wanting in their hearts; of such it is said: ‘Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ Verse 17” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 476).

“The message to the church of the Laodiceans applies especially to the people of God today. It is a message to professing Christians who have become so much like the world that no difference can be seen” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 959).

“The message to the Laodicean church is applicable to our condition. How plainly is pictured the position of those who think they have all the truth, who take pride in their knowledge of the Word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives. The fervor of the love of God is wanting in their hearts, but it is this very fervor of love that makes God’s people the light of the world....

Here is represented a people who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God; and still He has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted His grace, abused His privileges, slighted His opportunities, and have been

satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, hollow formalism, and hypocritical insincerity” (*Selected Messages*, Volume 1, 357).

“As I have of late looked around to find the humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, my mind has been much exercised. Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are becoming conformed to this world and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since separated. The words addressed to the Laodicean church describe their present condition perfectly” (*Early Writings*, 107).

“The Laodicean message is applicable to the church at this time. Do you believe this message? Have you hearts that feel? Or are you constantly saying, We are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing? Is it in vain that the declaration of eternal truth has been given to this nation to be carried to all the nations of the world? God has chosen a people and made them the repositories of truth weighty with eternal results. To them has been given the light that must illuminate the world. Has God made a mistake? Are we indeed His chosen instrumentalities? Are we the men and women who are to bear to the world the messages of Revelation fourteen, to proclaim the message of salvation to those who are standing on the brink of ruin? Do we act as if we were?

In a clear, determined voice the messenger said, ‘I ask you what you are doing? O that you could comprehend! O that you could understand the importance of the warning and what it means to you and to the world! If you did understand, if you were filled with the spirit of the One who gave His life for the life of the world, you would cooperate with Him, making earnest, self-sacrificing efforts to save sinners’”

‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him’ (1 John 2:4). A

great awakening must come to the church. If we only knew, if we only understood, how quickly the spirit of the message would go from church to church. How willingly would the possessions of believers be given to support the work of God. God calls upon us to pray and watch unto prayer. Cleanse your homes of the picture-idols which have consumed the money that ought to have flowed into the Lord's treasury. The light must go forth as a lamp that burneth. Those who bear the message to the world should seek the Lord earnestly, that His Holy Spirit may be abundantly showered upon them. You have no time to lose. Pray for the power of God, that you may work with success for those nigh and afar off" (*Selected Messages*, Volume 1, 92).

I could wish you were cold or hot

"The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state." (Revelation 3:15-21 is quoted).

Half-hearted Christians obscure the glory of God, misinterpret piety, and cause men to receive false ideas as to what constitutes vital godliness. Others think that they, also, can be Christians and yet consult their own tastes and make provision for the flesh, if these false-hearted professors can do so. On many a professed Christian's banner the motto is written, 'You can serve God and please self,— you can serve God and mammon.' They profess to be wise virgins, but not having the oil grace in their vessels with their lamps, they shed forth no light to the glory of God and for the salvation of men. They seek to do what the world's Redeemer said was impossible to do; he has declared, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' Those who profess to be Christians, but do not follow in the footsteps of Christ, make of none effect his words, and obscure the plan of salvation. By their spirit and deportment they virtually say, 'Jesus, in your day you did not understand as well as we do in our day, that man can serve God and mammon.' These professors of religion claim to keep the law of God, but they do not keep it. O, what would the standard of true manhood have become had it been left in the hands of man! God

has lifted his own standard,—the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; and the experience that follows complete surrender to God, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Everything that man touches with unholy hands and unsanctified intellect, even the gospel of truth, becomes, by the contact, contaminated. Man puts confidence in man, and makes flesh his arm, but all the work of man is of the earth, earthy” (*The Review and Herald*, August 19, 1890).

Because you are lukewarm, I will vomit you out of my mouth

“Love of self excludes the love of Christ. Those who live for self are ranged under the head of the Laodicean church who are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot. The ardor of the first love has lapsed into a selfish egotism. The love of Christ in the heart is expressed in the actions. If love for Christ is dull, the love for those for whom Christ has died will degenerate. There may be a wonderful appearance for zeal and ceremonies, but this is the substance of their self-inflated religion. Christ represents them as nauseating to His taste” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 962).

“The Laodicean message applies to all who profess to keep the law of God, and yet are not doers of it. We are not to be selfish in anything. Every phase of the Christian life is to be a representation of the life of Christ. If it is not, we shall hear the terrible words, ‘I know you not’” (*The Review and Herald*, October 17, 1899).

“Man’s judgment is partial, imperfect; but God estimates all things as they really are. The drunkard is despised and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven; while pride, selfishness, and covetousness too often go unrebuked. But these are sins that are especially offensive to God” (*Steps to Christ*, 30).

“To those who do not practice it, the Word of God is a dead letter. Christ says of such, ‘I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of

my mouth.’ He cannot present their case to the Father. If they realized that they were sinners, He could plead in their behalf, and the Lord would arouse them by His Holy Spirit. But they are worse than dead in trespasses and sins. They hear the Word, but make no application of it to themselves; instead, they apply the Word spoken to their neighbors” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 963).

“The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.

Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purposes of God and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls and for the souls of your fellow men. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 6, 408).

