



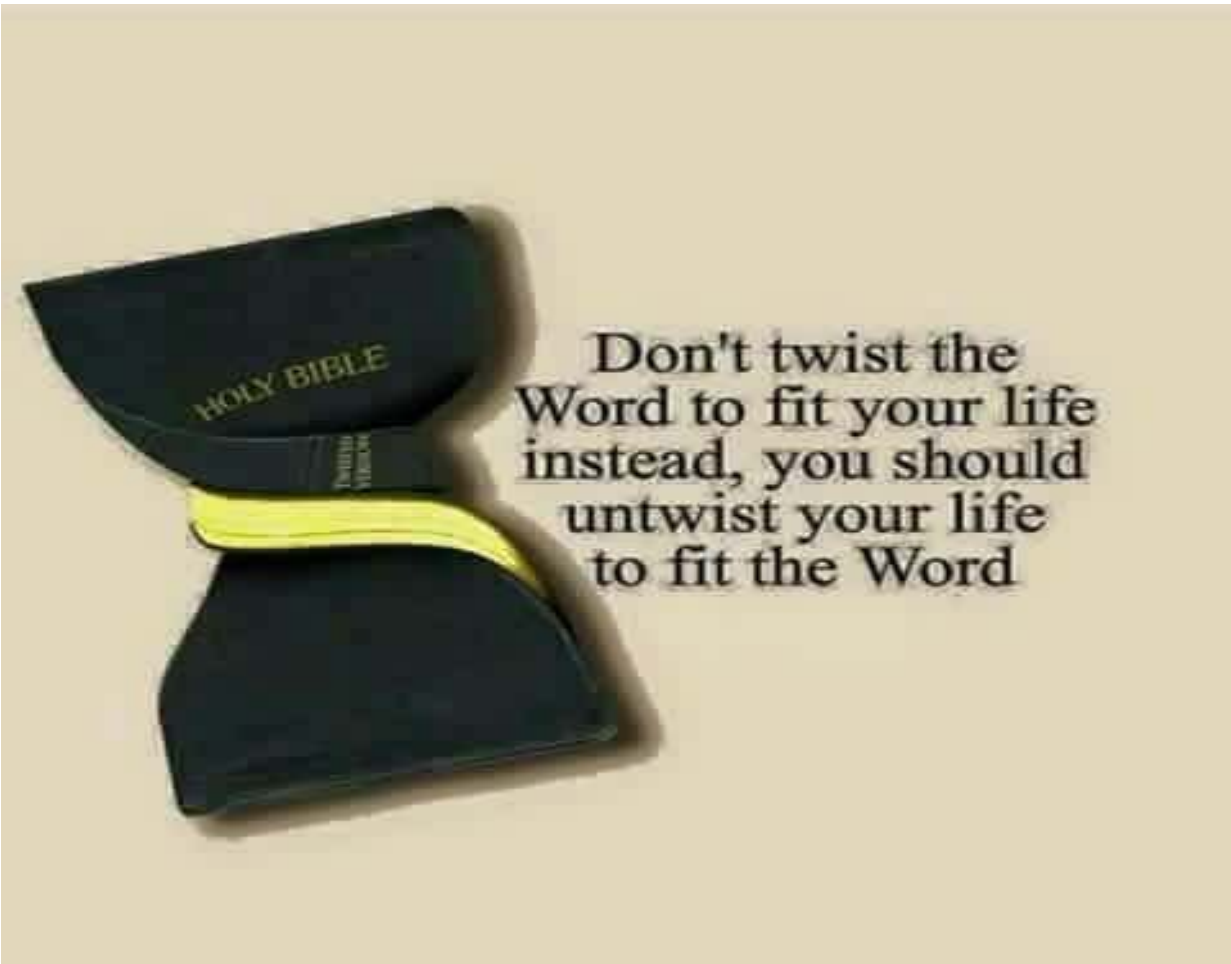
### Today's Sermons

Morning: The Passion of the Christ  
Evening: What Is Worship?

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FOR THE RECORD

Sunday Bible Study	31
Sunday AM Worship	50
Sunday PM Worship	23
Wed. Bible Study	23
Offering	\$1949



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**Times of Services:**  
Sunday  
Bible Study:... 10:00am  
AM Worship:...11:00am  
PM Worship:...6:00pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday  
Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program  
Sunday:.....7:30am  
"Back to the Bible"  
AM 580 WSKS  
93.5 FM

**We Extend A  
Warm & Cordial  
Welcome  
To All Our  
Visitors!**

### WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA? Roger D. Campbell

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

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

Well, were the people that made up the church in Laodicea ever really converted in the first place? Was it ever a true church of the living God? Go back to the Book of Colossians. Again, Paul referred to the members there as "*the brethren which are in Laodicea*" (Colossians 4:15). Yes, they were real brethren in the Lord. What did Paul instruct the saints in Colosse to do with the letter that he wrote to them

*Continued Inside*

(the Book of Colossians)? First, they were to read it among themselves. Second, they were to make sure that it was also read in the church of the Laodiceans (Colossians 4:16). It is obvious that the Holy Spirit spoke of the church in Laodicea as a real church.

But what happened to the church there? Know this: the brethren there did not go astray because they lacked proper instruction. There was an epistle that someone wrote to them (Colossians 4:16), they were to be given access to the epistle that Paul wrote to the Colossians, and Jesus sent them a letter through John (Revelation 3). Count 'em up: that is at least three letters of instruction to guide them.

Neither could anyone in the church at Laodicea rightfully say that no one really cared about them. Jesus rebuked them alright, but He explained why He did so: "*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten . . .*" (Revelation 3:19). Let us take a deep breath right here and tell it like it is. No one, and I mean *no one*, becomes unfaithful to the Lord because there is not ample guidance available. Folks, every true child of God has the Bible for divine guidance! Second, no one, and I mean *no one*, wavers in his faith because there is nobody that cares about him. If every other person in the church becomes a cold-hearted snob, this fact remains: God cares for every one of His children (1 Peter 5:7).

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

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

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

(3) They were spiritually poor, spiritually blind, and spiritually naked (3:17). Jesus said so. He also said they did not know such was the case. They either had become so spiritually dull that they did not recognize what they were truly like, or else they refused to see themselves as they really were (James 1:23,24).

(4) They needed to repent. Jesus commanded them to do just that (3:19). Their apostasy shows plainly that a child of God can sin and stand in need of repentance. Jesus' words also show that it is possible for a child of God in sin to come to his senses and "make things right." His words further let us know that a whole congregation can get to the point that it needs to repent. He who thinks that every modern-day congregation of the church of

the Christ is doing just fine and dandy is lacking proper spiritual discernment, just like the brethren in Laodicea did.

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

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

*"And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:4-11)*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- July 2 – Men's Business Meeting & Ladies' Class
- July 9 – Preach-N-Eat & 1:30 Worship
- Aug 6-11 – 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Old-Fashioned Tent Meeting with Mark Bass
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell