

Laodicea

Part 1

Speaker	Sidney Thurston
Duration	00:28:16
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/st010/laodicea

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] We ask you to turn to the second chapter of the book of Revelation.

The second chapter of Revelation.

Verse 18.

Verse 18 of Revelation 2, where it says, And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write, Thee sings saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass.

I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first.

[00:01:06] Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which causeth herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants, and to weak things sacrifice unto idols.

Twenty-three.

And I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts. And I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

But unto you I say, the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan as they speak, I will put upon you none other burden, but that which ye have already, [00:02:04] hold fast till I come.

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

Would you turn to Psalm 2? Psalm 2.

Verse 6.

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

I laid me down upon the breast of God in measureless delight, enfolded in that bliss untold, that

wisdom infinite.

[00:03:03] I quote this, beloved saints of God, because he comes out of Thyatira. He comes out of the dark ages.

He comes from one who is shut up in a monastery. He comes from one, nevertheless, who knows the precious Jesus. And although the doctrine was wrong perhaps, the heart was right. And she loved this blessed Jesus.

And these are the lines that she wrote.

I laid me down upon the breast of God. Here's somebody, beloved saints of God, when everything seemed to have gone to pieces, when there was nothing but dark storm clouds all around, there was one here, there was one heart here, probably a solitary heart in the monastery, or the nunnery, whatever it was, there was a heart here that treasured Jesus. Do you think he thought much of this? Beloved saints of God, he treasured it. In his heart, it was a delightful thing to him, that in the dark system that then prevailed, [00:04:01] there was a heart there that made room for himself.

We're living, beloved saints of God, in a somewhat similar time. These are desperate days. These are difficult days.

This is where Thyatira comes in.

When the church fails, beloved saints of God, what happens? The king comes and sets up a kingdom.

You can't defeat God.

All the nations may rail against this precious Jesus, but God is going to highly exalt him.

And in spite of everything, adverse circumstances it might seem, the psalmist says, God says, I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

No defeat, beloved saints of God, up there. No regrets up there.

Even the peerless and impeccable Jesus, you remember, said that he had no regrets.

In other words, he shall see all the fruit of his soul, [00:05:03] fruit of his work, his soul, and he shall be satisfied. Beloved saints of God, it's a wonderful, precious thought that in the Christ, in the glory of this very moment, sits this anointed man and he has no regrets.

It touches people like you and myself. He's satisfied with what he's done. Could it be otherwise? He's done a perfect work. He's completely satisfied with what he's done.

When it comes to response, that might be another thing. But as regards his work, it was perfect. As to the peerless man, of course, he is beyond peer.

He is peerless.

There's no rival, as we've said before, and he's satisfied. This is a great thing, to have and treasure in one's soul that there's a man in the glory who is satisfied with what is the result of the work that he has done.

One thing that comes out in this letter, [00:06:03] and I mustn't be up here many moments, many minutes, there's one thing that comes out in this letter which is of extreme importance and one of the reasons why I've taken the liberty of reading it to you and that is in this epistle comes to light the remnant.

In other words, beloved saints of God, the church of God that was down here following a rejected Jesus who ought to have been wearing widow's weeds, so to speak, is setting herself up with Bridal Ray, Raymond, attiring herself in all that the pride of man and the wilfulness of man will bestow upon her instead of being here subject to the man who is in the glory.

The simple answer to this, beloved saints of God, is that there is a remnant, there is a company in the midst of all the awful profession that's going on. There is a genuine company, that's the remnant. That's why I read it a little bit different from the authorised version. [00:07:03] I didn't stop to explain then. I gather you're intelligent enough to know that what it really says is, unto you I say the rest, not an unto the rest, leave it out, it's not there in the manuscript. I say unto you the remnant in Thyatira.

Blessed be God that even in Thyatira, even in the dark ages, there's a remnant, there's a company who honours the precious Christ, who didn't go after worldly vanity and glory, but who follows humbly and solemnly the rejected Jesus.

If I were to perhaps try to sum up in my own mind what I had before me, and I assure you, beloved brethren, it's a very definite thought, and that is what comes down in one of the verses, hold fast, hold fast.

I appeal, beloved saints of God, especially to young brothers and sisters, to hold fast to what you've got. That's the word, that's the word to our souls tonight, so to speak. [00:08:02] This is God speaking to us. He's saying, I know only too well about Jezebel. I know there's a system set up in the world that is professing to have authority, calling herself a prophetess, that is wanting to add to the word of God. That's what a prophet is. He's one who's telling out the mind of God. But now there's nothing more to tell out. The precious Jesus, the Son of God has been here. It's all been told out in him.

We're living in a time when there's a system. That's what Jezebel is, it's a system. You'll find if you read the word of God that when a woman is introduced, it's often brought before the reader, the idea of a system.

