

To the Church in Laodicea

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[0:00] Good to see you all. Man, we started this series with the start with the end in mind, right? As we're figuring out what church is for us, we're going to start with the end in mind and figure out,! Actually, what is it that Jesus has said to the church?

Because I want to know. I want to know what the final ending is, because I want to know that we're not doing something wrong. I don't want to be wasting Sunday mornings if we're going to be doing something that actually he's not pleased with, that he's going to spit out of his mouth. So I want to know what it is.

And I've got to say, there's a bit of a confession here. This is my favorite one. And this is, look, actually, a lot of people say that preachers have their kind of, actually, every preacher apparently only has five sermons.

And everything that they speak about ends up going to be about one of the five things. Yeah, have we heard that before? And I think you guys know what mine is. And I'll give you a confession right now.

I've been talking about this sermon basically every sermon. This is how I live. And so this one, the Church of Laodicea, this is my jam. This is my vibe.

[1:06] This is the one that we're going to go for. I'll tell you why. Maybe it's because of my dad. Growing up, my dad would say this one thing. He'd say, You either don't do it at all, or you do it properly.

So growing up, that was always drawn into my mind. And I was also a 90s kid. And there was this pop band. Grace, maybe you know it. O-Town. Do you remember O-Town?

No? Janice remembers O-Town. Does anyone? Put your hand up if you remember O-Town.

Because I want it all. Or nothing at all.

Oh, Kenneth. You got me. You got me, Kenneth. Kenneth, don't be red. Don't go red, Kenneth. It's all good. Oh, man. That song was... Do you remember that song? You remember that song? I remember that song.

Yeah. That was like... No, it's O-Town. What? It's O-Town. Don't go searching now. I'll pay attention to the sermon. It's O-Town, man.

[2:05] It's O-Town. Anyway, because I want it all or nothing at all. So I've always had that. It's kind of like, hey, does this deserve all of my attention? Or does this deserve none of my attention? Right?

Right? And this is what this sermon is about. This is what it's going to be about. And we're going to talk about this. This is the final church in the book of Revelation that he talks to. The church of Laodicea.

And this is the one that we're going through. If you... You know what? I'll tell you something. We had a really fun time yesterday. Well, at least I thought it was fun. Watching people guess and remember, recall these last six churches.

Gabs, seriously. Seriously. Like, you should be convicted. Repent. Therefore, repent. You know all of them. Just as a confession, this has been on my heart. It's not just been on my heart.

It's on my mind. I've just been repeating this every day. Just going through. Actually, I came back from England and I was jet lagged. And so when I was jet lagged, this is what I was doing. Just constantly just memorizing, just recalling these seven letters.

[3:01] Because these seven letters are so important. So important to the church. But also just so important to me. I'm just like, man, this is important. We need to get this right. And so we're going to go through this.

And as always, we're just going to go through each part as it goes. And he introduces himself again. He always introduces himself. He's polite. He's well-mannered. So he says, hey, here are my words. The words of the amen.

We always say amen when we pray, when we go to dinner, just before we eat. We say amen. What does it mean? It means, so be it. Let it be. It means this is binding and this is true.

He's saying the words of the amen. Whatever I say is true, I am legit, I am the real deal. This is, whatever I say, this is going to happen. He says, I am the faithful and true witness.

The faithful and true witness. We looked at all these churches and all the complacency that's going on and all the heresy that's going on. He's saying, I am the faithful and true witness. I am the beginning of God's creation.

[4:01] The word there actually means, he's the prototype. He's the perfect model from the very beginning. When he says, I am the beginning of creation, what does he mean? He's saying, all of you, everything here, Joe just talked about this.

That actually, all of it, we're not self-made people. We're all made in the image of Christ. We all came from Christ. Maybe just stop there for a second. If you're taking notes or if you're even flicking through your Bible or if you're looking for O-Town playlists from the 90s, why don't you go with me to Colossians now.

Now, Colossians chapter 1 verse 15 onwards. Funnily enough, those of you from KFCI, Colossians chapter 1 verse 15 was my very first sermon when Christina and I, our family, we got to Hong Kong. I think I preached this in January 2019 on this passage, Colossians 1. It says this, Do you remember that?

Do you believe that? That you were created from him. You were made in his image. Not only that, not only did we come from him, we're going to him.

[5:24] Flick with me to Romans 8. Let's go to Romans 8. Romans 8. You have the very famous passage that we all remind ourselves and we have a fridge magnet based on it, 828.

