

The Laodicean **CHURCH**

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; ‘These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.’” (Revelation 3: 14-16)



The Golden Rule Of Interpretation

Created By Dr. David L. Cooper

Trying to understand what the Bible is saying can be difficult. I have discovered a way which has helped many people. It is known as Dr Cooper's Golden Rule. It is the rule that we will follow in this series.

“When the plain sense of scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic (i.e. self-evident or unquestionable) and fundamental truths indicate clearly otherwise.”

“A. Seek the plain, literal meaning of the scriptures.

“B. Seek the figurative meaning only when the facts demand such an interpretation.

“C. Study every statement of the scriptures in context.

“Then study the facts of the context in the light of related passages and axiomatic (*i.e. self-evident or unquestionable*) fundamental truths.

“No prophecy of scripture is of private (special) interpretation (2 Peter 1:20)

“The sum of thy word is truth (Psalm 119:160)

“1. *The Golden Rule of Interpretation* is one of the most important principles governing us in our interpretation of the Scriptures.

“2. If we follow this rule, we shall never go very far wrong; **but if we fail to follow it, we shall never go right.**”

C. H. Spurgeon agrees,

“I wish never to learn the art of tearing God's meaning out of His own Words. If there is anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of (the) passage, (it's) a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualised away. (C. H. Spurgeon Sermon No. 582 on-line source)

(“Cooper's Golden Rule” source: <http://www.messianicassociation.org/ezine19-dc.hermeneutics.htm>)

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Introduction:

The Laodicean Church

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; “These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3: 14-16)

This page introduces another series of “Single Paged Papers” regarding the Laodicean age of the Church. Each page in this series is complete in itself and may be understood without reference to other pages. However the pages collectively will paint an ever expanding picture of this subject.

The Laodicean Church was a Church in Asia (now called Turkey) that John addressed. The words he used came from a direct revelation by God viz...

- *“The Revelation of Jesus Christ,*
- *which God gave unto Him,*
- *to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass;*
- *and He sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.” (Revelation 1:1)*

The seven Churches of Asia are addressed in turn and some are commended for their witness and faithfulness, whilst others condemned for their lack of it. The message begins ...

“John to the seven Churches that are in Asia. Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne;” (Revelation 1:4)

Many prophecy students have observed that each Church represents a certain period of time (or era) in Church history with some eras covering centuries. In every era the Church is either faithful and advancing, or going badly. The reasons for their backward slide, or growth in the Lord are given in the message to that Church. (These “Church ages” are covered in greater detail. Click here: <https://www.thesinglepagedpapers.com/revelation-timeline>)

This does not mean that the Churches in some eras were totally good and faithful, and other eras lacked all that was holy. In all the ages of the Church there has been a faithful Church, and this will continue. The faithful Church will always coexists with other Churches who run their own race with little or no reference to the truths of God. Such is the history of the Church throughout the ages.

When we come to the Laodicean Church we find that John records nothing favourable about it. The Laodicean Church considered themselves to be doing well, but God describes them like this:

“You say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and don’t know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and

blind, and naked: I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with ointment, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (Rev 3:17-189)

The plain reading of the time frame presented in Revelation shows that the Laodicean Church will be most active in the final era before Christ returns in great glory. It is a Church that God in His love rebukes. As John reveals, the Laodicean Church exhibits deceptive wealth coupled with arrogance: *“we have need of nothing,”* but that is not how God describes them. He says that they are *“poor, and blind, and naked.”*

What does that mean for us? The Laodicean age appears in the latter days of the Church. It is the age of which Jesus says, *Nevertheless when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)*

If the latter days are upon us then we would expect to see a Church that appears wealthy and in need of nothing, but inwardly it is lacking the Light that only Christ can give.

The following words are very familiar to many Christians and they were spoken by Christ Himself directly to the Laodicean Church. He is standing outside of the Laodicean Church, and knocking in the hope of being invited into that Church. He appeals to them in their *poor blinded and naked state* and says,

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. (Rev 3:19-20)

Our loving Lord is still calling, but is the Laodicean Church listening?

The Laodicean Church

“The Wretched, Miserable, Poor, Blind And Naked Church”

Who would go to a Church that the Lord says is “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked”? (Revelation 3:17) Lots of people apparently for this is the description of some Churches in the latter days.

How would we identify such a Church? The answer comes from the Scriptures in the very passage that condemns the Laodicean Church.

