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Sermon Notes

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Laodicea: Christ's Urgent Counsel to a Lukewarm Church

Revelation 3:14-22

This morning we must come with fear and trembling to contemplate the worst of the seven churches in Revelation – the lukewarm church of Laodicea.

Of all the letters to the seven churches, this one terrifies me the most. Many godly leaders say that a spiritual disease, a contagious blight is spreading through the Lord's orchard of the churches in America... they say that the Laodicean church captures what has happened to so many churches in America

John Stott put it this way:

"Perhaps none of the seven letters is more appropriate to the twentieth-century church than this one. It describes vividly the respectable, sentimental, nominal, skin-deep religiosity which is so widespread among us today. Our Christianity is flabby and anemic. We appear to have taken a lukewarm bath of religion." [*What Christ Thinks of the Church*, 116]

NOMINAL CHRISTIANITY. Lukewarmness. A tepid pattern of religion in which outward forms are maintained without real power. Going through the motions. Checking the "God" box by outward observances... while denying the life-changing power of Christ.

Making matters more terrifying, the cause in Laodicea was wealth, prosperity resulting in complacency. The lukewarmness of the church at Laodicea was NAUSEATING to Christ and it should terrify us out of any spiritual complacency. It should make us cry out to God against ourselves, plead with God to save us from Laodicean lukewarmness.

Jonathan Edwards wrote many great theological works, but none has affected me so deeply as his classic, *Treatise on Religious Affections*. He wrote it to defend the powerful effects of the First Great Awakening from its cultured critics – church leaders who denigrated the outcries and shouts of joy and physical displays of sinners genuinely converted by the fiery gospel preached by Whitefield and Tennant and himself... these cultured aristocratic church leaders were criticizing what they called

“enthusiasm” . . . overwhelming displays of bitter sorrow over sin, of terror at the coming wrath of God, of soaring joy at assurance of true forgiveness through the blood of Christ.

These critics had never experienced any of this, and they bitterly criticized the preachers of the Awakening for their excesses.

Edwards’s response was timeless . . . and it stands powerfully in connection with Christ’s nausea over lukewarm Laodiceans throughout history:

“True [Christianity] consists in a great measure, in vigorous and lively actings of the inclination and will of the soul, or the fervent exercises of the heart

That religion which God requires, and will accept, does not consist in weak, dull, and lifeless wishes, raising us but a little above a state of indifference: God, in his word, greatly insists upon it, that we be good in earnest, “fervent in spirit,” and our hearts vigorously engaged in religion: Rom. 12:11, ‘Never be lacking in zeal, but be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.’

If we are not in good earnest in religion, and our wills and inclinations be not strongly exercised, we are nothing. The things of religion are so great, that there can be no suitableness in the exercises of our hearts, to their nature and importance, unless they be lively and powerful. In nothing is vigor in the actings of our inclinations so requisite, as in religion; and in nothing is lukewarmness so odious. True religion is evermore a powerful thing; and the power of it appears, in the first place in the inward exercises of it in the heart “

Thus Edwards felt in preaching, he should do everything he could to raise the affections – the love and passion – of his hearers as HIGH AS HE POSSIBLY COULD:

In a sermon that he preached on Song of Solomon 5:1, which says, *“Eat, friends, drink, and be drunk with love!”* he drew out the following doctrine: **“Persons need not and ought not to set any bounds to their spiritual and gracious appetites.”** Rather, he says, they ought to be endeavoring by all possible ways to inflame their desires and to obtain more spiritual pleasures. . . . Our hungerings and thirstings after God and Jesus Christ and after holiness can’t be too great for the value of these things, for they are things of infinite value. . . . [Therefore] endeavor to promote spiritual appetites by laying yourself in the way of allurements. . . . There is no such thing as excess in our taking of this spiritual food. There is no such virtue as moderation in spiritual feasting. (“The Spiritual Blessings of the Gospel Represented by a Feast”)

FEED your zeal for Christ! Feed the fire, dear friends! This is the sermon in a nutshell... the Laodicean lukewarmness caused by PROSPERITY and COMPLACENCY should make us tremble in the affluence and comfort of our American lifestyles.

So... this morning, we are going to read the final letter of Christ to the seven churches; and with God's help, we will trust the Lord Jesus, take his warning, heed his counsel, and obey his commands... and drink in both now and in eternity the sweet rewards he promises

I. How Christ Describes Himself: Amen, Faithful, True, Creator

A. How to Read these Letters

1. The key to maximizing our benefits from Revelation 2-3 is to read all the letters as if they were written by the Lord Jesus Christ directly to us
2. As Christians, we are not reading someone else's mail! The Holy Spirit tells us plainly every time:

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

3. Jesus SPOKE these words twenty centuries ago to a specific church, Laodicea, at a specific moment in time... but through the Spirit he SPEAKS NOW to anyone with a spiritual ear to hear
4. And we should hear with GREAT HUMILITY!