For all things work for the good of those who love him. And after that, it says this, According to his purpose, For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son. Not only did we come from him, not only were we made based on him, he was the first original OG prototype. We're also going to be looking like him.

That's it. We come from him and we're heading to him. So our destiny, everything that has life in this world, our destiny here, the destiny of every cell is to be conformed to his image, to looking like him.

So he says, The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation, you were not self-made. You're here because God breathed life into you.

[6:31] You were made from Christ and you were made for all Christ. And then he says this, I know your works. I know your programs. I know the stuff that you're doing. And here comes the famous part.

You are neither cold nor hot. Would that you be either cold nor hot? But because you are neither hot nor cold, I'm going to spit you out of my mouth.

Actually, the word spit there isn't a violent, aggressive spit. It's like, I really despise you. It's a nauseating one. It's like, oh, you make me so sick.

It's that kind of. I'm going to vomit you out of my mouth. That's what he's saying. He's saying, because you are lukewarm. Isn't this the biggest problem that we have?

Isn't this the biggest problem that we have in the church? Maybe in a church that doesn't have any pressure coming from outside. Isn't this the biggest thing? Lukewarmness. Lukewarm Christians, where we are neither cold nor hot.

[7:29] Now, growing up in England, when we used to sit down to eat food, every time we'd sit down and eat food, we'd have to explain to the staff. Because I'd go, hey, can I have some warm water to drink?

Because in Hong Kong, Chinese people, we love drinking. They were lunsou. Actually, in Hong Kong, it's so part of the fabric of society that there's just a lunsou station that you just go and get yourself.

It's just there. But in England, and then the waiters would be like, so you want warm water? Hot water? With lemon? And then in Spain, it would be with sugar?

And then it's cold water? It's like, but actually, they don't understand that as Hong Kong people, we like to drink warm water. But here's the danger. I wonder whether we drink so much warm water that we've let that seep into our faith.

That we actually approach our faith in the same way, but that we are neither hot nor cold, that we are lukewarm. That is the biggest problem. Tim Keller says this, you can't react to Jesus in any other way other than radically.

[8:28] You cannot react to Jesus in a moderate way. That is impossible. If you consider the claims that this guy made, you can't just say, oh, okay, seems like a nice guy.

C.S. Lewis puts it this way. You can either respond to Jesus with hatred, with terror, or with adoration. Hatred, terror, or adoration. He's either a lunatic, he's a liar, or he's Lord.

He's nothing in between. Which one is he for you? Because if you're neither here nor there, then actually you're lukewarm. And then Jesus, it makes Jesus sick.

Do you know why? Tim Keller says this, I've got a quote that, he says, how can you come to grips with someone who has given himself utterly for you without you giving yourself utterly to him? Let me just say that again.

How can you come to grips with someone who has given himself utterly for you without you giving yourself utterly to him? To do anything else is not only an offense to the moral sense, it's a crucifixion of the intelligence.

[9:30] It's as stupid as it is wicked. There is no other way to respond. There's no moderate way to respond. There is no lukewarm way to respond. The cold person understands that. The cold person says, I reject such claims. I don't give that kind of preeminence to anybody.

I'm on my own. I am my own God. The cold person has come to grips of the magnitude of the claims of Christ and the hot person has too. The lukewarm person has not. Do we get that? How can you come to terms with someone who has given himself utterly for you and then you say, cool, cool, cool, bro.

That's kind. That's nice. I like you. Kind of. I'll see you on Sunday. Maybe. Can you see that's a crucifixion of intelligence?

Jesus gave himself utterly for us and our response is, cheers, mate. Thanks. Can you see how ridiculous that sounds? And yet, if we look at our lives, isn't that how we, okay, we may say, Lord, we thank you.

We thank you. But if we look at our lives, does that even look that way? If someone was to shadow your life and walk around, would they sense the gratitude, the deep gratitude that comes with knowing what Christ did for you?

[10:40] Whew. He says, because you are lukewarm, you made me sick. Not in an aggressive sentence. This is just nauseating, given what I gave for you and now you don't seem to understand that.

That's nauseating. You are lukewarm. And there's two ways to look at this. There's a geographical way. When he says, you are neither cold nor hot, there's two ways to look at this. There's a geographical contextual way and there's just a pastoral way.