“But the counsel of the true Witness does not represent those who are lukewarm as in a hopeless case. There is yet a chance to remedy their state, and the Laodicean message is full of encouragement; for the backslidden church may yet buy the gold of faith and love, may yet have the white robe of the righteousness of Christ, that the shame of their nakedness need not appear. Purity of heart, purity of motive, may yet characterize those who are halfhearted and who are striving to serve God and mammon. They may yet wash their robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.

There is hope for our churches if they will heed the message given to the Laodiceans” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 966).

You are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked

“The Laodicean message must be proclaimed with power; for now it is especially applicable. Now, more than ever before, are seen pride, worldly ambition, self-exaltation, double-dealing, hypocrisy, and deception. Many are speaking great swelling words of vanity, saying, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’ Yet they are ‘miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked’” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 962).

“‘The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly;’ but where do we behold the true advent spirit? Who are preparing to stand in that time of temptation which is just before us? The people to whom God has entrusted the sacred, solemn, testing truths for this time are sleeping at their post. They say by their actions: We have the truth; we are ‘rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;’ while the True Witness declares: Thou ‘knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’

With what fidelity do these words portray the present condition of the church: ‘Knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ Messages of warning, dictated by the Holy Spirit, are borne by the servants of God, defects of character are presented before the erring; but they say: ‘That does not represent my case. I do not accept the message you bring. I am doing the best I can. I believe the truth’” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 5, 101).

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul-temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.

We are too easily satisfied with our attainments. We feel rich and increased with goods, and know not that we are ‘wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ Revelation 3:17. Now is the time to heed the admonition of the True Witness: ‘I counsel thee

to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.’ Verse 18” (*Christian Experience and Teaching*, 189).

Poor

“The message to the Laodicean church is highly applicable to us as a people.....You may manifest great zeal in missionary effort, and yet because it is corrupted with selfishness, and tastes strongly of self, it is naught in the sight of God; for it is a tainted, corrupted offering. Unless the door of the heart is open to Jesus, unless He occupies the soul temple, unless the heart is imbued with His divine attributes, human actions when weighed in the heavenly balances, will be pronounced ‘Wanting.’ The love of Christ would make you rich; but many do not realize the value of His love. Many do not realize that the spirit which they cherish is destitute of the meekness and lowliness of Christ, destitute of the love that would constitute them channels of light” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 961).

Blind

“Has not the Lord Jesus sent message after message of rebuke, of warning, of entreaty, to these self-satisfied ones? Have not His counsels been despised and rejected? Have not His delegated messengers been treated with scorn, and their words been received as idle tales? Christ sees that which man does not see. He sees the sins which, if not repented of, will exhaust the patience of a long-suffering God. Christ cannot take up the names of those who are satisfied in their own self-sufficiency. He cannot importune in behalf of a people who feel no need of His help, who claim to know and possess everything” (*Faith and Works*, 83).

“It is a fact that we have the truth, and we must hold with tenacity to the positions that cannot be shaken; but we must not look with suspicion upon any new light which God may send, and say, Really,

we cannot see that we need any more light than the old truth which we have hitherto received, and in which we are settled. While we hold to this position, the testimony of the True Witness applies to our cases its rebuke, ‘And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ Those who feel rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, are in a condition of blindness as to their true condition before God, and they know it not’ (*The Review and Herald*, August 7, 1894).

“The wares of heaven are offered to our churches. Every individual needs to have a decided interest in the invitation of Christ. Brethren and sisters, are your thoughts after this order? ‘These sharp, decided words do not mean me; I am in a fairly good condition spiritually, though I may not have all the fervor and zeal that some have. I believe the truth. Those to whom this message belongs may take it. I think some need it.’ You who think and reason thus, be assured that you are the very ones to whom this message belongs. While the costly wares of heaven are open before you, draw nigh and buy that which you have lost—the gold of love and faith, and the white raiment which is the righteousness of Christ” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 964).

“I have been shown that the greatest reason why the people of God are now found in this state of spiritual blindness is that they will not receive correction. Many have despised the reproofs and warnings given them. The True Witness condemns the lukewarm condition of the people of God, which gives Satan great power over them in this waiting, watching time. The selfish, the proud, and the lovers of sin are ever assailed with doubts. Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all

occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence” (Testimonies, Volume 3, 255).

Naked

“What is it that constitutes the wretchedness, the nakedness of those who feel rich and increased with goods?—It is the want of the righteousness of Christ. In their own righteousness they are represented as clothed with filthy rags, and yet in this condition they flatter themselves that they are clothed upon with Christ's righteousness. Could deception be greater?” (*The Review and Herald*, August 7, 1894)

“Christ’s plan is the only safe one. He declares, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ ‘If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.’ Christ gives man no encouragement to think that He will accept a patchwork character, made up mostly of self, with a little of Christ. This is the condition of the Laodicean church. At first there seems to be some of self and some of Christ. But soon it is all of self and none of Christ. The root of selfishness is revealed. It continues to grow, striking its roots deeper and deeper, till its branches are covered with objectionable fruit. Christ looks with pitying tenderness on all who have combination characters. Those with such a character have a connection with Christ so frail that it is utterly worthless” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 6, 1101).