James 4:6 "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

5. We should read with an ear to hear ways we need to grow in grace, ways we are weak, sinning, deficient... even if the Lord would speak a word of encouragement to us, we would hear it only as a word of exhortation to do it more and more
6. And if Christ spoke a stern word of warning to a church back then, we should be humble and realize we have the same sin nature as they did and need to beware as they did

Isaiah 66:2 "This is the one I esteem, he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at my word."

7. And this letter to Laodicea is the scariest of all of them... Christ speaks NOT A SINGLE WORD of encouragement to this church! John MacArthur believes there is strong evidence in verse 20 that there was not a single regenerate person, born again, a true Christian among their membership!

Because he stands OUTSIDE THE CHURCH and knocks to see if anyone is inside who will come and open the door to him

8. SO... how does the resurrected, glorified Lord Jesus Christ, the one walking through the seven golden lampstands like our Great High Priest ministering to the seven churches... how does he describe himself?

Revelation 3:14 To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

B. The Amen

1. We speak this word at the end of our prayers; the Jews were to say “Amen” at the end of the reading of all the blessings and curses of the Law (Deuteronomy 27)
2. It actually means “truly”... when Jesus says “Truly, truly I say to you...”, he literally is saying “Amen, amen”
3. The people of God speak “Amen” in the New Testament whenever we hear something POWERFULLY TRUE:

Revelation 1:7 Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

4. Amen is the FINAL WORD in the entire Bible:

Revelation 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

5. If Jesus is God’s AMEN, he is God’s FINAL WORD of truth! Jesus speaks only the truth... more than that, he IS truth itself

John 14:6 "I am the way and the truth and the life..."

6. Beyond that, Jesus is the AMEN God spoke to the promises he gave in the Old Testament

2 Corinthians 1:20 For all the promises of God in him are yes, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

C. The Faithful and True Witness

1. This expands what we were just saying... Christ is the AMEN (truly), and he is the FAITHFUL and TRUE witness

2. He testifies to his churches what is true, and we MUST hear him as he speaks
3. He is faithful to God, and he is faithful to his church... he will always testify solemnly to what we most need to hear
4. Everything Jesus says is dependable and accurate

D. The Beginning of the Creation of God

1. This phrase causes some trouble, because it seems to say that Christ is a created being
2. The Jehovah's Witnesses have taught that for years... but it is a misunderstanding of this concept
3. Jesus is called here effectively the ORIGINATOR of God's creation... the source or it, the fountain from which all creation flows
4. Paul made this awesome point clear in Colossians 1

Colossians 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

E. Application: Cure from Lukewarmness Comes from Right Estimation of Christ

1. At the end of the sermon, I will say more about the root causes of spiritual LUKEWARMNESS
2. But the central cause is failing to esteem Christ as the radiant, majestic Lord of the universe and your Savior... it is a failure to see the beauty of Christ, his glory, his attributes, his wisdom and power and love
3. Therefore, a remedy must be to read these words and let them soak into you; Jesus is about to give his church a clear diagnosis and prescribe a powerful therapy
4. Rescue from lukewarmness comes from seeing and savoring the glory of Christ based on his word

II. How Christ Diagnoses the Church: Lukewarm, Poor, Blind, Naked

A. The Church at Laodicea

1. Laodicea was close to Colosse, to whom Paul wrote the Letter to the Colossians

2. It was located in the Lycus Valley about one hundred miles east of Ephesus; it was the southernmost of the seven churches, about forty miles from Philadelphia
3. Laodicea was physically impregnable from attack, because it was built on a wide plateau several hundred feet high... but it was VULNERABLE to siege because it had to pipe in its water from several miles away through aqueducts which could be easily severed by an invading force
4. Three aspects of Laodicea: MONEY, WOOL, EYE MEDICINE
 - a. MONEY: Laodicea was strategically located in terms of COMMERCE and TRADE because it stood at the junction of two important highways... an east-west road leading from Ephesus into the interior of Asia Minor, and a north-south road from Pergamum to the Mediterranean Sea... therefore it was a powerfully wealthy commercial center... as a matter of fact, it was so wealthy that when an earthquake devastated the city, they rejected financial aid from Rome
 - b. WOOL: Laodicea was also famous for soft, glossy, black wool which was woven into carpets and luxurious black clothing
 - c. EYE MEDICINE: they were also known for developing an eye salve useful for treating certain forms of eye disease; this salve was exported all over the Roman world

These three industries – finance, wool, and eye salve – all come into play in Christ’s stern words to this church

B. Christ’s Diagnosis

Revelation 3:15-17 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm-- neither hot nor cold-- I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

1. “I know your deeds”...
 - a. Christ is about to speak of their HEART CONDITION
 - b. But their deeds truly expose their heart

Matthew 12:33 "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.

