

# Sermon Outlines

## Ephesus to Laodicea and the Development of Spiritual Balance

### Readings:

Song of Solomon Ch. 2:16; 6:3; 7:10  
Revelation Ch. 2:1-4; 2:18-19; 3:14-15

### Introduction

How much the Lord yearns for the fullness of love for Himself.

- a) And that is what the Song of Solomon and the letters to the seven churches are all about.
- b) He loves us completely and is jealous of our love.
  - i) Love the Lord with all thy heart. (Matt. 22:37)
  - ii) Lovest thou me? (Jn. 21:15, 16, 17)
- c) The song and the letters unveil the yearnings of the heart of the Lord for unreserved love.
  - i) In the Song of Solomon 1:2 – 2:7 - Initial love develops to mature love.
    1. With the development of love then activity.
      - (a) Lovest thou me?, feed (Jn. 21) Affection for Christ before service.

### The Letters To The Seven Churches

- 1) In Revelation chapters 2-3 the letters to the seven churches:
  - a) The way these churches can be considered
    - i) Historically, seven literal churches in Asia
    - ii) Characteristically, of any assembly today
    - iii) Typically, churches are made up of individuals, thus lessons for the individual
    - iv) Prophetically, of the church age
    - v) And they each had various backgrounds and characteristics
- 2) Ephesus, what was its characteristic?
  - a) A church which hated evil but did not love as they ought.
  - b) So busy with holding the truth, but making that an end in itself.
  - c) So busy with activities, but no love.
  - d) Dead formality.
  - e) cp. 1 Cor. 13. Though I speak, know, and act and no love, nothing.
- 3) Thyatira, what was its characteristic?
  - a) A church which loved but did not hate.
  - b) I know your love, their works were more than the beginnings.
  - c) Spiritual schizophrenics.
  - d) In us all.
  - e) Profess to love the Lord and at times in all sincerity we do, and yet:
  - f) Attitudes
  - g) Beliefs
  - h) Behaviours
  - i) That He hates, and we hold them
- 4) Laodicea, what was its characteristic?
  - a) A church which neither loved nor hated.
  - b) Today they are a balanced assembly.
  - c) No! To be balanced one needs a centre point, these simply have no boundaries.
  - d) Today, setting aside the doctrines of the scriptures.
  - e) Ignoring apostolic teachings.

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### Review of the passages

- 1) How can this condition in churches be corrected?
  - a) The personal appreciation of personal responsibility.
  - b) The whole-hearted submission to God so that:
  - c) We love the Lord and His things and hate that which He hates
  - d) To be balanced and not without boundaries
    - i) The Song of Solomon shows me how this is developed.
- 2) The three corresponding statements
  - a) My beloved is mine and I am his
  - b) I am my beloved's and he is mine
  - c) I am my beloved's and His desire is toward me
- 3) This development of love and ultimately worship is brought out in three verses:
  - a) For love results in the activity of worship
  - b) Not activity alone
  - c) But the activity which is the result of worship
  - d) Romans 1
  - e) How tragic when a believer lives life and not only has no activity but no activity the result of worship
    - i) Illustration: We had a little bird and my wife and children all tried to make it talk, despite all the efforts to try to make it speak.
    - ii) It died and all the effort was for nought
    - iii) So like many believers
- 4) The development of love and ultimate worship:
  - a) The three verses - Song of Solomon 2:16; 6:3; 7:10
  - b) each verse there is the truth of exclusiveness, but from different perspectives
- 5) The development of thought:
  - a) In the first two, thoughts are taken up with her affections and his for her
  - b) In the last, ch. 7:10, there is nothing of self at all.
  - c) The first clause Ch. 6:3 - I am my beloved's and he is mine
    - i) The development of affection
    - ii) She reviews the past, ch. 1-2, and knows all that his love has brought her into
    - iii) But the major thought is what she has, the blessing which is hers
    - iv) Dear Saviour thou art mine
    - v) It is spiritual childishness, the considering of herself, and then Him
    - vi) So many of our so-called worship hymns are centred on self
    - vii) When that happens, I like a spoilt child think that I am the centre of God's universe, there are no boundaries, no affection for the Lord and His things and lots of love for the things He hates.
    - viii) A new definition of what worship is
    - ix) Lev. 2; a Meal offering
  - d) In the second clause we see a contrasting thought and a degree of development Ch. 6:3 - I am my beloved's and he is mine.
    - i) Now he is becoming the centre of attraction
    - ii) The order is reversed
    - iii) The contemplation of consecration
    - iv) Romans 12:1-2
    - v) Take my life and let it be, consecrated Lord to thee.

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- vi) The pledge to personal fidelity
  - vii) I am the Lord's, Oh joy beyond expression
  - viii) To lay my plans, my decisions, on the altar
  - ix) The little lamb.
- e) In the third observation: Ch. 7:10 I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me
- i) Nothing of self at all
  - ii) Lost in the wonder of the yearnings of his heart
  - iii) It becomes an affirmation
  - iv) It becomes the foundation for amazement

#### Personal Application

Thus a life of true spiritual conformity to Christ and spiritual balance comes through:

- a) Being reckoned righteousness before God meant:
  - i) Life had a whole new focus
  - ii) It had a bigger dimension
  - iii) No longer things and what will happen things when I die
- b) Satisfaction:
  - i) An inheritance
  - ii) A life with a supernatural explanation
  - iii) Finding its source, and life in God
- c) Abram was made a steward of the life God gave for its:
  - i) Protection
  - ii) Nourishment
  - iii) Developing it for the:
  - iv) Purposes of God
  - v) Glory of God

#### Conclusion

The question Ephesus, Thyatira and Laodicea present to me is:

- a) Do I want to be conformed more to the Lord, thus having a balanced spiritual life?
- b) Then I must learn to have my priorities right, Christ first.
- c) See the fullness of the salvation He has given to me.

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

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