

The Church in Laodicea

[W]e want to take the Lord's word and pay the price to buy from Him the living faith to enjoy and partake of the golden divine nature, so that He may clothe us and become our living; also, we want to pay the price to **gain the eyesalve, the anointing Spirit**, so that we may **see**. It is not enough that many years ago we paid the price and gained Christ; **today** we need to pay the necessary price – which may be a higher price than many years ago – to gain Christ, experience Him, and have Him lived out of us.

We need to have the Lord's **present** leading, speaking, anointing, and teaching; we need the Lord's healing, His speaking, His covering, and His enriching. For this, we need to have a pure heart so that we may see God and gain God; to gain God is to receive God in His element, life, and nature, so that we may be constituted with Him. May we be the ones who **pay** the price to gain Christ day by day so that we may give Him the ground to build Himself into our being.

We need to open to Him in our secret time with Him, in our special place where we take time to behold Him and touch Him, so that we would **open the door of our heart to Him** again and again and dine with Him and Him with us. As we open to the Lord and let Him in, **His presence becomes our feast**, and we are subjectively supplied and encouraged; this produces us as His overcomers, and He will reward us with ruling and **reigning** with Him – even as He overcame and was given to rule with His Father. If we hear the Lord's voice, open the door of our heart to Him, and dine with Him, He as **the Overcomer** will reproduce Himself in us to make us His many overcomers, those who overcome in Him and by Him.

The Lord's word to the church in Laodicea is very enlightening and exposing, and it is such a **warning** to us. If it would be us, we would probably concluded our word to the churches with the church in Philadelphia, but the Lord clearly knows and sees that, even though Philadelphia is what He's after, Laodicea follows and comes in... Today the Lord has shown us mercy in His recovery to unveil to us the riches in His word, and we have the ministry of the age opening up the word of God to both understand it, experience it, and enjoy it; but if we don't **hold fast** what we have with humility of heart, not making any change or coming up with something new, then we may live in the principle of Laodicea. **We should not be weary of doing the same things – keeping the Lord's word and not denying His name** – for a long time; we should not contemplate doing something new after all the years of keeping the Lord's word and not denying His name.

The Lord's word to the church in Laodicea is a warning to us: **when the brotherly love is gone, the opinion of the majority is the accepted opinion**, and the vote of the many brothers replaces the Lord's leading and speaking. When brotherly love is **lost**, the Body relationship and the Body consciousness are also **lost**, and the fellowship of life is **cut off** as well, leaving **only opinions** of men. May the Lord really save us from our opinions and save us from trying to democratize or modernize the church; may we hold fast what we have, keep the Lord's word, not deny His name, and be humble before Him concerning our need for Him and our condition before Him.

[I]n the Lord's eyes the characteristics of Laodicea are **lukewarmness** and **spiritual pride**. It was not heretical teachings, different doctrines, or opposition from outside that was the problem; the problem is from within, for being lukewarm is an inward state and spiritual pride is something from inside. We need to take care of our **inward condition** before the Lord; if we want to be the messengers in the churches and those to whom

the Lord can speak His fresh message and whom He can produce as His overcomers, we need to take care of our inward condition before Him.

Where does the spiritual pride come from? It comes from having a “history” and “remaining in the things in the past”. The Lord was merciful to the church in Philadelphia once, and so now they think they are still rich; they remember their history, but they have **lost** that reality...If we would apply this to ourselves in the church life, we have the collected works of Watchman Nee and of Witness Lee published, ready to be read and enjoyed by us, but if we merely have these books on our shelves or online yet we don't live in the reality of these riches – while at the same time boasting of the riches we have....we may live in the principle of Laodicea. May the Lord save us from merely remembering that we once were wealthy and have therefore become rich and in need of nothing, when our real situation is that we are poor and blind, in great need of the Lord's mercy!

Lord Jesus, save us from being lukewarm before You, and save us from any spiritual pride. Save us from merely remembering our history with You and what You have given us in the Lord's recovery, while not living in the reality of Your riches. Lord, we have little power – we are not strong, so we need You! We don't know our situation and condition, but You do! We want to just open to You, forget what is behind, and be healed by You, filled by You, and saturated with You in Your word and the ministry, loving You and loving the saints, and keeping Your word and not denying Your name!

How can we continue in the way of Philadelphia and avoid becoming Laodicea in the church life in the Lord's recovery today? Brother Nee has a wonderful word of encouragement and warning on this matter,

Brothers and sisters, if you want to continue in the way of Philadelphia, remember to **humble** yourselves before God...Please bear in mind that **we have nothing that we have not received**. Those around us may be full of death, but we **do not need** to be conscious of the fact that we are full of life. Those around us may be poor, but we do not need to be conscious of the fact that we are rich. Those who live before the Lord will not be conscious of their own riches. May the Lord be merciful to us that we may learn to live before Him. **May we be rich and yet not know that we are rich**. It was better for Moses not to know that his face was shining, even though it did shine! Once a person knows himself, he becomes Laodicea, and the result is lukewarmness. Laodicea means to know everything, but in reality to be fervent about nothing. In name it has everything, but it cannot sacrifice its life for anything. It remembers its former glory but forgets its present condition before God. Formerly, it was Philadelphia; today it is Laodicea. (*Excerpt from the Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 50, pp. 785-786*)

The only way to continue in the way of Philadelphia and avoid becoming Laodicea is remembering to humble ourselves before God. Especially us in the Lord's recovery – we need God's deep mercy to save us and rescue us from any kind of spiritual pride.

*Oh Lord Jesus, save us from living in the way of Laodicea! Grant us the mercy and grace of humility. Rescue us from any kind of spiritual pride, and keep us humble before You, knowing and caring only for You and our need before You. Grant us a spirit of love to love You and love the saints. May we not brag or be puffed up because of our spiritual knowledge but be those who build up by loving the saints and keeping God's word. Lord Jesus, all we have is from You: You are the source, and we are nothing without You! (*Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word, The Church in Laodicea*)*