“There are many among us who are prejudiced against the doctrines that are now being discussed. They will not come to hear, they will not calmly investigate, but they put forth their objections in the dark. They are perfectly satisfied with their position. ‘Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be

clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.’ This scripture applies to those who live under the sound of the message, but who will not come to hear it. How do you know but that the Lord is giving fresh evidences of his truth, placing it in a new setting, that the way of the Lord may be prepared? What plans have you been laying that new light may be infused through the ranks of God's people? What evidence have you that God has not sent light to his children? All self-sufficiency, egotism, and pride of opinion must be put away. We must come to the feet of Jesus, and learn of him who is meek and lowly of heart” (*The Review and Herald*, February 18, 1890).

I counsel you to buy from Me

“The great Redeemer represents Himself as a heavenly merchantman, laden with riches, calling from house to house, presenting His priceless goods” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

“Jesus is going from door to door, standing in front of every soul temple, proclaiming, ‘I stand at the door, and knock.’ As a heavenly merchantman, He opens His treasures and cries, ‘Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.’ The gold that He offers is without alloy, more precious than that of Ophir; for it is faith and love.

The white raiment He invites the soul to wear is His own robe of righteousness; and the oil for anointing is the oil of His grace, which will give spiritual eyesight to the soul in blindness and darkness, that he may distinguish between the workings of the Spirit of God and the spirit of the enemy. ‘Open your doors,’ says the great Merchantman, the possessor of spiritual riches, ‘and transact your business with Me. It is I, your Redeemer, who counsels you to buy of Me’” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

“In the parable the pearl is not represented as a gift. The merchantman bought it at the price of all that he had. Many question the meaning of this, since Christ is represented in the Scriptures as a gift. He is a gift, but only to those who give themselves, soul, body, and spirit, to Him without reserve. We are to give ourselves to Christ, to live a life of willing obedience to all His requirements. All that we are, all the talents and capabilities we possess, are the Lord's, to be consecrated to His service. When we thus give ourselves wholly to Him, Christ, with all the treasures of heaven, gives Himself to us. We obtain the pearl of great price.

Salvation is a free gift, and yet it is to be bought and sold. In the market of which divine mercy has the management, the precious pearl is represented as being bought without money and without price. In this market all may obtain the goods of heaven. The treasury of the jewels of truth is open to all. ‘Behold, I have set before thee an open door,’ the Lord declares, ‘and no man can shut it.’ No sword guards the way through this door. Voices from within and at the door say, Come. The Saviour's voice earnestly and lovingly invites us: ‘I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.’ Revelation 3:8, 18.

The gospel of Christ is a blessing that all may possess. The poorest are as well able as the richest to purchase salvation; for no amount of worldly wealth can secure it. It is obtained by willing obedience, by giving ourselves to Christ as His own purchased possession. Education, even of the highest class, cannot of itself bring a man nearer to God. The Pharisees were favored with every temporal and every spiritual advantage, and they said with boastful pride, We are ‘rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing’; yet they were ‘wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ Revelation 3:17. Christ offered them the pearl of great price; but they disdained to accept it, and He said to them, ‘The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.’ Matthew 21:31.

We cannot earn salvation, but we are to seek for it with as much

interest and perseverance as though we would abandon everything in the world for it.

We are to seek for the pearl of great price, but not in worldly marts or in worldly ways. The price we are required to pay is not gold or silver, for this belongs to God. Abandon the idea that temporal or spiritual advantages will win for you salvation. God calls for your willing obedience. He asks you to give up your sins. ‘To him that overcometh,’ Christ declares, ‘will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.’ Revelation 3:21.

There are some who seem to be always seeking for the heavenly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits. They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do not find the precious pearl. They have not overcome unholy ambition and their love for worldly attractions. They do not take up the cross and follow Christ in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. Almost Christians, yet not fully Christians, they seem near the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot enter there. Almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 116-118).

“We must buy,—we must ‘be zealous and repent’ of our lukewarm state” (*The Review and Herald*, September 4, 1883).

Gold refined in the fire

“The gold that Jesus would have us buy of Him is gold tried in the fire; it is the gold of faith and love, that has no defiling substance mingled with it” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

“The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire is faith and love. It makes the heart rich; for it has been purged until it is pure, and the more it is tested the more brilliant is its luster” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 476).

“Graces that endure the proofs of affliction and persecution, and evidence their soundness and sincerity, are the gold which is tried in the fire and found genuine. Christ offers to sell this precious treasure to man: ‘Buy of Me gold tried in the fire.’ Verse 18. The dead, heartless performance of duty does not make us Christians. We must get out of a lukewarm condition and experience a true conversion, or we shall fail of heaven” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 478).

“Lack of love and faith are the great sins of which God’s people are now guilty” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 3, 474).

“The gold mentioned by Christ the True Witness, which all must have, has been shown me to be faith and love combined, and love takes the precedence of faith” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 2, 36).

“The gold tried in the fire is faith that works by love. Only this can bring us into harmony with God. We may be active, we may do much work; but without love, such love as dwelt in the heart of Christ, we can never be numbered with the family of heaven” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 158).

“God bids you with one hand, faith, take hold of His mighty arm, and with the other hand, love, reach perishing souls” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 2, 170).