I'll tell you briefly about both. One, the geographical way. The people of Laodicea would understand what this is. This was a wealthy town. It had everything. And I'll tell you more about that later. But one thing it didn't have was its own clean water supply.

Okay, so it had everything else, but it had to rely on other places to give it water. So, and it was famous that actually by the time the water got to Laodicea, it was tasteless, it was murky, and it was nauseating.

So the people of Laodicea would know exactly what Jesus is talking about here. Just down the road, six miles away, is this place called Hierapolis, which is basically like, I can see Brian and Marissa, who used to be with us at KFCI, but now live in Taipei.

[11:44] We went to visit them in the summer. And there's a lovely place near you called Beitu, where there's the hot springs. So Hierapolis has basically the hot springs. And it's a place where it's just restoring, healing as you sit in the hot pool and your body just relaxes.

So the nearby town had the hot springs that were super nice and healing. Colossae, another town just further down that way, kind of the twin city of Laodicea, had cool, ice, refreshing water.

What Jesus is saying here is you are neither healing or restoring, and you are neither refreshing either. And because of that, you make me sick. It means you're not serving your purpose.

You're not doing what you're supposed to be doing. You're not responding to the gospel in the way that you should do. This is a crucifixion of your intelligence. And it goes against just even the moral sense of what we're supposed to do when someone does something like that for us.

And yet in this city, that is exactly what it is. There's another way to look at it. It's just pastorally and ministerially. Those of you who've been with Young Life, who've volunteered with Young Life, who've worked with Young Life, we go out and we meet young people, a lot of young people who don't even know the gospel.

[12:54] I was talking to Nathan last week about this. Actually, when you do something like Alpha, you meet people who have never heard Christianity before or never heard the gospel before. It's actually refreshing. Because they're like, oh yeah, life really sucks.

I don't know where the hope comes from. And so when you talk to these people who are non-Christians, they're like, oh, actually it fills you up. Do you get that? Have you spoken to a non-Christian? You're trying to explain to them?

I'm trying to help them understand, to make sense of this world and this life that they live in. And actually it's refreshing. And even those who are avid, passionate atheists, I love those. Why? Because they have something to say. They have an argument that they want to make. They have a case that they want to bring to you. Yeah, but I disagree. I think this. And you're like, okay. Okay, now let's talk. What's the worst?

When you look at someone and goes, yeah, yeah, I was born a Christian. My grandparents are Christians and my parents were. Yeah. So what do you think about this stuff? Yeah. Yeah. It's kind of cool.

[13:51] Yeah, then I get a bit bored these days. Bored? But isn't that what we often have? I was asked to speak at a Christian school, one that Florence grew up in actually, and this is, I mean, my kids go to Christian schools.

I'm not knocking Christian schools. Christian school has really good things. But man, my heart sunk that day. And you know what I'm talking about, right? I went onto the stage and I spoke to this group of kids.

They were on a retreat in Wukaisa. Yeah, and you know, you've been to that retreat. And I was just about to speak. And I was like, man, these kids are bored. And I haven't even opened my mouth yet.

I'm like, at least give a brother a chance. Like, they're just like, oh, here we go again. Here's that gospel thing. Here's that Jesus thing.

Again. And I was just like, you know what I'm saying? Isn't that heartbreaking? That we would take something like the good news and strip it of the good and strip it of the news.

[14:59] And then you're left with just this empty mech. Forget Jesus. I want to be sick. Why are we here? You either do it properly or you don't do it at all.

You either believe it properly or you don't believe it at all. There is no halfway house in this. The only way to respond to Jesus is radically. And by all means, go and say that he's a liar.

Go and say that his claims are false. Go and say that he's actually crazy. He's a lunatic. But don't say he's Lord and then have no area of your life that he's lording over.

Don't do that. Don't do that. And this is my message. That's what you've heard me speak about. You've heard me speak about the fact that we all often are mildly vaccinated with a very mild weak form of Jesus. Those of us who have attended church, grown up in church, we've heard about church. We are vaccinated with a mild and weak or dead form of Jesus because we think we know.

[16:08] So when you say, when I ask you, are you Christian? You say, oh yeah, I kind of am. I grew up in church. I kind of know about the Jesus stuff. You know what that does? That stops you from knowing about Jesus himself. You know stuff about Jesus, but you don't know Jesus.