2. Lukewarmness

a. You are neither COLD nor HOT

Revelation 3:15-16 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm-- neither hot nor cold-- I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

b. This is metaphorical language going back to Laodicea experience

i) Perhaps their water supply which came from a long distance away through an underground aqueduct, and the water often arrived tepid, foul smelling, cloudy, and repulsive

ii) Others point to the nearby hot springs at Hierapolis, with its spa-like hot baths

iii) The water was not cold and refreshing like a mountain stream, nor hot for a cleansing bath

c. However, it is best not to push it to that extreme, as though Christ were saying "hot water is good, and cold water is good... but lukewarm water is useless."

d. Actually, if this idea of LUKEWARMNESS refers to the temperature of one's heart affections for Christ, HEAT is what Christ wants

Like the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus, walking with the resurrected Christ

Luke 24:32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Like John the Baptist:

John 5:35 He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

Like Jesus Christ:

Psalms 69:9 for zeal for your house consumes me

As we've already quoted from Romans:

Romans 12:11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

e. Someone who is COLD toward Christ is SPIRITUALLY DEAD, like a corpse

3. Then why does Jesus say this:?

Revelation 3:15 you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!

- a. A spiritually COLD person makes no pretense at all to be a Christian
- b. They know they are on the outside...
- c. They are easier to reach for Christ than someone who has heard the great things of God and responded with a lukewarm NOMINAL commitment to Christ... "I'll go to church on Christmas and Easter" ... or the Bible-belt habits of baptism and church-membership with no true godliness

2 Peter 2:21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

John MacArthur: "Smug, self-righteous hypocrites are far more difficult to reach with the gospel than cold-hearted rejecters. The rejecters may at least be shown that they are lost. But those who self-righteously think they are saved are often protective of their religious feelings and unwilling to recognize their real condition. They are not cold enough to feel the bitter sting of their sin. Consequently, no one is further from the truth than the one who makes an idle profession of Christ but never experiences genuine saving faith. No one is harder to reach than a false Christian."

4. Christ finds them NAUSEATING and will vomit them out of his mouth

Revelation 3:16 So, because you are lukewarm-- neither hot nor cold-- I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

5. Nominal Christianity is utterly repulsive to Christ!

C. Their Self-Assessment is Totally Wrong!

Revelation 3:17 You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

D. The Cause of Spiritual Lethargy: Their Material Wealth

- 1. Their material prosperity has made them COMPLACENT... there are SELF-SUFFICIENT
- 2. "I do not need a thing!!"
- 3. Forgetting this

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. ... apart from me you can do nothing.

4. The material prosperity of Laodicea came from finances and wool and eye salve and other commercial successes
5. They seem to be congratulating themselves... as though their wealth is a new thing; they have just come from the bank and their last financial venture has come in with overwhelming success
6. I DON'T NEED A THING!!!! Self-reliance.

This is the GREAT DANGER in America as well... overwhelming prosperity, such as the Christian world has hardly ever seen, on a widespread scale unprecedented in church history

E. Their Real Condition:

1. The "Amen," the "Faithful and true witness" is about to sit down with them like a physician who has just completed a thorough exam and has the results of the blood work, the MRI, the X-Ray...

"You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked."

2. Truly these are terrifying words... to have a self-assessment SO DIFFERENT from the Lord's
3. Wretched and pitiful... not to be ENVIED but to be PITIED! Like a homeless beggar, shivering out in the streets spiritually

Exactly the opposite of the suffering church of Smyrna

Revelation 2:9 "I know your poverty, yet you are rich!!"

4. Blind: spiritually blind, unable to see the truth, unable to understand who Christ really is, how needy they really are; since FAITH is the EYESIGHT OF THE SOUL, this means they were living as if they had no faith at all
5. Naked: shameful in sin... needing a covering, needing an atonement

III. How Christ Counsels the Church: Come to Me and Buy

A. Amazing: The Lord of Heaven and Earth Gives Advice

1. Christ could have simply shut down this lukewarm church and disposed of them on Judgment Day
2. Instead he humbles himself to give them sound advice
3. ***"I counsel you..."*** he said

4. Amazing! This is Jesus, exalted to the highest place by Almighty God, sitting on the right hand of the throne of God; perfect in wisdom... awesome in holiness says, "Let me give you some advice."