White raiment

“Discussions may be entered into by mortals strenuously advocating creature merit, and each man striving for the supremacy, but they simply do not know that all the time, in principle and character, they are misrepresenting the truth as it is in Jesus. They are in a fog of bewilderment. They need the divine love of God which is represented by gold tried in the fire; they need the white raiment of Christ’s pure character; and they need the heavenly eyesalve that they might discern with astonishment the utter worthlessness of creature merit to earn

the wages of eternal life. There may be a fervor of labor and an intense affection, high and noble achievement of intellect, a breadth of understanding, and the humblest self-abasement, laid at the feet of our Redeemer; but there is not one jot more than the grace and talent first given of God. There must be nothing less given than duty prescribes, and there cannot be one jot more given than they have first received; and all must be laid upon the fire of Christ's righteousness to cleanse it from its earthly odor before it rises in a cloud of fragrant incense to the great Jehovah and is accepted as a sweet savor" (*Faith and Works*, 23).

"The white raiment is the righteousness of Christ that may be wrought into the character. Purity of heart, purity of motive, will characterize every one who is washing his robe, and making it white in the blood of the Lamb" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

"The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience" (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 476).

"The Laodicean message has been sounding. Take this message in all its phases and sound it forth to the people wherever Providence opens the way. Justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ are the themes to be presented to a perishing world" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 964).

"It is the privilege of every earnest seeker for truth and righteousness, to rely upon the sure promises of God. The Lord Jesus makes manifest the fact that the treasures of divine grace are placed entirely at our disposal, in order that we may become channels of light. We cannot receive the riches of the grace of Christ without desiring to impart them to others. When we have the love of Christ in our hearts, we shall feel that it is our duty and privilege to communicate it. The

sun shining in the heavens, pours its bright beams into all the highways and by-ways of life. It has sufficient light for thousands of worlds like ours. And so it is with the Sun of Righteousness; his bright beams of healing and gladness are amply sufficient to save our little world, and are efficacious in establishing security in every world that has been created. Christ declares that Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. The day of Pentecost furnished a wonderful occasion. In the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, what a testimony was given to the abundance of the grace of Christ! Why is it that those who claim to believe advanced truth, live so far beneath their privileges? Why do they mingle self with all they do? If they will cast out self, Jesus will pour into the thirsty soul a constant supply from the river of life. How can our ministers become the representatives of Christ, when they feel self-sufficient—when by spirit and attitude they say, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing’? We must not be in a self-satisfied condition, or we shall be described as those who are poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked.

Since the time of the Minneapolis meeting, I have seen the state of the Laodicean Church as never before. I have heard the rebuke of God spoken to those who feel so well satisfied, who know not their spiritual destitution. Jesus speaks to these as he did to the woman of Samaria: ‘If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.’

Like the Jews, many have closed their eyes lest they should see; but there is as great peril now, in closing the eyes to light, and in walking apart from Christ, feeling need of nothing, as there was when he was upon earth. I have been shown many things which I have presented before our people in solemnity and earnestness, but those whose hearts have been hardened through criticism, jealousy, and evil surmisings, knew not that they were poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Those who resist the messages of God through his humble

servant, think they are at variance with sister White, because her ideas are not in harmony with theirs; but this variance is not with sister White, but with the Lord, who had given her her work to do.

Those who realize their need of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, will have contrition of soul, will repent for their resistance of the Spirit of the Lord. They will confess their sin in refusing the light that Heaven has so graciously sent them, and they will forsake the sin that grieved and insulted the Spirit of the Lord. They will humble self, and accept the power and grace of Christ, acknowledging the messages of warning, reproof, and encouragement. Then their faith in the work of God will be made manifest, and they will rely upon the atoning sacrifice. They will make a personal appropriation of Christ's abundant grace and righteousness, and he will become to them a present Saviour; for they will realize their need of him, and with complete trust will rest in him. They will drink of the water of life from the divine, inexhaustible fountain. In a new and blessed experience, they will cast themselves upon Christ, and become partakers of the divine nature. The human and the divine will co-operate every day, and the heart will well up in thanksgiving and praise to Christ. Heavenly inspiration will have a part in the Christian experience, and we shall grow to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus" (*The Review and Herald*, August 26, 1890).

Eyesalve

"The Lord knocks at the door of your heart, desiring to enter, that He may impart spiritual riches to your soul. He would anoint the blind eyes, that they may discover the holy character of God in His law, and understand the love of Christ, which is indeed gold tried in the fire" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

"The eyesalve is that spiritual discernment which will enable you to see the wiles of Satan and shun them, to detect sin and abhor it, to see truth and obey it.

The deadly lethargy of the world is paralyzing your senses. Sin no longer appears repulsive because you are blinded by Satan. The judgments of God are soon to be poured out upon the earth. “Escape for thy life” is the warning from the angels of God. Other voices are heard saying: “Do not become excited; there is no cause for special alarm.” Those who are at ease in Zion cry “Peace and safety,” while heaven declares that swift destruction is about to come upon the transgressor. The young, the frivolous, the pleasure loving, consider these warnings as idle tales and turn from them with a jest. Parents are inclined to think their children about right in the matter, and all sleep on at ease. Thus it was at the destruction of the old world and when Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed by fire. On the night prior to their destruction the cities of the plain rioted in pleasure. Lot was derided for his fears and warnings. But it was these scoffers that perished in the flames. That very night the door of mercy was forever closed to the wicked, careless inhabitants of Sodom” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 5, 233).

