

The Spirit of Laodicea

Revelation 3:14-22

But in what the Spirit said to the church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval: it was lukewarm, without exception; and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter.

They would attend to it just as they did to other things, which they loved as well. The sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross was nothing thought of more than a common gift by man. They were not constrained by the love of Christ more than by other feelings. They could repeat the words of the first great commandment of the law, and of the second, which is like unto it; but they showed no sign that the one or the other was truly a law to them.

There was no Dorcas among them, who, out of pure Christian love, made clothes for the poor. There was no Philemon to whom it could be said, "The church in thy house," and who could look on a Christian servant as a "brother beloved."

There was no servant who looked to the eye of His Father in heaven more than to that of his master on earth, and to the recompense of eternal reward more than to the hireling wages of the day; and who, by showing all good fidelity, sought to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. There was nothing done as everything should be, heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

They neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless than if they had been cold. For sooner would a man in Sardis have felt that the chill of death was upon him, and have cried out for life, and called to the physician, than would a man in Laodicea, who could calmly count his even pulse, and think his life secure, while death was preying on his vitals. The character of lukewarm Christians, a self-contradicting name, is the same in every age. Such was the church of the Laodiceans...

(Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion Derived from the Literal Fulfilment of Prophecy... by Alexander Keith, Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, n.d., 355-356, Paragraph Structure Modified)