

A Zealous Church
Revelation 3:14-22

Introduction: In the passage that we are considering today, we are looking at the last of seven “letters to the churches.” These seven letters recorded in Revelation were messages from Jesus to seven specific churches in Asia Minor in the first century. We’re looking at the letter to the church at Laodicea because it encapsulates much of what we’ve been trying to communicate in our *Making Room* series. We’ve been talking about making room in our facilities and in our lives for people far from God, for children and youth, for worship and prayer. Instead of maintaining the status quo or being satisfied with what God has done in the past in these (and other) areas, we are trusting that God wants to do mighty things in and through us in the future. If we are going to do this, we need to be a zealous church.

Opening Question: What is something about which you are easily zealous?

Read Revelation 3:14-22

1. What sticks out to you in this passage?
2. What is Jesus' problem with the church at Laodicea?

Steve said:

Jesus' evaluation of the church at Laodicea was that when it came to their deeds (the things they were actually supposed to do for God) they were neither hot nor cold; they were lukewarm. “Lukewarm” is an image of complacency.

3. What tends to make you "lukewarm" or complacent spiritually?
4. How is it possible for a church (or individual) to say, "I am rich, . . . and have need of nothing" and yet be "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (v. 17)?
5. In what ways can affluence tend to mask a church's (or individual's) true spiritual condition?

Steve said:

How should we respond to His discipline? “Therefore be zealous and repent.” If you repent, you go a different direction. You don’t merely feel bad; you don’t wallow in your guilt. You actually turn and go a different direction. If you repent of being complacent and lukewarm, you become zealous. If you’re zealous, you live like you mean it. You are passionate, fervent about walking with God. Understand that this is a command, something that we’re supposed to do. We don’t repent and become zealous in our own strength, but our wills need to be engaged.

6. What, if any, are the areas of lukewarmness in your life where you sense you need to “turn and go a different direction?”

Steve said:

The encouraging thing in this letter is that Jesus quickly follows up His command to “be zealous and repent” with an offer of fellowship. . . All you have to do is “open the door” - say to Jesus, “I want that type of fellowship with You.” You open the door initially when you put your faith in Jesus, and you keep opening the door throughout your life (not that Jesus leaves your life; it’s more a matter of continuing to accept this offer of fellowship). The implication is that the zeal and repentance will come from being in His presence - and not from some type of hyped-up commitment. In other words, His fellowship is what makes a person zealous and repentant.

7. How would you describe your desire to experience close fellowship with Jesus?
8. Read verse 20 again. How do you sense Jesus is leading you to respond to this invitation for fellowship with Him?
9. As you look back on this whole *Making Room* sermon series, what has God been doing in your life?