

From the following we see that the message to the Laodiceans is to bear fruit, that many will learn to choose the good and to refuse the evil:

When the day approaches for this scripture to be fulfilled, then its truth must be the "meat in due season" for the people at that time. Nothing else can take its place. And so we see that as Nineveh was spared by the message to it, so the Laodiceans can only be saved by the "Message to the Laodiceans."

Ezek. 9:4-6—And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others He said in mine hearing, Go after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

"This sealing of the servants of God [the 144,000] is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision. John also had been a witness of this most startling revelation."

To further realize that we need to study in order to recognize the abominations that surround us, and to know how to avoid them, I shall read from *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 445:

meat in due season." Matt. 24:45, 46.

"In the time when his wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul-anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, those who have a zeal for God's honor and a love for souls, will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. Their righteous souls are vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with grief and alarm. They mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 210.

Since we now clearly see that the Laodiceans perish without the message to the Laodiceans, we should hold fast to the Truth for this time, and win our crown of life, and in addition to it we shall be credited with a good harvest of souls and with the commendation "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Matt. 25:23.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring

ourselves do not know, declares Inspiration: but how shall we know what sin is? We of would be, Repent from sinning. This is true, shall one repent?—Broadly speaking, the answer Now therefore arises the question, Of what

follows the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then Baptism is therefore the gate to the Church. The ticket to baptism, we see, is repentance.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38.

Text of Address by V. T. Houteff,
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Sabbath, December 20, 1947
Mt. Carmel Chapel
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BAPTISM AND THE LORD OUR
RIGHTeousNESS—
THE GATE TO THE CHURCH

TEXT FOR PRAYER

Amusements Bring A Flood Of Temptations

Our reading today begins on page 54 of *Christ's Object Lessons*.

"Even the church, which should be the pillar and ground of the truth, is found encouraging the selfish love of pleasure. When money is to be raised for religious purposes, to what means do many churches resort?—To bazaars, suppers, fancy fairs, even to lotteries, and like devices. Often the place set apart for God's worship is desecrated by feasting and drinking, buying, selling, and merry-making. . . . The pursuit of pleasure and amusement centers in the cities. Many parents who choose a city home for their children, thinking to give them greater advantages, meet with disappointment, and too late repent their terrible mistake. The cities of to-day are fast becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah. . . . The youth are swept away by the popular current. Those who learn to love amusement for its own sake, open the door to a flood of temptations. . . . They are led on from one form of dissipation to another, until they lose both the desire and the capacity for a life of usefulness."

Let us now pray for both the parents and the children, for the Church herself at her low-ebb is encouraging worldliness by her unholy methods of raising money; God's house is desecrated, and the cities are become like Sodom and Gomorrah. Let us pray that we as parents and guardians will keep close to the Master and seek Divine aid in bringing up the children in God's own order, for their very salvation is at stake.

Until the Lord takes us back to our own land, though, there to change our hearts and to write on them His law (Ezek. 36:24-28), until then the struggle in which the apostle Paul found himself—a struggle to obey the law of the Spirit while the law of the flesh is against it—is to be our lot. But we thank God who gives us power to overcome day by day in the Lord our Saviour.

All who repent of breaking the law, and accept Him as their Saviour, arise to walk in newness of life. A life that is in harmony with the law is indeed the righteousness of Christ. They, moreover, no longer sin, their salvation is secured because, says the apostle John, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1. He therefore cannot sin, or stay in sin. He is righteous in the Lord.

From these verses of Scripture you see that the law of the ten commandments, the eternal law which defines sin, and which judges a man either right or wrong. Now, since all mankind has broken this law, they are all condemned to eternal death, but we thank God that Jesus died in our stead and arose again, making us free from the condemnation of the law. Yes, His death and resurrection make us all free from the death which transgression of the law imposes.

Rom. 7:19-25. *ami Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.*

Him. He that saith He abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2:3-6.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment. Matt. 5:17-21.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Romans 8:6, 7.