Jezebel is a system. And a system has grown up in the church, beloved. And we are called upon to separate from the system that has grown up in the church. And the reason why, beloved saints of God, it's very apparent here, she calls herself a prophetess. She pretends to be able to add something to what God has said. And that's not all.

It says, she sets out to teach.

[00:09:04] She's not only a prophetess who proclaims to say what the mind of God, which you and I don't know through reading the word, she has something extra and special to tell out, but she sets

out as a teacher.

You read Mr. Darby's letter to the Elishan Times, was it?

No. Somewhere on the West Coast I've forgotten now. He listened or read the sermon of a cardinal.

The church teaches, says the cardinal. That's what Jezebel says. The church teaches. I'm not only a prophetess. I'm telling out the mind of God that you don't understand. But if you want to know, the church teaches. It's a system, you see, that's grown up in the professing church of God.

And then seduce my servants to commit fornication, to eat things, sacrifice unto idols.

How does she do this?

[00:10:02] I'll tell you. And I must be brief, of course.

Sacraments.

You call them sacraments? I say sacraments so you know what I mean. Sacraments.

Baptism.

Baptized into the church.

Communion.

And why do they press baptism and communion? Because it bolsters up priest's craft.

Unless you've got a priest in that system, you can't partake of these things. You must have a priest.

So we must teach this in order to get a priest.

This is a fearful condition that surrounded these four saints of God in Thyatira. And beloved saints of God, the reason I say hold fast to what you have is this. That we are in exactly the same position tonight. We are surrounded by that system which has crept into the professing church. Which for the sake of priest's craft is pressing these sacraments as I've called them. [00:11:03] And at the same time, if I may repeat for myself, professing to be a prophetess, to add to the world. First, professing to be a teacher, the church teaches. And then insisting on the carrying out of the sacraments, the baptism and the communion. Because it's an essential feature in the teaching. Otherwise they wouldn't need a priest. We must have a priest. We must have a priest, you see, that's what we teach. So that's just about it. That's a system, you see, that has grown up. And we have to beware of course of the principles that are enunciated by such a picture as this. We may think we're entirely free from all these things. We may think we're safe.

Beloved, when you feel you're safe, that's when you're in most danger of that. Let us be exceedingly dependent as we've heard so many, many, many times this week.

But beloved, let us be obedient.

To obey is better than sacrifice.

Oh beloved saints of God, I wish we could take it to heart. [00:12:02] It's so simple. Yet your whole Christian life, the happiness in the Christian life, all depends upon that little word obey. It's surprising, but it's true. To obey.

You sound very busy.

I've been told it, often enough. Every night I'm doing something. I'm giving out tracts. I'm distributing this. I'm attending missionary meetings. I'm stitching for the Congo. I'm busy.

I'm busy.

I'm busy.

I'm too busy to obey.

Far too busy to listen to what God has to say. You know, beloved, I've had to tell myself sometimes. I think our brother said in his prayer tonight. He knows better than I.

You'll have to come down to this sooner or later. God knows better.

We may say, oh, but it's the proper thing to do. Obviously you must do these things.

To obey is better than sacrifice.

You hear that? To hearken.

That's it.

To obey.

To hearken to what God has to say. To carry it out. These things, beloved saints of God, are written so that we may carry them out. [00:13:02] Why do you think God has taken the trouble to talk to you and to me if he didn't intend us to listen to what he says? And having listened to carry it out in effect in our Christian pathway. Of course he has.

So here we have our Jezebel.

It's already come to your mind. I doubt not about the woman, the scarlet woman, later on in Revelation. I have no question at all in my own mind that this Jezebel and that woman are linked. I don't need to tell you the kind of woman Jezebel was. Neither do I. You know what she was. There is nothing too evil, too corrupt for her to go in for.

I'm not in a position, of course, to talk about other people and where they've gone wrong. But you don't need me to open your eyes as to what Jezebel speaks about.

This awful Christless system that one day is coming under judgment.

Beloved saints of God, do you and I want to be in a system upon which the judgment of [00:14:03] God is going to fall?

You say, of course I don't. Well, let it be. Don't let us get mixed up with these things. It would be like what, you know, dragged out of Sodom. You don't want to be like that, do you? You want to be like Paul. Ends his career in triumph. Hold fast.

Isn't that the burden?

Hold fast.

Things are slipping, beloved saints of God, all around. You and I have the immense privilege of holding fast.

I remember in the early, the first week of the year, I believe, brother wrote to me from And I replied, the motto for 1980 is, fidelity to Christ.

That's your motto, beloved. Fidelity to Christ. Doesn't matter a little bit what else happens. It doesn't matter.

I don't say we ought to be slothful of anything out there. But I'm pressing this, beloved, that we must obey the word of God. [00:15:02] If we want to be happy, if we want to enjoy divine things, if we want the assembly to prosper, we need to obey.