“I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.” (Revelation 3:18-19)

“White raiment” is a common term in the Bible and always speaks of the purity that comes from the forgiveness of sin. We see it used in Revelation chapter seven where we read of a

“great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:9)

The Lord tells us exactly who these people are for *“These are they which ... **have washed their robes, and made them white** in the blood of the Lamb.”* (Revelation 7:14)

So all who are forgiven by the Lord appear in “white raiment.” They are the forgiven ones and are truly the Lord’s people. But what does the Lord say to those in the Laodicean Church? *“I counsel you to buy of Me...white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear...”*

The “white raiment” that the Laodicean Church lacks is *salvation* itself for all of those who are truly saved *“have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”* Thus we see that many in the Laodicean Church are not of the Lord, for the Lord Himself counsels them to come to Him for “white raiment” meaning “*forgiveness of sin.*”

Just so the significance of this is not lost, in the parable of the wedding feast Jesus also used this same idea when He said,

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment (white raiment): And he said to him, Friend, how did you come in not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into

outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 22:11)

This same thought is emphasised later in the Revelation where Jesus says,

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. (Rev 16:15)

Here the Lord adds in the idea of *nakedness* and the eternal *shame* it brings, and these are the very words He uses to describe the Laodicean Church.

“I counsel you to buy of Me ... white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear.” (Rev 3:18)

The Laodicean Church boasted of its wealth and position saying *“I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing”* (Rev 3:17) but the Lord declares *“I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich”* (Rev 3:18)

The Laodicean Church is blinded to the truth of its own position before the Lord who says *“anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that you may see.”* This false Church is shown to be wealthy and doing well, and the world perhaps sees it as “*successful*” and even to be desired, but the Lord looks on the heart. What does He see? This Church is *“wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”* What a hopeless position it is to be eternally lost, and yet to vainly imagine that you are doing well.

The Lord says that *“it is neither hot nor cold”* and thus He *“vomits it out.”* **Please note that Christ is locked out** of the Laodicean Church. He says *“Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”* (Revelation 3:20)

Sadly, there are many such Churches today. Churches where anything goes, where the Biblical standards are not upheld. In some cases they are deliberately ignored as we will see. Some of these Churches are wealthy beyond measure and yet remain in darkness. They should listen to the voice of the Lord and be *overcomer’s* through our Lord Jesus Christ. He says ...

“He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.” (Rev 3:5)

The Laodicean Church

The Modern Tragedy:

The Pro\$perity Go\$pel Church

God says that the Laodicean Church claims *"I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."* (Rev 3:17) This wealth is quite foreign to my Church experience. I am quite familiar with Australian evangelical Churches, faithful Churches with faithful Pastors. I have known Pastors to struggle economically and to do so without complaint. In earlier days, everyone was struggling and the Pastors I have known were godly men who truly served the Lord.

It is a different world now with some Pastors really raking in the money. There are at least twenty-one well known TV *"Pastors"* or so called *"Evangelists"* who own private aircraft, some even have a fleet of them. One even has a private airport with runways of sufficient length to land jet aircraft right in his own rather modest *"backyard."*

The following is admittedly an extreme example, but it is true. Here is one *"TV evangelist"* who preaches about money. He claims *"As long as we say money is laid up, the wicked are gonna keep it. But God says it's time for us to tell that money you don't belong to the wicked, you belong to us and I wan't you to get in the right place,"* that is in your or my pocket. Immediately he repeated a mantra that featured many times in his *"sermon."* He faced the audience and cried out *"Moneeey cometh (pause) to me (pause) NOW."* The crowd joined in the well known *"hymn"* and roared its approval. The following transcript comes from several video's.

He went on, *"I'm lookin' for unexpected income. Hallelujah, Hallelujah. That hold over you is broken tonight, in the name of Jesus you will receive your money tonight in Jesus name. Listen to the Holy Ghost, listen to the Holy Ghost, He's gonna set you free tonight, this is your night, listen to the Holy Ghost. Come out of the back and move with the Holy Ghost."*

That last phrase *"move with the Holy Ghost"* was apparently the appeal for money, and move they did. He went on *"Listen to the Holy Ghost. Tonight is your breakthrough in Jesus name. Monneeeey cometh (pause) to me, (pause) NOW."* And it did. The congregation came forward in large numbers and threw thousands of dollars onto the stage. The preacher said, *"You keep comin' and I'll keep preachin'"* and they did, so he did.

The money was piling up quite thickly and he then advised the congregation that he needed *"to put some anointin' on the money."* Then he began to prance across the stage from left to right and back

again, shuffling his feet through the piles of notes, all the while calling out *"whoo, whoo, whoo,"* or something like that. That was when I learned how to *"anoint money,"* an ecclesiastical rite that I had not witnessed before. How much money was there? Only the preacher knows, I suspect.