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I

Verse 9— . . . *Hear ye the rod, and Who hath*

For further information Inspiration advises—
sacrificing their first-born.
are willing to do almost anything, even to need for revival and reformation, God's people
Once having caught the vision of the great

*humbly with thy God?
but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk
good; and what doth the Lord require of thee,
Micah 6:8—He hath shewed thee, O man, what is*

et Micah:
same answer comes to us today through the proph-
never replace judgment, mercy, and faith. This
their credit, said the Lord, but tithing should
faith." Matt. 23:23. Honest tithing was to
her matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and
anise, and cunning, but they omitted "the weight-
the minutest item of income, on such as mint,
were very particular about paying tithes even on
in the days of Christ's first advent: The Jews
out our churches. This same condition obtained
own eyes actually see this very thing through-
for the remission of their sins. We with our
haps the most acceptable gift they can offer
a gift of some kind from material things is per-
ing of this scripture reveals what they think
This inquiry by the people in the unfold-

*calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased
with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands
of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn
for my transgression, the fruit of my body for
the sin of my soul?*

appointed it.

These are God's answers to the question, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?"

Since we are asked to do "justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with [our] God," it must be that we as a people are not practicing these things, that there is dishonesty, inconsiderateness, and pride. We are glad, though, that we are not hopelessly condemned for our iniquities, but that we are invited to give them up, to forsake them, if we expect to stand on Mount Zion with the Lamb.

Through the prophet Ezekiel we are shown wherein we abuse the gift of mercy and justice:

Ezek. 34:21, 22, 31—Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; therefore will I save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. . . . And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.

The diseased, the weak, are of course those who are less influential, and for one reason or another are unable to hold their own. These are pushed and horned out by the stronger, the unjust and unmerciful class, the class who control the work. This class is nevertheless eventually to be judged.

There is but one safe course to pursue if we would find favor with the Lord, and that course is out lined by the prophet Isaiah:

that we have been baptized to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

If this be not true of us, then it is certain that we shall never advance any further in the knowledge of God, Christ, or His Truth,—no, not any further than we were the day we were baptized. Those who do this become dwarfs instead of grown-up Christians, never reaching the fullness of the stature of Christ, for they are satisfied to be what they are; they feel in need of nothing more than what they got at baptism; they are as unmovable as were the priests, scribes, and Pharisees in Jesus' day. God forbid that any of us should thus lose out.

left without hope.

Rev. 3:18—*I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

The gold tried in the fire obviously represents inspired Truth for this time, the only truth that saves, the only kind God would sell. And what can be the white raiment which the True Witness urges them to buy, if not the righteousness of Christ?

And what must one do to obtain these?—We shall find the answer in—

Mic. 6:5—*O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.*

Here we are admonished to remember Balak's question and Balaam's answer if we would know the righteousness of the Lord. Let us turn to—

Num. 24:17-24—*I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and*

among God's people."—*Early Writings*, p. 270.

"God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.

"A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend."—*Christ Our Righteousness*, p. 121.

With such a guileless company of servants brought to light, the subject becomes unquestionably clear. They can with power proclaim the "everlasting Gospel," the gospel of the kingdom in all the world, for a witness unto all nations. Of those that escape the slaying (Isa. 66:16), the guileless ones, the Lord says:

I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the Isles afar off, that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord.

in Matthew, chapters 5, 6 and 7, the sermon on the mount. Even after baptism we should do well to read these chapters often, lest we forget.

After we have received worthily the baptism of water we are patiently and confidently to wait for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire. This promise, we shall now see, the disciples received on the day of Pentecost.

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. Acts 1:4, 5.

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren. Acts 1:12-14.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:3, 4.