The danger of not obeying is that we put our own thoughts into action, and we listen to what brothers say, perhaps, or our own minds say, and we're immediately led astray. Haven't we had it over and over again this week? One mind.

Beloved.

He says to Sintike, he says to Sintike, you'll have to let that idea go. He says to lotus, lotus, you'll have to let it go. I'm sorry, they'll have to go. There's only one mind.

That's the Lord's mind. You see then. If you and I be here for him, if we're to follow this stranger, so to speak, on this pilgrimage, it is essential that there should be only one mind controlling all activities, and the activities, of course, of all the saints of God. And I said this afternoon, Paul knew what you and I perhaps have failed to grasp, that when any little thing like this comes in, it can easily disrupt the whole assembly. [00:16:04] Paul was a wise spiritual man, and he saw it coming under the door of the teenagers which they had to wait. And he stopped it.

How did he stop it?

One mind.

His mind.

All the loved saints of God, it's not difficult. This is why I'm trying to press it as I could upon your soul. It's not a difficult path. It's the easiest path in the world. It's a simple path. It's a path of a mere slave,

who doesn't have to bother about anything else but to do as he's told.

That's why I said this afternoon, you don't have fellowship with the Lord, because he's Lord. You don't have fellowship with your master, you do as he tells you. Paul knows that. The Spirit of God knows that. When he talks of communion, he immediately changes from Lord to Christ. It's the blood of Christ. Communion with the blood of Christ, not the blood of the Lord. It was his blood, I'm not denying it. I'm just saying the Spirit of God is careful enough to distinguish between the Lordship of Christ, and his being the anointed man, the one who shed his precious blood, and because [00:17:01] of his intrinsic worth, is adorning the throne of the Father at this very moment. Beloved, it's a joy to your soul. It will make your heart dance with merriment to know that there's a man in the glory, and you and I belong there. Do you know what it says? I don't want to be awkward. Seated.

Take it to heart.

Seated in heavenly places. Do you want to disturb it? Do you want to bring something that's going to cause a ruffle in those heavenly places? Seated in Christ, in heavenly places. O beloved saints of God, can we but grasp we belong to the family of God, and we belong there, the Father's house. Where do you find the Father's house? Rest. See that?

I've never rested on my legs. One rests upon a chair or in a bed.

God has a rest for us. It's in the Father's house. If we once grasp the precious truth that we are as he is in the glory, and that we belong to him, we're a member of the family of God, we shall be as family, men and women, boys and girls.

We belong to the vast family of God. And we shall learn that as a family, he has nothing in his mind for us, but rest in the [00:18:05] Father's house.

Well, 23, until our children were dead.

I suppose that's spiritual death.

Apostasy.

Apostasy comes in. And then he says, unto you I say, that rest in thy chair. This is 24.

As many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, I put upon you none other burden, but that which ye have already.

All fast.

Not till Jezebel repents. It's never anticipated that she's going to repent. All fast.

Until I come.

I should have said all I need to say really.

All fast, beloved saints of God, for the things that we've got. Until he comes.

Things are not going to get better. Corruption is not going to be eased. [00:19:01] It's going to go worse and worse. But it's coming. All fast.

All fast at all costs.

All fast to what you have. Until he comes. You say, well what have I? You tell me, beloved.

Some people immediately ask of what they have, they say, I've got forgiveness of sins. I talked to two men on board ship, not so very long ago. And they talked to me on those lines.

And when I said, what have I got?

Oh, I've got a man of the glory. Man of the glory.

Baptist minister one of them. Leader in the catamystic moment, or whatever you call it in the other. Never heard of such a thing. They looked at me as though I was mad. A man of the glory. Beloved, you have a savior, so have I. But let us understand that he's saved you in order so that you can start climbing. In order to stop there. We're always hearing about the saviorship of Jesus. Of course, he's the most precious savior. No question at all. He's far more than that, beloved. Far, far more than your savior. He became your savior because he wanted to put you on the path. [00:20:02] Some brothers and sisters never seem to take one step along the path. They are 40 years after still praising the savior for what he's done for the sins. They never somehow or other have seemed to join John the Baptist. On that day, the next day, when he said, Behold the Lamb of God. He doesn't say anything about his works. The first day he says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. That's the man in his work. Have you ever heard the voice, beloved, from the scripture, Behold the Lamb of God.

No mention of works.

And why?

If you want to magnify the works of Jesus, and we all do. Of course we do.

What does it mean? We're self-centered. He's done it for me. What other thing is it?

He's done all this for me, for me. Glory to the man in the glory who did something for God. You and I are linked with this heavenly man. We're seated with him. We're the same nature as him. We take the same character. We go into the same place. [00:21:01] We're already there. We belong there.