B. Buy FROM ME...

1. Jesus is the source of everything they need; they have greatly underestimated Christ; they have paid him lip service, lukewarm worship, token prayers... it's time they understand they have nothing and Christ has everything they need
2. They need to kill forever their repugnant SELF-RELIANCE... and understand that he is indeed the vine and apart from them they are DEAD
3. Why does he say to these destitute spiritual beggars who are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked that they should BUY from him, when they have nothing??

Isaiah 55:1 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

C. What Should they Buy from Christ?

Revelation 3:18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. aa

1. Gold refined by fire: true gold, pure gold... symbolizing genuine spiritual wealth... this is SALVATION in Christ... the treasure hidden in the field worth selling everything to obtain
2. White clothes to cover their shameful nakedness: this is the IMPUTED righteousness of Christ, given as a gift by faith in Christ...
3. Salve for the eyes: this is the gift of SPIRITUAL SIGHT, which is genuine faith... the ability to see the spiritual world as it really is... to see Christ crucified as the atoning sacrifice for their sins; to see their own shameful condition as it really is; to see the holiness of God, and the coming wrath of God as it will be and flee to Christ... to SEE!!! To turn from darkness to light, and from lies to the truth

Christ alone can give all these things!

John Stott: "Here is welcome news for blind beggars! They are poor, but Christ has gold. They are naked, but Christ has clothes. They are blind, but Christ has eye salve. Let them no longer trust in their banks, their clothing factories, and their Phrygian eye ointment! Let them come to him! He alone can enrich their poverty, clothe their nakedness, and heal their

blindness! He can open their eyes to perceive a spiritual world of which they have never dreamed. He can cover their sin and shame and make them fit to partake of the inheritance of saints in the kingdom of light. In a word, he can SAVE THEM!”

D. Christ’s Loving Discipline

Revelation 3:19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.

1. Jesus cherishes even wayward, sinning children... he loves them too much to give them over to their sin
2. Instead, he speaks powerful words of REBUKE and he orchestrates stern disciplines for them
3. For Jesus to say these harsh words must have been hard to hear... True Children of God will inevitably take them to heart and REPENT

E. Christ’s Clear Command “Be earnest and repent”

1. He is calling them out of their LUKEWARM LETHARGY... they have been tepid, weak in their reactions and words and actions
2. The time for that is OVER if they want to live
3. They have to be ZEALOUS... to burn with fire to make their lives pleasing to Christ
4. And they have to repent...

Watson: Sight of sin... sorrow for sin... hatred of sin... shame for sin...
confession of sin... turning from sin

IV. What Christ Promises those who Open the Door: Fellowship and Feasting

A. The Most Famous Verse in the Seven Letters

Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

1. This verse is frequently connected with evangelistic tracts
2. The picture is a powerful one, of Jesus standing OUTSIDE the door of your heart, knocking to see if you will come and open the door and let him in
3. Ultimately every individual person needs to have this kind of personal relationship with Christ... fellowship with him, intimacy with him

4. There is nothing wrong with using Revelation 3:20 as a gospel appeal to repent and trust in Christ... just as long as we don't press it too far and deny Christ's sovereignty over salvation
5. This points to the deep desire Christ has to have a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP with each member of the church
6. If ANY ONE PERSON would just open the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me
7. It also points to the sad state of affairs in the church at Laodicea in which Jesus is tragically on the OUTSIDE trying to get in

B. Hearing His Voice

1. This is the hearing of faith... just as he often said

"He who has an ear, let him hear..."

2. Can you hear the voice of Christ speaking to you from the words of scripture?
3. Can you hear him personally calling you to follow him?
4. This is a hearing power that only the Holy Spirit can give

C. Open the Door to Him

1. There is an OPENNESS of faith... a desire to be open to Christ, to have him enter and live within you
2. To open the door really is to submit to his kingly authority, to declare your loyalty to him

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

3. It is to be OPEN to whatever he would do with you
4. It also is the openness of love... you WANT to be close to him

D. The Promise: I will Come In to Him and Eat with Him and He with Me

1. This is the language of intimate fellowship
2. In the Ancient Near East, to have a meal with someone meant closeness and friendship and relationship

3. Jesus again and again enjoyed intimate times with his disciples around the table
4. I believe this is what was going on in John 1

John 1:35-39 *The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. ³⁶ When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.*