Never since that day have men been thus baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. Indeed,

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against it, and this is what will cause a shaking and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear their straight testimony. They will rise up and will lead him to exalt the standard of the True Witness upon the heart of the Laodiceans. This straight testimony called forth by the count- seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the shaking of the shaking I had asked the meaning of the shaking I had were before the house." Ezek. 9:1, 2, 4-6.

tuary. Then they began at the ancient man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanc- little children, and women; but come not near any pity: stay utterly old and young, both maids, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye hearing. Go ye after him through the city, and midst thereof. And to the others He said in mine cry for all the abominations that be done in the upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark unto him, Go through the midst of the city, stood beside the brazen altar. . . . And the Lord said among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's man a slaughterer weapon in his hand; and one man gate, which lieth toward the north, and every behold, six men came from the way of the higher man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And charge over the city to draw near, even every with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have ture reveals: "He cried also in mine scrip- will take place exactly as the following Scrip- cost. This is what now must take place, and it revival and reformation since the day of Pente- opinions, it would indeed bring the greatest one were to cast away his private ideas and as she has never yet experienced. Yes, it every- val and reformation, a shaking, a sitting, such

they could not have been, for never since then has a group of Christians, a church, come into one accord. There is nevertheless a promise of another such baptism after the "former rain, and the latter rain" fall upon God's people, after His people reach full spiritual maturity.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. . . . And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. Joel 2:23, 28, 29.

The statement, "upon all flesh," shows that as a people, without one exception, all shall again receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

This scripture shows, moreover, that the manifestation of the Spirit, in the second Pentecost, is to be much greater than the former, that in comparison the former was but a sample.

When will this be?—It will have to be just as soon as God can get a company of people to "see eye to eye" (Isa. 52:8) that their own so-called good deeds are but filthy rags, and thus be of one accord. The only such company in prophecy, you know, is the 144,000, the first fruits, the servants of God who stand on Mount Zion with the Lamb without guile in their mouths (Rev. 14:1, 4, 5). To achieve such a happy holy state the Church must experience a mighty revi-

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When people are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked as are the Laodiceans, and do Vol. 3, pp. 252-253.

and his testimony must be correct."—*Testimonies*, The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. True Witness breaks their security by the start- exalted spiritual condition, the message of the are flattering themselves that they are in an die in the sight of God. While those addressed- They know not that their condition is deplora- sad deception, yet honest in that deception. the True Witness finds the people of God in a right, when they are all wrong! The message of man minds than a confidence that they are

"What greater deception can come upon hu- miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or Rev. 3:15-17—I know thy works, that thou art

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Sabbath, December 27, 1947

"MESSAGE TO THE LAODICEANS"

THE LAODICEANS PERISH WITHOUT THE

not know it, then the only title that can be given them is "Deceived," yet ironically the Laodiceans are the people most fearful of being deceived! They think themselves in need of nothing, although the Lord Himself says that they are in need of everything. They think themselves rich and increased with goods. What goods?—Not money, I am sure, for right along we hear them calling for money, even begging for it.

It is with supposedly sufficient Bible Truth that they are satisfied. They are confident that they have all the revealed Truth they need to take them through to the Kingdom. This is their great deception. They do not know their great need of Truth now while the Church is about to enter upon the final phase of her work. They do not realize that this next phase of the Church's work cannot be carried on with her old phase of Truth. The Church now can no more do without the additional message (*Early Writings*, p. 277) than could she at the closing of the Old Testament era have entered the Christian dispensation with the Old Testament ceremonial Truth isolated from the Gospel.

But, sad to say, to speak to the Laodiceans of more Truth than what they already have is to incur their greatest displeasure: and the idea that they need no more Truth, that they have it all, and that someone is always trying to deceive them, has been drilled into them as deeply as it can be drilled. This has made them prejudiced and suspicious of everyone who dares approach them with something new. This is what puts them in as bad a position as the Jews of old. Plain it is that if the Laodiceans choose thus to remain lukewarm, satisfied in their deception, they shall be spued out and forever

