

THE



"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)

December 2013

No. 336

RE: LAODICEA

To: Jesus

Cc: The Philadelphians

It was really good to hear from you, Jesus, and we appreciate your letter to us in Revelation 3:14-22. We realize the letters you wrote to the seven congregations in Revelation 2 and 3 represent periods of time in the Church, so we know you are talking directly to us. While here in Laodicea we always take your praise and criticism in equal reverence, we felt that you were a little harsh on us. Thus, we would like to address some of your criti-

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cisms in this response.

First off, what do you mean by "lukewarm"? You accuse us of being neither hot nor cold (Rev. 3:15). How could you say this to us? We have really good attendance. Well, on Sunday mornings we typically do...sometimes. But at least we come, right? Sure, we don't have the attendance that the generation before us had, but who does these days?

Speaking of, we saw what you wrote to them, the Philadelphians (Rev. 3:7-13). Maybe they spoiled you. It's not fair to hold us to those same high standards they set. They had excellent attendance, great zeal, and a thirst for knowledge. We've heard they were even once called "Bible Thumpers" because of their familiarity and knowledge of the scriptures. I guess you could say they delighted in the law of their Lord (Psa. 1:2)...not that we don't. We just aren't as obvious about it.

You see, Jesus, it's not that we don't care. We're just really busy! Have you seen what all we do? We have to go to school or work for eight or nine hours. That's exhausting! Once we get back home, we just want to relax. We deserve some "me" time by then, don't we? We don't mind studying the Bible, praying, or visiting fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. It's just that we need to relax first. We need to feel our best so we can give God our best, right? Plus, there's just so much entertainment on the TV and Internet to help with our "me" time. Those Philadelphians didn't have all of that to take up their time. They just worked really hard, studied the Bible, and worked to spread the Word. We can't do that. It's not that we don't care about serving God; it's that we're just too busy. Wait, that sounds bad...

Anyway, on top of that, those of us with kids have an even greater load! We've got to get

them to and from school, practice, lessons, and everything else. It just often leaves us with few if any nights where the whole family is together having dinner. We often don't even know what our children are up to when they're out with their friends. We trust them, however. We may not see them study their Bibles often, but I'm sure they're really quite knowledgeable. They're just really busy with more school and other activities than those Philadelphians ever were. They deserve the time to watch TV and play video games instead of studying the Bible. We Laodiceans think so, anyway. Besides, our kids go with us every Sunday morning. Attendance is what counts, right?

We're not quite sure what you meant when you said we claim to be *"rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"* (Rev. 3:17). We are rich! In fact, we're rich with knowledge. While we don't have the thirst for knowledge on an individual basis like the Philadelphians before us, we have more knowledge in whole. We have it all figured out! We know how the parts of the worship service are to go, we have divorce and remarriage figured out, and so much more. So while our knowledge on an individual basis may not match generations of the Church that came before us, we're perfectly fine as long as we attend a congregation who does everything right. So unless you're lecturing us about how little knowledge each one of us has compared to those Philadelphians, we don't see how we're wretched, poor, or blind.

Jesus, the bottom line is that we're too busy working, relaxing, or doing something more entertaining than serving God. Wait, that came out wrong...

From: The Laodiceans

RE: RE: LAODICEA

To: Laodiceans

Cc: Jesus

You are our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. You are forgetting the lessons we worked hard to instill in you and to spread to others. Not only must you delight in the law of the Lord (Psa. 1:2), but you must also direct your families to do so as well: *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* (Eph. 6:4).

From: The Philadelphians

RE: RE: LAODICEA

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matt. 22:37)

From: Jesus

BEN

APOLOGIA

QUESTION: Since the 'Ten Commandments' are part of the Law of Moses, are Christians obligated to obey them?

ANSWER: Although the Ten Commandments are part of the Law of Moses, the concepts of all but the fourth commandment, *"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy"* are found in the New Testament. The Ten Commandments are listed in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

1. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* (Exo. 20:3, Deut. 5:7)
2. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.* (Exo. 20:4, Deut. 5:8)

3. *Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain. (Exo. 20:7, Deut. 5:11)*
4. *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. (Exo. 20:8, Deut. 5:12)*
5. *Honour thy father and thy mother. (Exo. 20:12, Deut. 5:16)*
6. *Thou shalt not kill. (Exo. 20:13, Deut. 5:17)*
7. *Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Exo. 20:14, Deut. 5:18)*
8. *Thou shalt not steal. (Exo. 20:15, Deut. 5:19)*
9. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. (Exo. 20:16, Deut. 5:20)*
10. *Thou shalt not covet. (Exo. 20:17, Deut. 5:21)*

In Acts 15 we find where the Jewish Christians were trying to bind circumcision required under the Law of Moses on the Gentile Christians. Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to discuss this matter with the apostles and elders. In verses 28 and 29 we find the decision of the apostles and elders on this matter.

For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (Acts 15:28-29)

In Romans 7 we find we are dead to the law.

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. (Rom. 7:6)

In Ephesians 2 we see that the law of commandments has been abolished.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; (Eph. 2:14-15)

In Colossians 2 Paul more graphically describes the elimination of the Law of Moses.

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (Col. 2:14)

These verses indicate to us that Christians are no longer bound by the Law of Moses.

As mentioned before, one can find that all but one of the Ten Commandments do indeed apply to Christians. Below are a few of the verses written for Christians after the death and resurrection of Christ and thus under the New Testament ("*For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator*" (Heb. 9:16)).

1. *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am*

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thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: (Rev. 19:10)

2. *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. (1 John 5:21)*
3. *That the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. (1 Tim. 6:1)*
4. *Even though the Sabbath Day is mentioned frequently in the New Testament, there is no indication that Christians are obligated to "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." On the contrary, Paul writes, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:" (Col. 2:16)*
5. *Children, obey your parents in all things: (Col. 3:20)*
6. *Thou shalt not kill. (Rom. 13:9)*
7. *Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Rom. 13:9)*
8. *Thou shalt not steal. (Rom. 13:9)*
9. *Thou shalt not bear false witness. (Rom. 13:9)*
10. *Thou shalt not covet. (Rom. 13:9)*

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. What was the name of Ruth's son?
 2. What animal did Samson kill on his way to Timnah?
 3. To which tribe did Jesus belong?
 4. Which prisoner did the crowd call for to be released when Pilate asked them?
 5. What does James say we should say when we make our future plans?
- ...and remember last month's questions?

Gospel Meetings

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
December 7 - 8	Willow Oaks Russell Springs, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
December 12 - 15	Cullman Cullman, AL	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY) James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
December 27 - 29	Oak Grove Eubank, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
December 27 - 29	Verona Verona, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)

1. Elias prayed earnestly that it not rain. How long did it not rain? 3 YEARS AND 6 MONTHS (James 5:17)
2. According to Ruth 4:22 what relation was Ruth to David? GREAT-GRANDMOTHER
3. How many sons were born to David in Hebron? SIX (2 Samuel 3:5)
4. In healing the blind man Christ spit in his eyes, put his hand on him, and asked him what he saw. What was his answer? "I SEE MEN AS TREES, WALKING" (Mark 8:22-24)
5. What city was Peter in when Cornelius sent for him? JOPPA (Acts 10:5)

Last month's Search the Scriptures questions were submitted by A. D. Pendergrass.