

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

The Seven Churches of Revelation: Laodicea

Revelation 3:14-22

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SERMON SYNOPSIS

- The city of Laodicea was wealthy as it had a thriving banking industry and was a trade centre. They gained their wealth from three main sources/industries – gold, the production of a fine quality glossy black wool, and the production of an eye oilment in treating eye and ear infections. However, they lacked their own water supply and would get their water either from hot springs from the northern city of Hierapolis or cool spring water from Colossae in the south via aqueducts or transported overland. By the time the water reached Laodicea, it lost its heat or coolness and would be lukewarm.
- Jesus' rebuke of them was that they were lukewarm: indifferent to Jesus and not making a difference to the lives of people around them (v16). Their indifference arose because they were influenced by the culture around them in the pursuit of wealth, prosperity and achievement. They became self-sufficient rather than Christ-sufficient (v17).
- In His rebuke, Jesus was challenging them to turn away from their earthly sources of riches to focus on His Kingdom solutions for true wealth and security. Refined gold – seek His glory and kingdom first; white garments – righteousness of Christ; eye salve – to see God's truth and God's perspective (v18).
- The solution to indifference is to stay in intimate fellowship with Jesus. The invitation of Jesus knocking on the door for us to open to Him, is an assurance of His presence here and now; His love and desire for us to spend time with Him (v20). Jesus also calls us to be overcomers just as He overcame (v21). We can overcome challenges not by our own effort but through faith in Jesus (1 John 5:4-5). Our faith in Him is not misplaced. Because Jesus assures us that He is the one who makes certain of all He says, He is steadfast and holds all things together (v14).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The sermon highlighted a 2012 Gallop survey result that revealed that Singaporeans were the most emotionless among 150 nations. Opinions to the results were that Singaporeans are apathetic to societal events because we strive for economic success and miss out on life. What do you think and do you think this applies to you?

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2. What can we learn from Scripture in how one can slip into indifference and the consequences of it?
[Verses to help us go deeper: Psalm 36:1; Matthew 13:22; Proverbs 30:8-9; Proverbs 8:13]

3. Symptoms of spiritual indifference can be very subtle, eg. lack of concern for winning souls for Christ, attending church only when it's convenient, lack of participation in congregational singing, lack of punctuality for service, indifferent to the needs of others, hurrying through Bible reading or prayer. Do you recognize any possible symptoms of spiritual indifference in your life and how can you prevent your earthly focus or passions from causing you to be indifferent to Jesus?
[Verses to help us go deeper: Ephesians 6:7; Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank the Lord that it is because of His love for us that He convicts and corrects us.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to bring up attitudes, actions and bad habits in your life that is causing you to be indifferent to Jesus. Confess it to Jesus and ask the Holy Spirit to help you turn away from it.
- Ask the Lord to increase your faith so that you can be an overcomer.

MEMORY VERSE

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me." [Revelation 3:20, NASB]

PRACTICAL HANDLE

Are there any specific symptoms of spiritual indifference creeping into your life that you identified in Question 3? If punctuality to service is an issue, set off 15 minutes earlier to get to church so that you can come unhurried and prepared to worship God. If lack of Quiet Time with God is an issue, set a specific time of the day for QT, you might even want to put it into your phone calendar with an alarm to remind you.