“The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of their disease” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 476).

“The eyesalve is that wisdom and grace which enables us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise. God has given His church eyes which He requires them to anoint with wisdom, that they may see clearly; but many would put out the eyes of the church if they could; for they would not have their deeds come to the light, lest they should be reprov'd. The divine eyesalve will impart clearness to the understanding. Christ is the depositary of all graces. He says: ‘Buy of Me’” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 476).

“The eye is the sensitive conscience, the inner light, of the mind. Upon its correct view of things the spiritual healthfulness of the whole soul and being depends. The ‘eyesalve,’ the Word of God, makes the

conscience smart under its application; for it convicts of sin. But the smarting is necessary that the healing may follow, and the eye be single to the glory of God. The sinner, beholding himself in God's great moral looking glass, sees himself as God views him, and exercises repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Volume 7, 965).

"The worker for God often regards the activities of life as essential to the advancement of the work. Self is mingled with all that is said and done. A dependence on self is seen. The worker looks upon himself as a necessity. God says, This poor soul has lost sight of me and my sufficiency. I must cast my light and my vitalizing power into his heart. I must prepare him to receive truth by anointing him with the heavenly eyesalve. He sees too many things His eye is not fastened on me, his Lord and his Redeemer" (*Manuscript 94*, 1897).

"Many have so beclouded their own minds with self-importance, that they have been very confident where they would do well to be distrustful and cautious. If men could see how easily self and spiritual pride become woven with supposed devotion to the work of God, and how, when this takes place, they are left to mar the work, and set the Weaver's pattern all astray, they would pray, Anoint my eyes with the heavenly eyesalve, that I may see all things correctly.

Unless there is increased humility of heart and purity of action, things will be done that will lead to a whole train of mistakes. One mismeasure, because of a lack of faith, has led to many disastrous circumstances" (*Manuscript 43*, 1898).

"They will feel the necessity of ... eyesalve, which is the grace of God and which will give clear discernment of spiritual things and detect sin" (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 3, 254).

“Through earnest prayer and living faith, the sentinels of God must lay hold, as never before, of the divine nature or they will be found ensnared—professedly working for God but working on Satan’s side of the question, flattering themselves that they are working on Christ’s side. The eyes of their understanding are blinded. They are ignorant of the wonderful and specious devices of Satan, because their eyes are not anointed with the heavenly eyesalve. Their vision is perverted with human wisdom, which in God’s sight is foolishness” (*Manuscript 44*, 1890).

“I saw that if any need eyesalve, it is those who have earthly possessions. Many of them are blind to their own state, blind to their firm grasp upon this world. Oh, that they may see!” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 1, 143).

“Opportunities are opening on every side. Press into every providential opening. Eyes need to be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve to see and sense their opportunities. God calls now for wide-awake missionaries. There are ways that will be presented before us. We are to see and understand these providential openings” (*Testimony Treasures*, Volume 9, 130).

“God requires that the church arouse from her lethargy and see what is the manner of service demanded of her at this time of peril. The lambs of the flock must be fed. The Lord of heaven is looking on to see who is doing the work He would have done for the children and youth. The eyes of our brethren and sisters should be anointed with heavenly eyesalve, that they may discern the necessities of the time. We must be aroused to see what needs to be done in Christ’s spiritual vineyard, and go to work” (*Counsels to Teachers*, 42).

“We are to do all in our power to fulfill the commission given by Christ to his disciples just before his ascension. Of the giving of this commission we read: ‘Then the eleven disciples went away into

Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'

When the eyes of the members of our large churches are anointed with the heavenly eye-salve, they will arise, and go forth to fulfil this commission. When their hearts are imbued with the Holy Spirit, they will worship the Lord their God, and him only will they serve. The Lord is calling upon those who are congregated in congested centers to go forth into the places where the truth has never been proclaimed" (*The Review and Herald*, February 9, 1905).

I rebuke and chasten

"Those who are reprov'd by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin. It is not pleasing to human nature to receive reproof, nor is it possible for the heart of man, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, to realize the necessity of reproof or the blessing it is designed to bring. As man yields to temptation, and indulges in sin, his mind becomes darkened. The moral sense is perverted. The warnings of conscience are disregarded, and its voice is less clearly heard. He gradually loses the power to distinguish between right and wrong, until he has no true sense or his standing before God. He may observe the forms of religion and zealously maintain its doctrines, while destitute of its spirit. His condition is that described by the True Witness: 'Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' Revelation 3:17. When the Spirit of God, by message of reproof, declares this to be his condition, he cannot see that the message is true. Is he therefore to reject the warning? No.

God has given sufficient evidence, so that all who desire to do so may satisfy themselves as to the character of the Testimonies; and, having acknowledged them to be from God, it is their duty to accept reproof, even though they do not themselves see the sinfulness of their course. If they fully realized their condition, what would be the need of reproof? Because they know it not, God mercifully sets it before them, so that they may repent and reform before it shall be too late. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived; but those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. Those who are most closely connected with God are the ones who know His voice when He speaks to them. Those who are spiritual discern spiritual things. Such will feel grateful that the Lord has pointed out their errors.