No one will be surprised to learn that this *"evangelist"* is one of the Pastors listed who has a private jet aircraft. One other Pastor who helped him put *"some anointin' on the money"* also has his own private jet that allegedly cost \$65 million.

I do not watch these men regularly, or anyone else like them, so cannot fairly comment on their preaching in an overall sense. However in the few examples I have seen, they did not preach anything like the Gospel *"of Salvation by faith alone in Christ alone"* that I am familiar with. But they did seem to know quite a bit about how to take up an offering.

Does this example fairly illustrate the modern Church? I hope not, but these men do have a regular presence on television and, by their examples at least, bring the modern day Church into disrepute. Some of these *jet aircraft owning men* are seen week-by-week on Australian TV. Their regular TV presence must create some sort of impression of the Church to any who watch them. That likeness is far removed from that of our Saviour who had *"nowhere to lay His head."*

So how do they survive on the TV? If everyone complained about them then they would surely disappear, but some remain on the *"Australian Christian Channel."* Surely they are bringing the Gospel of Christ into disrepute, but they remain. This shows us that the standards of the Christian faith, and the presentation of the Gospel of Salvation, have diminished over recent years. No one would have put up with this sort of thing in years gone by.

In terms of this being illustrative of the Laodicean Church you must make your own decision, but it is a far cry from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. Prolonged appeals for money, the emphasis that *"if you give God will bless you, Listen to the Holy Ghost and give"* have nothing at all to do with the Gospel. This is the sort of Church that makes me vomit, so what would a Holy God do.

(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oXhYVm2MW8&t=33s>)

The Laodicean Church

The “Itching Ears” Church Part 1

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” (2 Timothy 4:3-4)



Humans are funny. Many of us insist on being confirmed in our own opinions, even when those opinions do not measure up. In the text above we read that a time will come when people will turn their “*itching ears*” from the Truth and prefer to listen to the lie. Has that time arrived?

The Bible is THE source of truth, real objective truth, and its author is the Creator God Himself. But Gods truth does not suit those who are bent on their own way and determined to continue in “*the sin that so easily besets them.*” All they want to hear are those things that confirm them in their chosen lifestyle.

Well that presents a real problem for the Bible speaks Gods truth without any reference to our opinions. So what do we do? It’s so easy really, you just **correct** the Bible to say the things that you approve of, and to dismiss the ideas that contradict your preferences. It’s so simple, why didn’t we think of this before?

The Queen James Version

Here is the answer to homosexuality being condemned by the Bible. Right now you may purchase a brand new version of the Bible. It is called “*The Queen James Version.*” The pic is from their website and shows the Cross of our Lord and Saviour in the rainbow colours of the homosexual movement. Is that blasphemous?

The website of the *The Queen James Version* explains why such a new version was required and necessary.

*“The Queen James Bible seeks to resolve interpretive ambiguity in the Bible as it pertains to homosexuality: **We edited those verses in a way that makes homophobic interpretations impossible.**” (My emphasis)*

One major problem for some people in our society is that the faithful Church continues to condemn **all sin** based on the voice of the Bible. The Bible condemns **all sin** and that has always been a problem for society. Liars don’t like it, thieves don’t like it either, and nor does anyone else who wants to participate in any activity that God calls “*sin.*”

The problem for those who want to persist in their preferred sin remains, for the Bible clearly says “*You shall not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.*” (Leviticus 18:22). The editors of the Queen James Bible describe Leviticus as “*an outdated moral code*” and have changed that verse to now read “*You shall not lie with mankind, as with womankind **in the Temple of Moloch, it is an abomination.***” This makes out that it was the pagan rituals of Moloch that were condemned, not the sin itself. There are not a lot of Temples of Moloch around these days, so that solves that problem apparently.

That Leviticus quotation was from the Old Testament so what does the New teach? The New Testament says this

“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly...God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient...Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” (Romans 1: 26-32 selected)

They have also rewritten this passage seeking to link it with paganistic Moloch as they did with the Leviticus verse. This is surely an example of apostasy today and it’s within the Laodicean Church right now. Some Churches approve this sin so do not warn against it. The Holy Bible ends with a strong warning against those who would tamper with the Word of God,

“... If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.” (Revelation 22:19)

The Laodicean Church

The “Itching Ears” Church Part 2

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3: 16-17)

Despite the above plain statement from God, there remain those who will not accept His Word, and seek to “correct” it. Here is a further example of it from the modern Church.