You know stuff about Jesus. You've been taught about Jesus. You've been taught about the big fish. You've been taught about the big ark, but you don't know Jesus at all. You are not following him. He is not your Lord. You think you know, and you know what?

That's how the vaccination works, right? Because you have this mild vaccination of, it's this strain inside you, that's the false one. It stops you from getting the real thing. And then you're wondering, oh, this Jesus thing isn't that great at all.

Because you don't have the real thing. Because the real one would blow your mind. And that's the danger. It's not atheist versus Christian that I'm most worried about. I'm worried about the ones who

are just in the middle.

Those lukewarm Christians who say they believe but don't really believe. Who actually think they have it right. Charles Spurgeon said this, the discernment is not knowing between right and wrong. It's knowing between right and almost right.

[17:09] Can I just say that again? Discernment is not knowing between right and wrong. It's knowing between right and almost right. And being almost right is so dangerous. Because when you think you are right but you are almost right, you miss the real thing completely.

You're watching the fireworks from your phone and you're not looking at the real thing. And because of that, you think, oh, it's no big deal. That's the problem that we have. I think this is the church that we have in here in Algol.

This is the thing that keeps me up at night. Because I think there are so many of us who have heard this stuff before. We've even said the prayer. We even say we'll follow. We say we'll go to church. And man, I think it's better that we don't go to church.

Because the way we do it, actually, forget Jesus for now, I think it turns non-Christians off. I think non-Christians go, oh, you say you believe in this stuff but yet you don't look any different to me. In fact, you're worse. You gossip more than anything. I don't see anything different in you. So why do I need to go and use my Sunday morning for that? The only way to respond to Jesus is radically. [18:19] It's not moderately. And that's what Jesus is addressing here. He saved the worst till last or the best till last, however you look at it. This is his final one and he's coming in and he's finishing with his left hook. And again, this church was interesting because this church, very similar to the church in Sardis, was a very wealthy church.

It had everything other than a clean supply of water but it had everything. And then he goes and talks about this. He says, for you say, I am rich. You say, I am rich.

And it's interesting here. He says, I am rich, I have prospered and I need nothing. Those are the most dangerous words. I need nothing. It's interesting because Jesus knows exactly the city.

This was a very, very wealthy city to the point where the Jews in Jerusalem at one time actually contacted the Jews in Laodicea and said, can you lend us some money? Our accounts are not doing well. Can you lend us some money?

So they actually lent money back to the Jews in Jerusalem. There was another time where an earthquake actually flattened the whole city and Rome actually offered to give them money to rebuild their city and what did Laodicea say?

[19:24] No thanks. We need nothing. We got this ourselves. We have all our banks. All our banks are solvent. We are fine. We can pay for ourselves. Can you imagine that pride? Someone's offering you, Rome's offering you money and you say, I don't need it.

We've got enough. That's a little bit of the mindset. He says, for you say I am rich, that I have prospered, that I need nothing. Actually, there's three interesting points about the city. One, it had a lot of money, a lot of banks and all the banks were solvent and they just were never in need.

Number two, they were also, actually, it's like Wall Street. So imagine Laodicea, the elements of Wall Street there and then it also was the fashion capital. Okay? Fashion capital, so think Wall Street mixes in with Milan or Paris or Lululemon.

That's a place, right? That's a place. Yeah, this place. So you got Wall Street and then you got Paris and then it was also famous for his medical schools. So those three things, it has the money, it has the appearance, it has the look and it also has the health and it has the treatments that sorted itself out.

Jesus almost knows these things and attacks these three things. There's the triple threat. He says, for you say, I am rich, I have prospered, I need nothing. And then he says this, but you don't realize and you are not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, naked and blind.

[20:44] You think you are rich but you are poor. You think you are fully clothed and yet you are naked. You think you see and you can heal your own eyes and yet you are blind.

And then he says, for I counsel you, for I counsel you, it's kind of like a doctor saying, I prescribe you this, for I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire that you may be rich. That the gold that I'm talking about is not the gold that you're talking about.

It's not the notes that you're talking about. It's not the crypto that you're talking about. The gold that is tested that you may be rich. It's a heavenly rich that you cannot get here.

And so he's attacking that. And then he's saying, and I counsel you to buy from me clothes that you may clothe yourself that the shame of your nakedness may not be seen. You say you need nothing yet you are fully, fully covering all the shame and all the guilt that you have.