David learned wisdom from God's dealings with him and bowed in humility beneath the chastisement of the Most High. The faithful portrayal of his true state by the prophet Nathan made David acquainted with his own sins and aided him to put them away. He accepted counsel meekly and humiliated himself before God. 'The law of the Lord,' he exclaims, 'is perfect, converting the soul.' Psalm 19:7.

'If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye ... not sons.' Hebrews 12:8. Our Lord has said: 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.' Revelation 3:19. 'No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.' Hebrews 12:11. Though bitter the discipline, it is appointed by a Father's tender love, 'that we might be partakers of His holiness'" (*Counsels to the Church*, 96-97).

"The church must and will shine forth 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' God's servants must, by laboring together with Christ, roll away the curse that has made the

church so lukewarm. [Revelation 3:15-19 quoted.] The chastening reveals a hope of reform [vs. 20, 21 quoted]” (Bible Commentary, Volume 7, 966).

Therefore be zealous and repent and open the door

“My brethren, be whole-hearted Christians, or else make no profession of Christianity. To many the words are spoken, ‘I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.’ Their conduct is not in harmony with God’s holy law. They present before the world a life of selfishness, corrupted by sin. They do not love Christ; if they did, they would love their brethren....

Return to your first experience, when your soul was filled with love for Christ. Gather to your heart the obedience of a faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Obedience to the law of the Lord makes men pure, holy, undefiled....

O that there might be seen among our people a deep and thorough work of repentance and reformation! O that they would fall on the Rock, and be broken! Let us crucify self, that in our hearts may grow up a strong love for Christ and for one another. Let us bring into the daily experience the instruction contained in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Self must be surrendered to God before there can take possession of the life that strong, steady belief in the truth that is broad and comprehensive; that casts out from the heart all enmity, all petty differences, and transforms coldness into Christlike affection.

Why should not believers love one another? It is impossible to love Christ, and at the same time act discourteously toward one another. It is impossible to have the Christ-love in the heart, and at the same time draw apart from one another, showing no love or sympathy. The deeper our love for Christ, the deeper will be our love for one another” (*The Review and Herald*, February 24, 1903).

“These brethren who claimed to have this wonderful light had the very same work of repentance and confession to do, thus clearing the rubbish from the door of their own hearts, and opening the door of their hearts to welcome the heavenly guest. Had they placed themselves in the channel of light, they would have received the most precious blessings from heaven. They would have seen that the Lord was indeed gracious, manifesting Himself to His people, and that the Sun of Righteousness had risen upon them. This was precious merchandizing actively carried on. The counsel of Christ to the Laodicean Church was being acted upon, and all who were feeling their poverty were buying gold (faith and love), white raiment (the righteousness of Christ), and eye salve (true spiritual discernment)” (*Manuscript Releases*, Volume 1, 350).

“This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. It must arouse His people from their security and dangerous deception in regard to their real standing before God. This testimony, if received, will arouse to action and lead to self-abasement and confession of sins. The True Witness says: ‘I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot.’ And again, ‘As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.’ Then comes the promise: ‘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.’ ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.’

The people of God must see their wrongs and arouse to zealous repentance and a putting away of those sins which have brought them into such a deplorable condition of poverty, blindness, wretchedness, and fearful deception. I was shown that the pointed testimony must live in the church. This alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans. Wrongs must be reproved, sin must be called sin, and iniquity must be met promptly and decidedly, and put away from us as a people” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 3, 259-260).

I stand at the door and knock

“Jesus says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ Will we let him in? He would not have us stand at this time, amid the perils of the last days, in our own finite strength. We cannot afford to be without his presence; for he says, ‘Without me, ye can do nothing.’ But if he abides in the heart by living faith, we can do all things in his name. Jesus loves us; he is working for our interest, and he wants us to trust him fully. He will be the Captain of our salvation if we will let him lead us on to victory” (*The Review and Herald*, November 24, 1895).

“The church was defective and in need of stern reproof and chastisement, and John was inspired to record messages of warning and reproof and entreaty to those who, losing sight of the fundamental principles of the gospel, should imperil their hope of salvation. But always the words of rebuke that God finds it necessary to send are spoken in tender love and with the promise of peace to every penitent believer. ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock,’ the Lord declares; ‘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’” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, 587).

“The Lord Jesus Christ says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.’ Revelation 3:20.

The cold, critical, sarcastic spirit which has found place in your hearts has driven out the love of Jesus. Expel this spirit which is not of Christ, supply the vacuum with the spirit of Jesus, and you will then be vessels unto honor, workmen for God who need not to be ashamed” (*Letters and Manuscripts*, Volume 6, Manuscript 40, 1890).

“I saw that many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove. Others have evil tempers, selfish covetousness, to remove before they can open the

door. Others have rolled the world before the door of their heart, which bars the door. All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in.

Oh, how precious was this promise, as it was shown to me in vision! 'I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' Oh, the love, the wondrous love of God! After all our lukewarmness and sins He says: 'Return unto Me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings.' This was repeated by the angel a number of times. 'Return unto Me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings'" (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 143).