Sabeel - Reinterpreting Scripture

Sabeel is an Arabic word meaning “the way” or “channel” or “spring.” Sabeel was founded by a Palestinian Anglican priest, Rev. Naim Ateek, the former Canon of *St. George’s Cathedral* in Jerusalem. *The Presbyterian Church USA* is an official partner of Sabeel and Sabeel also has an office in Australia. (1)

This movement is seeking to create a new understanding of the Bible by identifying it with the Palestinian cause. It is seeking to promote *Palestinian Liberation Theology* defined by them as “interpret(ing) scripture in light of the Palestinian experience under occupation.” So their aim is that the Bible should now be interpreted through the lens of “the Palestinian experience” and not on its own merits.

It’s not new. There have been many “*Liberation Theology*” reinterpreting movements over the years, some seeking to equate Marxism with the Christian faith. They claimed that Marxism was a *liberating* force for good and to follow Marxism would bring about the equivalent of the *Millennial Kingdom of Christ*. All that form of *Liberation Theology* was doing was to make wicked Marxism more acceptable to people in the Church.

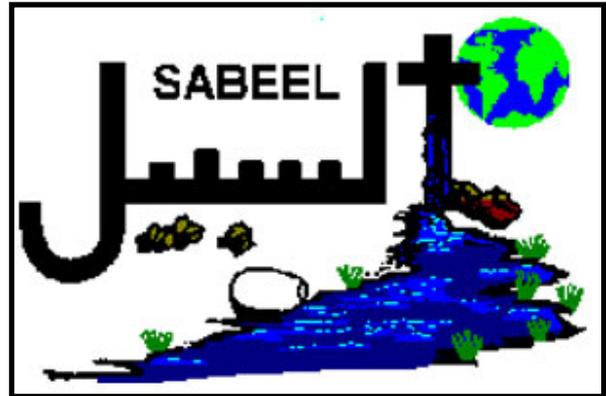
Rev. Naim Stifan Ateek writes,

“Before the creation of the State [of Israel], the Old Testament was considered to be an essential part of Christian Scripture, pointing and witnessing to Jesus. Since the creation of the State, some Jewish and Christian interpreters have read the Old Testament largely as a Zionist text to such an extent that it has become almost repugnant to Palestinian Christians [...] The fundamental question of many Christians, whether uttered or not, is: How can the Old Testament be the Word of God in light of the Palestinian Christians’ experience with its use to support Zionism?”

(Naim Stifan Ateek: *Justice, and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation.*)

Arteek now insists

“It is our responsibility as Palestinian Christians to de-Zionise the Bible. To de-Zionise the Old Testament is to critique and reject what seems to be a “Zionist theology of God.” Zionism, both



secular and religious, has corrupted the biblical faith ... Zionism’s god is tribal, exclusive, prejudiced, and xenophobic. (xenophobic means having or showing a dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries). Therefore, it is the responsibility of all biblical scholars to help us de-Zionise the Bible... all those texts that do not conform and are inconsistent with the Spirit of Christ I openly reject ... many texts in the Old Testament that I find spiritually uplifting and morally edifying such texts I embrace as God’s word for me. Everything that passes the test of the hermeneutic of love comes from God; while everything that fails the test will remain in the Bible but has no authority or spiritual value for me. It is not the word of God for me.”

(Naim Stifan Ateek: *Justice, and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation.*)

Despite Rev Ateek’s protestations we read that “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

No human has the right to decide what is “correct” and what is “wrong” within the Bible, but many do. To rewrite the Bible to eliminate the parts that do not suit our politics, or other theories, is wrong. Jesus, who is locked outside of the Laodicean Church and seeking entry, says to that Church, “*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.*” (Revelation 3:20)

(1) Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabeel_Ecumenical_Liberation_Theology_Center

The Laodicean Church

The “Strong Delusion” Church

*“And ... God shall send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thess 2:10-12)*

The Church has always been under attack from within and without. Trouble from within sometimes comes when groups “fiddle” with Bible truth. These people fail to take the plain words of Scripture at their normal and obvious meaning and, in doing so, open themselves to all sorts of delusions. C. H. Spurgeon said,

“I wish never to learn the art of tearing God’s meaning out of His own Words. If there is anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of (the) passage, (it’s) a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualised away. (C. H. Spurgeon Sermon No. 582 on-line source)

And that is wise advice from the man who was said to be the “Prince of Preachers.” Spurgeon was confirmed in his ministry by the outstanding blessings that God showered upon it. Never-the-less people do “fiddle” with the plain words of the Bible and give them all sorts of meanings that were not intended by God, and trouble inevitably comes upon them.