And he says, salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. You are poor, blind, and naked, but if you buy from me gold, if you buy from me white garments, if you buy from me this salve and ointment to anoint your eyes, then, and only then, will you see.

[21:55] This tells me one thing. Discipleship is the hardest in cities. I'm feeling it. I'm feeling it. I was back in London. I was back in Birmingham where we grew up, and the pace, and you were back home in Ohio.

The pace is different. It's slow. People don't have much to do. So when you run things, people all come because, wow, this is the only thing that we have in town. So yeah, we're going to come. And actually, one of the main things is you just have space.

You have space to sit and just think. And only then, when you have space, do you like, oh man, what am I here for? What is the meaning of life?

There's got to be more than this. Whereas when you're in a city, like Hong Kong, it's just, you don't have time. You are just constantly moving. You don't have time to decide whether that thing that you're doing is actually worth it or not.

You just got to do it because everyone's doing it and it just keeps going. Discipleship is the hardest in cities. Mostly because also in cities is where you have everything you need. And I cannot think of a city that has more than Hong Kong.

[23:02] That has everything that you need within reach. 15 minute drive, 30 minute MTR, you can reach everything. Have you found yourself saying, I don't need anything?

I mean, of course, when you see it in the Bible and it's coming from a guy whose eyes are like flame of fire and mouth with a sword coming out, you're kind of like, oh, that's scary. I'm not that bad. But have you ever felt that?

When you're saying, you know what? I'm pretty, I have everything I need. That's what he's saying here to this church. He's saying, you think you have but you don't realize. Have you known those people who you know they need help but the only person who doesn't know that they need help is that person themselves?

And it's so frustrating, right? It's so frustrating to look at that person and go, you need help and yet you are so proud. That's what Jesus is saying. And do you know who he's saying it to? He's not saying it to prideful, obnoxious, murdering non-Christians outside.

He's saying it to you. He's saying it to me. He's saying it to the church. You say you have everything that you need. You've got this big church.

[24:07] You're doing all these fun things. You have all the money, your accounts, you can do anything you want and yet you are poor, blind, naked. I counsel you, I prescribe you to buy from me.

The city is the hardest because actually the city is built in such a way all the way from Cain, all the way from Cain, all the way from the tower that we tried to build to reach God. The city basically shouts what? What's the mantra of the city?

We have everything. We don't need God. That's what the city says. Now, since the beginning of time, the Lord's been trying to reverse that. Back to the garden where actually there is plenty, you don't need everything because one thing about the city is it may say we have everything and yet, man, there is lack.

There is lack in this city. Josh and I were just talking about that. He sent me a message about that even yesterday, right? Can we reflect ourselves? Do we have that heart of just lacking that I just don't have enough?

And I'll tell you, this whole city is filled with people who lack, myself included. People who are super rich and people who are super poor they are still lacking. Isn't it funny that we've built this whole thing to make sure that we don't lack anything and yet somehow we still lack everything.

[25:21] Can you see the meaningless pursuit that comes with that? That's what's happening here. That's what's happening with this church here and he's saying, come to me.

No other letter has such a bigger threat. Actually, there is nothing good about this. Even in Sardis, which is pretty bad already, at least it said, yet you still have a few names who haven't sold their garments, who will walk with me in white for they are worthy.

In Laodicea, there's nothing. There is no one. There is no greater problem than this church here. But I'll tell you what, yet there is no greater promise. It just fills me with comfort because if you carried on from here, you'll see that he finishes with this.

He's like, I'm going to throw you out of my mouth. You make me sick. And yet, those whom I love, I reprove and discipline. So be zealous and repent.

Those whom I love. Wait, you just talked about all the bad things that we have that we're not doing. And yet suddenly he turns it around and says, those whom I love, I reprove. What's he saying?

[26:25] And parents have said this, I think. I hope. I think we have. I'm only doing this, I'm only saying this because I love you. I'm only telling you off because I love you. If I didn't love you, I wouldn't even tell you off.

That's what Jesus is saying. Jesus is saying, I may be harsh here. I may be calling you wretched and pitiable and naked and poor and blind, but I love you. I'm only doing this because I love you. And then he backs it up and he tells you more. He says, those whom I love, I reprove and discipline. So turn around. Repent. Be zealous. Turn your attention back on to me. Turn your attention back on to me and here's the promise.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. We've heard this. Revelation 3.20 is the famous passage. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and I will eat with him and he will eat with me.