"I do not know what more I can say, what greater appeal I can make. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock:' Christ says, '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.' There are places which should be entered. What will you do? May God move upon heart and mind, leading you to carry out the work he desires to have done for the most needy fields upon this earth" (*General Conference Bulletin*, April 25, 1901).

"Jesus says, '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.' Then I ask, How is it that so many of you are saying you do not know whether you are accepted of God or not; that you want to find Jesus? Don't you know whether you have opened the door? Don't you know whether you have invited him in? If you have not, invite him now. Don't wait a moment. Open the door, and let Jesus in" (*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, April 13, 1891).

"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.'

Christ is willing to take possession of the soul temple, if we will only let him. He is represented as knocking at the door of our hearts for admission, but Jesus never forces himself upon us; he will come in

only as an invited guest. If we seek him, we shall certainly find him. Many seem to have an idea that Christ is a great way off. It was difficult for the children of Israel to understand that Christ was their divine leader, and that he was enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night. If we could only realize that we do not have to ascend into the heavens to bring Christ down, nor descend into the earth to bring him up, but that he is near us, how different would be our actions. There would not be so much trifling conversation. We would not be so easily led into temptation, and there would not be so many things in our lives to displease Jesus. We would realize that the divine eye is upon us, and that the record is passing up to heaven which we must meet again in the day of final accounts; for the judgment is to sit, the books are to be opened, and everyone is to be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

In order to let Jesus into our hearts, we must stop sinning” (*The Signs of the Times*, March 3, 1890).

“Says Christ, ‘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.’ It is the sinner himself who has barred the door. Will he take down the barriers? Will he unbolt the door? The locks are all on his side of the door, not on the Saviour’s side” (*The Review and Herald*, March 5, 1889).

“Without Christ the heart of man is cold. But when one feels his need of the Sun of Righteousness; when he comes to Jesus, saying, Lord, I am sinful, unworthy, helpless; save me, or I perish, he is accepted in the Beloved, and his heart is warmed by the rays of divine love. By this sincere coming to Christ, he opens the door to him who has long been saying: ‘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.’ He is accepted, and he knows what it means to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. God says, Let there be

light; and there is light. The soul possesses an abiding Christ, who is the light of life” (*The Youth’s Instructor*, September 28, 1899).

“Repentance and confession is the Spirit’s work upon the human heart. The Laodicean message has been ignored, and in the place of heeding the voice of Jesus, the true Witness, ‘Those that I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent.’ [Revelation 3:19.] In that moment when self is humbled Satan loses his hold on the human agent that has been led captive by him at his will. Jesus says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door I will come to him and sup with him, and he with me.’ [Verse 20.]

Everything depends upon hearing the voice. If one goes on in his self-presumption and self-confidence, he will attribute the voice to anything or anyone but to Jesus, close his ears, turn from the invitation, and open the door of his heart to the bewitching delusions of Satan, to his own ruin. Satan has triumphed. But the tidings of a soul repentant and humbled and contrite before God, creates joy among the angels of God in heaven. Joyous anthems pour forth from angel voices, ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who is slain to receive, power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessings.’ [Revelation 5:12.] ‘For there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repented.’ [Luke 15:7.]

In every case of repentance Satan suffers a defeat, and Christ gains a victory. All heaven is watching the conflict going on between Christ and Satan. When the tide of battle runs in favor of the cross and when the standard is raised over the citadel of another heart conquered by the mercy and love of Jesus, angels rejoice. Oh, what a work is ours! We will do all we can to win souls to Christ” (*Letters and Manuscripts*, Volume 7, Letter 97, 1892)

“The True Witness says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ Revelation 3:20. Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It

is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth” (*The Desire of Ages*, 489).

“The Saviour says, ‘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 3:20. He is not repulsed by scorn or turned aside by threatening, but continually seeks the lost ones, saying, ‘How shall I give thee up?’ Hosea 11:8. Although His love is driven back by the stubborn heart, He returns to plead with greater force, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ The winning power of His love compels souls to come in. And to Christ they say, ‘Thy gentleness hath made me great.’ Psalm 18:35” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 235).

“You are in terrible darkness, and unless you arise in the name of God, and break asunder the fetters of Satan, and assert your freedom, you will make shipwreck of the faith. So great is the unwillingness of the Lord to leave you, and such is His love toward you, that notwithstanding your life has not been in accordance with His will, and your works and ways have been offensive to Him, the Majesty of heaven condescends to beg the privilege of making you a visit and leaving you His blessing: ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ The mansions in glory are His, and the joy of that heavenly abode; yet He humbles Himself to seek an entrance at the door of your heart, that He may bless you with His light and make you to rejoice in His glory. His work is to seek and to save that which is lost and ready to

perish. He wishes to redeem as many as He can from sin and death, that He may elevate them to His throne and give them everlasting life” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 2, 224).

To him who overcomes

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 187).

“Some, I saw, would gladly return. Others will not let this message to the Laodicean church have its weight upon them. They will glide along, much after the same manner as before, and will be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Those only who zealously repent will have favor with God. ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.’ We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him.

It is our privilege to have faith and salvation. The power of God has not decreased. His power, I saw, would be just as freely bestowed now as formerly. It is the church of God that have lost their faith to claim, their energy to wrestle, as did Jacob, crying: ‘I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.’ Enduring faith has been dying away. It must be revived in the hearts of God’s people. There must be a claiming of the blessing of God. Faith, living faith, always bears upward to God and glory; unbelief, downward to darkness and death” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, 144).