The modern Church does not always like the plain words of the Bible.

This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife ... Likewise must the deacons ... be the husband of one wife (1Tim 3 selected)

The straight forward nature of this scripture creates a certain stated standard. Many in the modern Church do not like the plainly spoken truths of the Bible. Here it is quite clear that the Church leadership is to be male and, if married, is to have only one wife. This does not please the feminists who rebel directly against it and twist and turn the plain words to make it say what pleases them.

And that raises yet another problem for the modern Church. Does having one “wife” mean that the “wife” has to be female? Not according to some these days who see no problem with their male Minister having a “husband” or their female minister having a “wife.”

The *Uniting Church* in Australia took the historic step of explicitly allowing for the ordination of those in same-sex relationships at its *National Assembly* in 2003. One homosexual woman was ordained as minister of the Uniting Church, and a male homosexual followed the next week. He later said, “I think there are people in the Uniting Church who see this as a grave issue that will destroy the church.” He also said, “I feel as though I’m on the

right journey, it’s about walking the path that’s in front of you with the light that you’ve got.” He would do well to heed the words of Jesus, “... If therefore the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!

(Matthew 6:23)

The female minister declares that, “... *sexuality was a non-issue for (our) congregation, which is united in its focus on social justice. I think there are bigger issues than who I love and share my life with.*” (1) One of those issues should surely be the maintenance and promotion of Biblical truth that declares the sacredness of the marriage bond and that firmly condemns homosexual relationships. Many Christians are convinced that maintaining the simple and obvious Truths of the Bible should have a higher priority than *social justice*, but apparently not all do. But whom are they following?

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

(Romans 6:16)

Why has *social justice* gained pride of place in some Churches? Jesus told us that “*You have the poor always with you.*” (Matt 26:11) We should be moved with compassion for the poor, but the Great Commission is not *social justice*; it is the spreading of the Gospel that brings salvation.

All of us would do well to pay close attention to the Scriptures, and those tempted by homosexuality would also do well to heed the plain truths of the Bible ...

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:8-10)

This is a very serious and eternal matter and to dismiss it will bring dreadful consequences. The Lord promises to deliver anyone languishing under such temptations. Never-the-less some in the modern Church are suffering a *strong delusion* and seem to be bent on pursuing their own goals, even if those goals are in direct opposition to the declared truths of the Word of God. Is it fair to call a Church behaving like this a *Laodicean Church*?

(1) (Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/gay-ministers-show-a-uniting-front-to-lead-congregations-20110821-1j4rf.html>)

The Laodicean Church Is God “Homophobic”? Is God Guilty Of “Hate Speech”?

“With the merciful You will show yourself merciful; with an upright man You will show Yourself upright; With the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the froward You will show Yourself froward.” (Psalm 18: 25-26) (“froward” means awkward, difficult to deal with, contrary).

According to some understandings in our world, God is “*homophobic*” and guilty of “*hate speech*.” Such a conclusion comes from the way society treats anyone who merely repeats, or preaches, what God has said about all types of sin.

Please consider the verse above. It teaches that it is our own character, our own dominating thoughts and desires, that determine how we “see” and “hear” things. We all have a sort of built-in filter system that screens our every thought, and we interpret everything through that filter system. We don’t think consciously about it: it just happens.

We all want support for the things we want to do, and that support is all that we like to hear. Those who practice the homosexual lifestyle want to be confirmed in it. They choose to remain in that sin totally unchallenged, even by the Word of God. In John 8 we find the Pharisees bringing a woman “*taken in the act of adultery*” to face Jesus. The Pharisees reminded Jesus of the Law that said she should be stoned to death. The answer Jesus gave was dynamic. He said “*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*” They slunk away. He said to the woman “*Woman, where are your accusers? has no man condemned you? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn you: go, and sin no more.*”

Jesus forgave her but said she should “*sin no more.*” That is the way of the Lord. He came to save us out of all sin and, if you desire to follow Him, you must choose: *Will I follow Jesus or will I choose my preferred sin?* If you choose Jesus His word is forever fixed and He will kindly say “*Neither do I condemn you: go, and sin no more.*”

The Bible will always declare that all sin, of any type, is repugnant to Holy God. Many don’t like that for they choose to remain in their preferred sin. So what do they do? In this case they label God’s declaration that a homosexual lifestyle is “*sin*” and call it “*homophobic*.” Any *unfavourable* mention of it is called “*hate speech*”, and they alone determine what is *hate speech*, or what is not *hate speech*.