You and I tread those courts, or do we? We tread those courts, beloved, because we belong to the family. We have every right to be there. God will never raise a finger and say, you can't come in. We might be reluctant.

The returned prodigal was very reluctant. Oh, it's a simple matter to remove reluctance. The wisdom of the Father comes out.

The Father simply says, bring forth a bestrow. You're reluctant to go in, my boy? Put on the bestrow. I can understand if you're in rank, you won't want to go in. Put on the bestrow. Put a ring on his finger.

Shoes on his feet. And he says, come in.

Let us go to you, beloved saints of God.

What is being said there is worth pondering. Let us.

Who? Let us be married.

You know, beloved saints of God, you've been saved because God wants to be married. [00:22:01] And he wants you to enter into the glee of heaven and be in the merriment of heavenly places. And he says, they began to be married.

Awful faces?

They're all gone.

Sad hearts?

Often stricken, I know, by the circumstances, but generally speaking, sad hearts overcome by the sense of what the blessing of God the Father has done for those erstwhile prodigals who one day down there were almost ready to say, make me one of thy high servants.

Beloved, how little we understand the heart of the Father. If you and I think he wants high servants, he doesn't. He wants sons.

When he sent a pharaoh, you remember, he said, let my son go. What a tussle we had by reading this year. Just because we said, let my son go.

God said it, I didn't.

It's the son, the son.

[00:23:01] It's grand, I know, to talk about the precious blood being put on the lintel and side posts, so to speak. But it's important we should understand why and what the effect was. And understand he had a son there that he's going to bring out of Egypt.

And as our brother pointed out last night, my whole heart went with him. Into a good man.

Oh, beloved, how good. How wonderful. How precious.

I saw my Irish brother looking at me last night. Because I took this up in Kilkeel two weeks ago. Very same thing. And I wondered whether my brother was going to contradict anything I said. But thank God he didn't.

Thank God he didn't. It's a good land. No question at all about it. There's nothing like it, beloved saints of God. It's all the Jordan. You feed on the whole corn of the land. Do you know, beloved saints of God, God has something treasured up. Treasured up in the heavens for you. He wants you to feed upon it. He says, look, I want you to take a look at my crust. I want you to understand what I

think of him. Come and feed upon what I've treasured up for you. [00:24:03] When at last I've got you. Perhaps very reluctantly, all the Jordan into the land which flows with milk and honey. Sustenance and communion are found there, beloved saints of God. Well, I've been on here too long, I feel. Why I read Psalm 2.

It might seem a long way away from Revelation 2.

We need to understand Psalm 2 if we're to understand the letter to Thyatira.

You notice what the man or the person who is an overcomer gets.

What he gets, beloved, comes out in Psalm 2.

That's why it's introduced by the Son of God. Power is needed, beloved.

Extraordinary thing it says. He shall rule them with a rod of iron. I don't think for a minute I'm going to rule them with a rod of iron alone. I believe I'm going to be with the precious Christ when he rules them with a rod of iron. [00:25:05] And this is the promise to the overcomer. That's why it's prefaced with the Son of God. And that's why I've linked up Psalm 2. Because this is what is given to the overcomer.

That he, in that day, will be with the Christ of God when he comes in power and great glory and rules here for God.

So, I will give him the morning star.

You carry in your heart, beloved.

You're carrying in your affections.

I don't think we understand what an important part the affections play in the things of God. We say a great deal about faith. But I'm almost convinced that affection, love for Christ, will take us where faith, somehow or other, doesn't seem to get us. Love, beloved saints, affection, is a wonderful motive, one might say.

[00:26:02] And also a wonderful attractive part.

And here it says, I will give him the morning stars. So you see, beloved, you carry away, so to speak, in your heart, the sense of the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And then finally, just ending on the note we tried to begin with, to obey is better than sacrifice. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

I haven't time, or rather, we've passed over much. I'd like perhaps just to point out, there are two kinds of works mentioned here at least. One would dwell upon my works, his works, the works of the Son of God. But the other works, he is among the churches here. And you notice his feet are, what does it say about them, brazen, isn't it?

Verse, like fine bronze.

[00:27:03] His feet are like fine bronze. In other words, beloved, he's judging. And what's he judging? Works.

Simple enough, works.

He distinguishes between works and my works. He recognizes there are works down there, but he says, you're allowing, you are permitting, Jezebel to be in your midst.

And he cannot tolerate Jezebel in the midst.

And what does he do? As Peter would have said, he brings to light for the first time in church history, such a thing as a remnant.

I know this is denied. I've heard it denied quite recently. It's denied all around us. Because it would touch dispensational truth. Many, many Christians are not believers in dispensational truth in 1918.

I know only too well. But beloved, this is the fact.

He's bowing among the churches. [00:28:02] He has a discerning eye.

And when judgment comes, it's not going to be judgment according to your profession. It's going to be judgment according to her works.