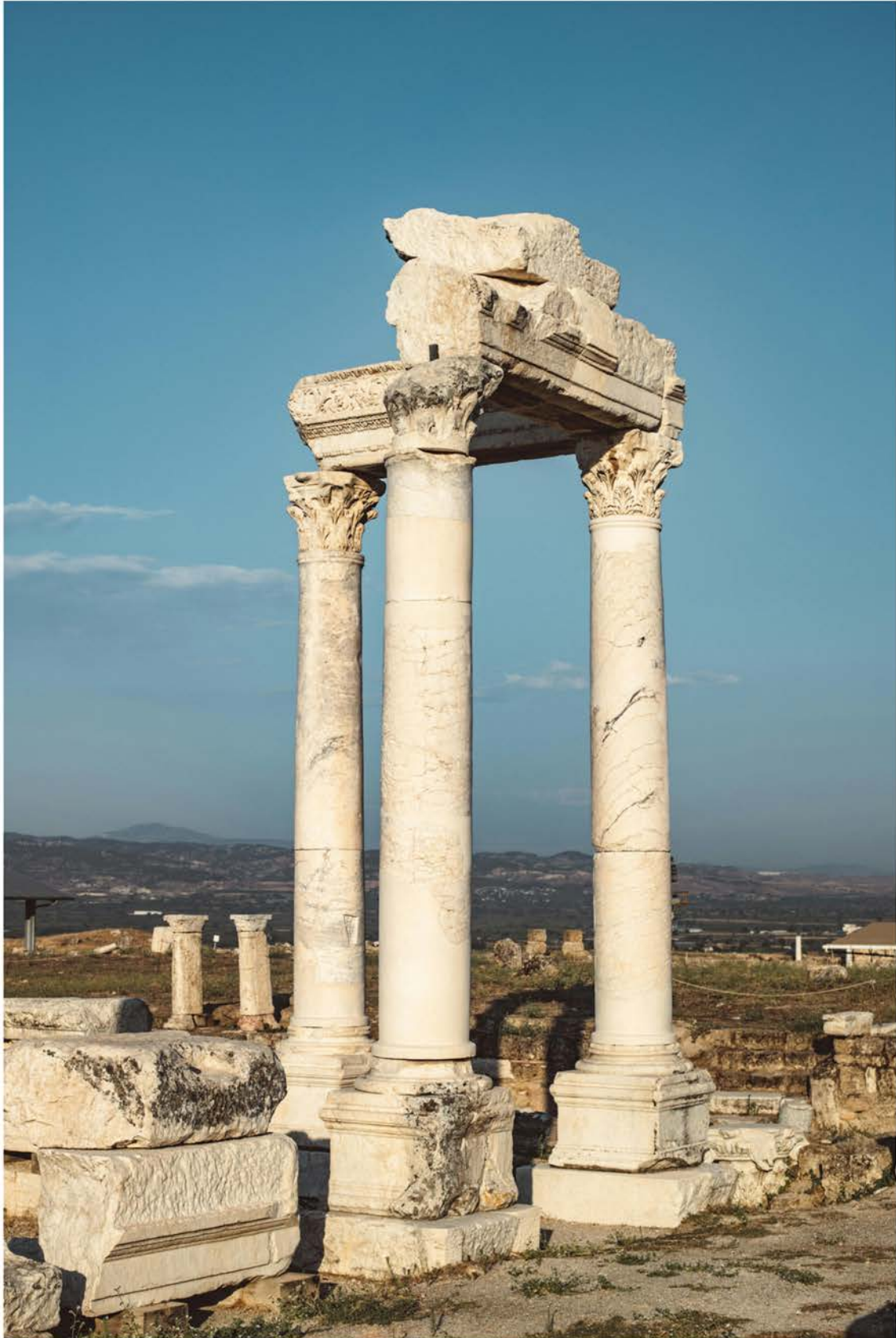
“In the name and strength of Jesus every youth may conquer the enemy today on the point of perverted appetite. My dear young friends, advance step by step, until all your habits shall be in harmony with the laws of life and health. He who overcame in the wilderness of

temptation declares: ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne’” (*Temperance*, 190).

“In the wilderness of temptation, Christ passed over the ground where Adam fell. He began the work where the ruin began, and on the point of appetite He overcame the power of the evil one in our behalf. Satan left the field a vanquished foe, and no one is excused from entering the battle on the Lord’s side, for there is no reason why man may not be an overcomer if he trusts in Christ. ‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne’” (*Temperance*, 282).

“It is not an easy matter to overcome the appetite for narcotics and stimulants. But in the name of Christ this great victory can be gained. His love for the fallen race was so great that he made an infinite sacrifice to reach them in their degradation, and through his divine power finally elevate them to his throne. But it rests with man whether Christ shall accomplish for him that which he is fully able to do. God cannot work against man’s will to save him from Satan’s artifices. Man must put forth his human power to resist and conquer at any cost; he must be a co-worker with Christ. Then, through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God, and a partaker with Christ of his glory. No drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God; but ‘to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne’” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, 40).





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