Using these terms “*homophobic*” and “*hate speech*” cleverly changes the whole thing. Such words declare the sinner to be those who are merely revealing what God has said, **and not those who practice the sin.** This is total hypocrisy. Godly

people are relaying a warning from our loving God who offers salvation to all. Those who prefer to be their own god are seeking to dismiss the real Word of God. They declare the wicked ones to be those who are following God’s command to warn sinners.

But what are these people really doing? **They are openly confessing just who their real Master is.** The Bible says: “*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*” (Matt 6:24) **Our true Master is the one that we follow. For all of us it is either our sin, or Holy God.**

There are those who say they are “*Christian homosexuals*” and many apparently seek a Church that “*accepts*” them. “*Acceptance*” means that their sinful lifestyle is totally unquestioned. In this Laodicean Church age there are many Churches that will never tell the truth about the homosexual lifestyle. Some even see it as a part of God’s creation. One Pastor, the Rev Dr Margaret Mayman said, “*sexual and gender diversity are part of God’s plan, part of the fabric of creation woven by God. Inequality and injustice are an affront to gospel values.*”^{*} Thus they identify God as the author of that sin. Is it reasonable to declare that such a Church is apostate? ^{*}(Source: <http://journeyonline.com.au/national-news/uniting-church-marches-with-pride/>)

Today any Church faithful to the word of God is likely to be called “*homophobic*,” or any other type of “*phobic*” for that matter. It all depends on the besetting sin of the hearer. The real problem in much of the Laodicean Church today is that we have lost our commitment to the Word of God, we no longer believe it, we change it, and we are led along by seeking to please the world and fit into their agenda. The homosexual agenda is a serious threat to our faith today and is promoted by many lobby groups with very experienced activists. It is the activists who pose the real threat and they are seeking the very life blood of the Church.

But the Laodicean Church remains safe from these experienced activists for they fail to stand at all. God says to this type of Church, “*So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.*” (Rev 3:16)

The Laodicean Church Redefines Marriage

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him...And ...the Lord God ... made a woman, and brought her unto the man... she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” (Genesis 2:18-24 selected)

Marriage is a sacred thing, ordained by God Himself, and we fiddle with it at our peril.

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion ... over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

(Genesis 1: 27-28)

The purpose of marriage is for companionship

- *“It is not good that the man should be alone”*

and for procreation

- *“Be fruitful and multiply.”*

Marriage is also an exclusive bond

- *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, **and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.**”* (Genesis 2: 24)

Jesus spoke of the holiness of this relationship

The Pharisees ...tempted Him saying, ‘Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?’ Jesus answered, ‘Have you not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female ... for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and the two shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.’ (Matthew 19: 3-6 selected)

The Bible is clear; marriage is a sacred rite ordained by God. If you have a problem with same sex marriage then you should discuss it with Jesus Himself for He does not support it. Marriage is the most sacred human relationship that we may enter into. The Bible makes the marriage bond equal to the bond between our Lord Jesus Christ and His church: the Bridegroom and the Bride.

In the marriage vows you say *“I will”* to your spouse and in effect you say *“I won’t”* to everyone else. In our relationship to Christ we say *“I will”* to the Lord and *“I won’t”* to all else. The faithfulness of the Bridegroom (Jesus) in that holy bond is certain, but what about the Bride? (The bride of Christ is the Church) Will she betray Him?

God invented marriage and it is sacred, so it surely follows that we, the Church, do not have the right to redefine the plain words of God; to betray Him?

The idolatrous opinions of wicked men and women, who worship their own desires, have redefined the sacred right that God Himself created and ordained. The overriding tragedy is that some in the Church agree. They thus betray our Lord!

Sexuality is also God given, **and it too is “sacred”** being ordained by God within the marriage bond.

God Himself declared *“It is not good for man to dwell alone”* and so *“God made a helpmeet for him”* and it was a woman. So we are taught that **God made a woman for the man and thus He defined the divine order.**

- So we see that marriage is a sacred union initiated by God,
- secondly God defines sexuality: a man and a woman.
- Consequently sexuality is sacred also and it too was defined by God.