5. It was beautifully pictured at the end of John's Gospel as well, at the Last Supper:

KJV John 13:23 *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.*

6. Ultimately, I will come in to him means the INDWELLING of Christ's great gift, the Holy Spirit, to give continual fellowship with Christ

John 14:16-17 *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.*

E. Fellowship with Jesus... and with God

1 John 1:3 *And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

V. How Christ Rewards Those Who Overcome: Enthronement

Revelation 3:21 *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.*

A. In Every Case, Jesus Has Promised Lavish Rewards to the One Who Overcomes

1. Overcome = fight the good fight of faith against the world, the flesh, and the devil
2. Lavish rewards promised in the Seven Letters
 - a. Eating from the tree of life (2:7)
 - b. Receiving the crown of life (2:10)
 - c. Protection from the Second Death (2:11)
 - d. A Gift of the Hidden Manna (2:17)

- e. A White Stone with a New Name written on it (2:17)
 - f. The Authority to Rule the Nations (2:26-27)
 - g. The Morning Star (2:28)
 - h. White garments, symbols of purity and holiness (3:5)
 - i. The honor of having Christ confess our names before God the Father and the holy angels in heaven (3:5)
 - j. To be made a pillar in God's temple, never to leave it (3:12)
 - k. To have written on us the name of God, the New Jerusalem, and of Christ (3:12)
3. What reward here? Ruling with Christ on his throne
- a. Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords
 - b. He will reign forever and ever in the New Jerusalem
 - c. The conquerors will rule with him in the New Heavens and New Earth
 - d. John Piper speaks of us sitting in Jesus' lap while he sits in his Father's lap
 - e. If we overcome, we will not only sit at table and eat with him, we will sit on a throne and rule with him
 - f. AMAZING GRACE!!

VI. Applications

A. To the Lost: Jesus is Calling to You Today...

Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

1. Recognize that what was said of the Laodiceans is true of every non-Christian on earth

Revelation 3:17 You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

2. Because of our sins, we are naked and shameful
3. Christ's death on the cross can pay for all your debt and cover you

4. Like the Prodigal Son, you have been wandering in sin, seeking fulfillment in earthly pleasures, and becoming more and more spiritually impoverished... cold, dead, distant from God
5. Christ is offering you an incredible gift: full salvation, intimate fellowship
6. All you need to do is HEAR HIS VOICE in this sermon, and OPEN THE DOOR to him by faith... trust in him and repent of your sins, and he will come into your heart, into your life forever

B. Beware of Lukewarmness

1. The Laodicean church had grown lukewarm... neither hot nor cold
2. They claimed to be Christians, but they were distant from him, tepid in their reactions to him
3. BEWARE of this condition! Beware of the dangers of wealth and prosperity and ease and worldliness
4. The journey to lukewarmness is similar to the Ephesian church: "You have forsaken your first love"
5. It is that the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke out the seed making it fruitless
6. Look at your private devotional life... is it characterized by FIRE, PASSION? Do you worship Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit? Do you sing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs to him with gratitude in your hearts toward God?
7. Do you read the scripture passionately and accurately and personally, as though the Lord Jesus Christ were speaking directly to you?
8. Is your life characterized by sacrificial acts of service... joyful service?
9. Or do you see church attendance and Christian duties as a BURDEN
10. The feeling that Church and prayer and bible reading and confession of sin and Christian fellowship and financial offerings and corporate worship and ALL THOSE CHRISTIAN THINGS are a burden... and you are going through the motions, more excited about a ballgame or a hobby or a vacation or a movie on Netflix than you are about anything spiritual... these are DANGEROUS SIGNS
11. The feeling of confidence that, because you are wealthy and successful and healthy and don't feel like you need anything... this is a dangerous sign

12. Is there PASSION in your heart toward Christ??? It is my DUTY to stir up your affections as high as I possibly can as a preacher... but it is your duty to stir up your own affections as high as you can! Don't let your heart grow cold and distant! Don't accept LUKEWARM expressions of your Christian walk

C. Prayer: O. Hallesby

1. Especially look at your prayer life
2. In 1931, Norwegian Pastor Ole Hallesby wrote a book simply called "Prayer"
3. He began his whole treatise with Revelation 3:20

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me."

4. He said the essence of prayer is found in that one verse

"It is not our prayer which draws Jesus into our hearts. Nor is it our prayer which moves Jesus to come into us. All he needs is access. He enters of his own accord, because he desires to come in. To pray is nothing more than to open the door, giving Jesus access to our needs and permitting him to exercise his power in meeting them. That requires no strength. It is just a matter of our wills. Will we give Jesus access to our weakness and needs or not?"

START HERE with prayer!!!!