If you're sat here going, man, I'm lukewarm. Man, I'm responding to Jesus in such an inappropriately moderate way and you're just feeling bad about yourself, this is your encouragement.

[27:35] This is for you. This is the comfort that you can have if you have strayed from living radically for him because even in all that lukewarmness, even when he wants to spit you out, even when he wants to, when you make him sick, he moves towards you.

Do you know when you're sick? If you eat something and it makes you vomit, you don't want anything to do with it, right? You just run away and get it away from me. Sometimes, that's how I used to feel about durians until my family, a family of durian lovers have trained me to be okay. It's like, get that away from me. Jesus sees the lukewarmness that is in you and I and yet he moves towards us. He doesn't have to, but because he loves us, he moves towards us and what does he say?

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and I will eat with him and he with me.

A lot of people use this verse for evangelistic events. Have we heard this before? If you've been growing up in the church a long time ago, this is this, if you're a non-Christian, often it will be, hey, actually, Jesus is standing at your door and he's knocking.

[28:52] All it requires is for you to open the door. There's a famous painting of this verse and Jesus is standing at the door and he's knocking on the door but the handle is not on the outside. The handle is on the inside because the call to the non-Christian is, hey, Jesus is knocking at your door.

You have the power to open this door. But let's just stop there for a second because Jesus isn't writing to non-Christians. Who's he writing to? He's writing to the church.

What does that tell you? That there is a church, that there can be a church that has locked Jesus out on the outside. We started this series, Revelation 1.

He says, I walk among you. I know, I know what you're doing. Can you imagine just for a second, I said, Jesus is among us. He's here. This isn't a memorial service about a guy, about a nice guy that lived 2,000 years ago and died and that was it.

He came back to life and He is alive and He is walking among us. But the problem is, we've left Him outside. Can you imagine that kind of, has anyone been to a birthday party where the birthday boy or the birthday girl was forgotten and was outside?

[30:07] He's outside! Is that the same for us? He's talking to the church. I know there are some of you here who aren't Christians and we welcome you here.

And we hope that you coming here is not just for you to see, oh, there's a group of welcoming, kind people here. No, we want you to come in here and to meet the living God.

I'll tell you something else. Gabriel talked about the church in Philadelphia. And He says, He said to the church in Philadelphia, He says, I know your works. Behold, I put before you an open door that

no one is able to shut.

He says, the one who has the key of David who opens and no one can shut and who shuts and no one opens. So let me tell you something about Jesus. He can force open that door if He wants to. Literally, the church just before, He said, I want to back open your door.

Actually, if I open the door, no one can shut it. If I shut the door, no one can open it. I have complete control over this. And yet here, He portrays Himself as the gentle Jesus. Saying, I'm knocking.

[31 : 11] I think we need to remember those two letters side by side. He is the Jesus who can knock down the door. And yet He stands at the door gently, knocking. That's what He's doing for us.

There will come a time though. There will come a time where all those doors will be completely down. He says, there will come a time where every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. You will have no choice but to declare that He is Lord.

You can think He's a lunatic or a liar or He's just a friend or a nice guy now and you can just be lukewarm as much as you want to. There will come a time where you can't help but actually kneel down at Him before His presence.

But right now, Christians, Church of Laodicea, Church of Hong Kong, Kongfolk Church, have we let Him out? Have we kept Him out?

Have we locked Him out? And He's gentle. And He says, hey, I'm going to come in. And when I come in to Him, I will eat with Him and He with me. The Jewish tradition, the Jewish meaning behind that is way more than, oh, let's just grab a coffee.

[32 : 15] It's not that. There's a covenant, there's a relationship between the people that you eat with. Actually, one of the biggest problems that people had with Jesus when He was walking this planet, what was one of the biggest problems they had with Him?

Who He shared a table with. Why are you eating with them? You're not allowed to eat with them. You're allowed to go to their house. Because in that kind of culture, when you go in to eat with someone, you're basically saying, I approve of everything that you are, that everything that I have is yours.

In that moment, there is a special relationship. There is a special covenant. And He's saying, behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and I will eat with him and he with me.

That is the tightest level of intimacy. Something that this church does not deserve because it is lukewarm, because it makes him sick. Yet, He moves towards them. Yet, He moves towards you and He moves towards me.

And He says, to the one who conquers, I will sit on my throne with me. That's fun. To the one who conquers, to the one who is victorious, is what Jackie read, to the one who is victorious, to the one who keeps faithful until the end, He will sit with me and I with Him.