So what right has the Church, or society, to redefine those things that God has ordained, and in doing so, betray our Lord? Jesus said, *“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs.”* (Matt 7:6) To say that a homosexual “marriage” is acceptable is to deny the plain truths so clearly defined in the Scriptures. What did Jesus say? *“Have you not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female.”* (Matthew 19:4)

“Male and female” is the God ordained order of things **and thus it is a sacred matter** and not for negotiation by wicked people, especially those within the Church. As Jesus said of marriage *“let not man put asunder.”* We in the Church have no right to *“put asunder”* what God has ordained and approve homosexual marriage. Some *“Churches”* even participate in it. This is totally abhorrent to a Holy God and in direct defiance of His revealed will.

We personally, and the organised Church, have the power of choice and we may choose the way that God declares, or we may not. In making that free choice but the end result is already fixed. God will allow us to choose our own way, but He solemnly warns *“There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”*

(Proverbs 14: 12)

God warns against self-worship and that is the very essence of most besetting sins; they are idolatry.

*“But if your heart turn away, so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away, **and worship other gods, and serve them;** I denounce unto you this day, that you shall surely perish, ... I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: **therefore choose life...**”*

(Deuteronomy 30:17-19 my emphasis)

The Laodicean Church

Redefining The Gospel

“You have wearied the Lord with your words; Yet you say, How have we wearied Him?” In that you say, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, And He delights in them...” (Malachi 2:17)

The Bible paints very definite pictures of certain things being good and other things as being evil. We are not left in the dark about whether or not certain things are sinful for the Bible makes these matters very clear. But the Bible also reveals that some people want to make up their own rules.

The prophet Jeremiah was sent to the Israelites with a certain message. They asked him to seek the Lord and promised that *“whatever the Lord said we will do.”* So Jeremiah sought the Lord and, on the tenth day, received a clear message from the Lord. The Lord said that these people *“must not go down to Egypt”* otherwise calamity and death awaited them. Jeremiah gathered the people around and told them what the Lord had revealed.

Instantly they rejected the message claiming that Jeremiah was lying to them, **simply because they wanted to go to Egypt.** They rejected the Lord's message because it conflicted with their own desires. (The whole tragic story is told in Jeremiah 42 to 44) The saga ends with the words ...

“So the Lord was no longer able to endure it, because of the evil of your deeds, because of the abominations which you have committed; thus your land has become a ruin, an object of horror and a curse, without an inhabitant, as it is this day. Because you have burned sacrifices (to strange gods) and have sinned against the Lord and not obeyed the voice of the Lord or walked in His law, His statutes or His testimonies, therefore this calamity has befallen you, as it has this day.” (Jer 44:22-23)

It has always been like that. There are certain groups these days who want to honour strange gods, the god of hedonism, the god sensual self-indulgence, and many live lifestyles that pursue endless sensual pleasures, sex, drugs, alcohol etc. Many know that all sin is utterly condemned by God but some choose to live that way. Tragically some in the organised Church support them in it.

In Sydney there is a Mardi Gras that promotes all types of sensual pleasures. Some in the Church support this event by participating in it. One female Uniting Church minister said, *“We are participating in the parade because sexual and gender diversity are part of God's plan, part of the fabric of creation woven by God. Inequality and injustice are an affront to gospel values.”* That statement is a direct denial of the plain words of Holy Scripture.

The activities of those participating in Mardi Gras has nothing to do with we Christians really. Everyone must make their own decision about how

they live their lives and are responsible to God for their choices. Here is the problem. Many of these who participate are riddled with guilt knowing that they oppose the Lord's way. Being *self condemned* they attack the Church. They know that the Word of God opposes their lifestyle and therefore the faithful Church has become their target.

Believe it or not, some within the organised Church do actively support these sensual movements. In doing so they declare themselves to be a part of the Laodicean Church and fulfil the words of Malachi who says *“You have wearied the Lord with your words ... In that you say, Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, And He delights in them...”* (Malachi 2:17) The truth is that the Lord does not delight in any sin for the Word of God clearly states *“Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people”* (Proverbs 14:34)

These days we see much of the organised Church supporting all sorts of sin that they should be condemning for Jesus sake, for the sake of the many individuals caught up in the sin, and thirdly for the sake of our Country. We, as a Nation, have embraced homosexual marriage and that will bring *“reproach”* (that is God's disapproval) of Australia. People laugh and mock at that thought, but people have always mocked at the pronouncements of God. We will certainly regret the day when this became Law in Australia. Many *“blind leaders of the blind”* in the organised (ie Laodicean) Church do endorse it however.

The tragedy is that the Church as a body is NOT in agreement about what is indeed “sinful.” If ever there was a factor that announced the Laodicean age of the Church, surely this is it. Known sin, sin as defined by God Himself, sin that has for millennia been condemned by faithful believers is now being promoted and endorsed by so-called churches, that is Laodicean Churches. Some of their “ministers” blasphemously declare that *“... sexual and gender diversity are part of God's plan, part of the fabric of creation woven by God. Inequality and injustice are an affront to gospel values.”* (Source: <http://journeyonline.com.au/national-news/uniting-church-marches-with-pride/>)

That statement declares God to be the author of this sin. It is hard to know what Gospel values they are referring to, but it is certainly not the Gospel of *“salvation by faith alone in Christ alone.”* It is rather *“another gospel”* that brings darkness rather than light.

The Laodicean Church

The Church Romancing Islam

Many in the organised Church are seeking some sort of alliance with Islam, and not the conversion of the suffering Moslems. Here is an example. Pope Francis has released a *Joint Declaration* with Patriarch Bartholomew, *Ecumenical Archbishop of Constantinople* of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Eastern Orthodox Church has been outside the Roman Church for centuries so their coming together is significant in itself. The Declaration has several aims:

"We express our sincere and firm resolution, in obedience to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to intensify our efforts to promote the full unity of ALL Christians ... To this end, we offer the assurance of our fervent prayer as Pastors of the Church, asking our faithful to join us in praying "that all may be one, that the world may believe" (John 17:21)." (The emphasis is mine)

The Joint Declaration seeks to include Islam in this alliance viz,

"The grave challenges facing the world in the present situation require the solidarity of all people of good will, and so we also recognise the importance of promoting a constructive dialogue with Islam based on mutual respect and friendship.

"Inspired by common values and strengthened by genuine fraternal sentiments, Muslims and Christians are called to work together for the sake of justice, peace and respect for the dignity and rights of every person ...

"Moreover, as Christian leaders, we call on all religious leaders to pursue and to strengthen inter-religious dialogue and to make every effort to build a culture of peace and solidarity between persons and between peoples." (My emphasis.)

Pope Francis says that *"Muslims and Christians are called to work together for the sake of justice, peace and respect for the dignity and rights of every person,"* but the Bible clearly says, *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3)*

How can any true Church of our Lord and Saviour *"work together (with Islam) for the sake of justice, peace etc"* when Islam opposes the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour? Islam declares that Jesus is not divine. *"O people of the Book (that means Christians), do not transgress the bounds in your religion, and attribute nothing but the Truth to Allah. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger of Allah." (Koran 4:171 Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi translation.)*

The authoritative commentary by Ala Maududi explains, *"As Jesus is only a spirit from God and has no part of Godhead in him, do not go beyond the bounds but believe in Allah as One God and accept all His Messengers including the Messiah. This was what the Prophet Jesus himself really taught and this is the truth which a true Christian should believe."* (My emphasis)

Islam denies the Trinity: *"Most certainly they committed blasphemy, who said, 'Allah is one of the three': whereas there is no deity other than the One Deity. And if these people do not desist from uttering such words, a painful chastisement shall be inflicted on all those from among them who have been guilty of blasphemy." (Koran 5:73)*

Islam denies the resurrection *"And [We cursed them ... for] their saying, 'Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah.' And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them... And they did not kill him, for certain." (Koran 4:157 The brackets are in the text. Some argue that Judas Iscariot was crucified, not Jesus.)*

Despite Islam's denial of Christ's deity, the denial of His death for sin and His resurrection, some in the modern Church seek communion with the Islamic faith. The Gordon Uniting Church (in Sydney) holds interfaith services every Sunday in September. Speakers for their "worship" services included:

- 6th: Ba'hai - Dr Fiona Scott.
- 13th: Maha Abdo, Muslim Women's Association,
- 13th: Dr Ibrahim, the Grand Mufti of Australia.
- 20th: Unnamed Hindu speaker.
- 27th: Indigenous Spirituality – Prof. Denis Foley followed by a visit to an Aboriginal Sacred site.

According to the *North Shore Times* (27/9/16) some Anglicans are also hosting interfaith services. *"The Gosford Anglican Church's priest Father Rod Bower is renowned for embracing all faiths as well as supporting the LGBTI community."* His Church sign one week read *"Wishing our Muslim friends a holy Ramadan."* Another week *"Dear Christians, some people are gay, get over it, Love God"*. He says *"I am often criticised by my Christian brothers and sisters for not putting biblical things on the sign (whatever that means)."* The brackets are his.

Surely this is the apostate Church. The Laodicean age of the Church is upon us. Apostasy abounds in traditional and non traditional Churches as we have seen. It makes the Lord sick. *"I know your works ... So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth."* (Revelation 3:15-16)