[33 : 27] Why? Because I also conquered. And I sat down with my father. That's what He says. And of course, why did He conquer? How did He conquer? When He came to this world Himself. The sinless one.

Lived a perfect life. And then paid for our sins. That is what He's saying here. Because I conquered, you conquered. Because I'm victorious, you're victorious.

It doesn't matter if you're lukewarm, you just need to let me in. You just need to let me in. And you will sit with me. Philippians 2 says this, that He emptied Himself, right?

Became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. Therefore God has now highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

You can sit with me there. Ephesians 2 says this. Ephesians 2 says, you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.

[34 : 25] But, verse 4, but God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead, even when we were lukewarm, made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Even though we were sinners, we were still invited to the table because He moved towards us. He knocks on the door. He has gentleness. He reaches out to us. There's a few people I want to speak to here though.

If you're one of those people, hey, I don't think I'm lukewarm. I think I'm doing alright. I'm really trying. I think I'm really trying to live in a way that really honors Him, living radically for Him. I think, I think, God help me, I think I'm one of those people. But I'll tell you this. When He knocks on the door, actually there's an old little exercise we used to do in our old church, which is, we did it over an encounter weekend, which is My Heart, Christ's Home.

And the idea that He has is you go away for a weekend and you really spend time reflecting. Actually, you may have let Jesus through the front door into your home, but maybe there are rooms in your house that you do not let Jesus into.

[35 : 38] So if you're like, hey, I think I let Him in and I genuinely want to live for Him, to you I say, is there a room? Is there a closet? Is there a closet that you don't let Jesus into?

That you're like, Jesus, you can come into every room. Actually, better still, why don't we just hang out in the living room? I'll make some coffee. We'll hang out here. We can just talk about fun things. You can help me with my anxiety at work.

You can help me with that jerk in my workplace. We can sort that out. We can just talk about those things and we're cool. But let's not go any further. Are you that person? Is Jesus, actually, you let Him in and then you just turned around and you walked off and you went back to the study to do your own thing and to scroll on your iPhone to look at all those photos.

And Jesus just stood in your hallway. Okay, I'm in now, but what am I doing here? Are you that person? If you've let Him into your house already, then actually, maybe the question is, you let Him through the front door, but there are other doors that He's knocking on.

And He knocks so gently. And actually, one of the things is, He's not here to clean house. There are some drawers in my house that actually, I mean, there's nothing bad in there.

[36 : 53] It's just a little bit messy. That Christina's like, what's in this drawer? And I'll be like, cables. Lots of cables.

Cables that I don't really need anymore. And that's when I feel convicted. And if she's in a bad mood, then that's when she'll literally pull the whole drawer out and she'll like, tidy it all for me, which is great.

Praise the Lord. But I feel all the fear and all the kind of like zealousness that she has. But actually, her heart is just to clean up.

I think we have closets and we have rooms in our houses that we are afraid to let Jesus in. Because when, we're afraid that when He comes into that room, He'll walk out of the house.

Let me tell you something. He will never walk out of your house. He will never walk out of your house. In fact, the funny thing is, the silly thing is, He already knows what's in that closet. That's the silly thing.

[37 : 51] He just wants you to open it. And He just wants to tidy it for you because He knows that you can't tidy it yourself because you got yourself into this mess and you know that you can't get out of it. He just wants to help you. Would you let Him in?

Whether it's the kitchen, whether it's the study, whether it's your computer, whether it's your search history, whatever it might be. Would you let Him in and let Him clean up for you? And it will be tidy and it will be nice and it will be clean.

Do you have that? I encourage you. If that's you, He is knocking. Let me in. Let me clean up. But if you're that person who let Him into the front door and then you just left and you've just gone and sit back and you're doing your own thing, then you've got a problem.

Then you best haul your ass back out into the hallway and say to Jesus, sorry, I totally forgot that you were here. Come and sit with me in the living room. Spend time with Him.

You wouldn't do it with any other guests. Why are you doing it with the Lord of hosts? With any other guests that come and visits you, you would say, hey, what would you like to drink? What would you like to do?

[39 : 04] Let's talk. But yet with Jesus, we let Him in and then we just leave Him. Like, hey, I've got five minutes today. I've got five minutes. Can you look after yourself for the other 23 hours?

I've got stuff to do. I've got people to follow on Instagram. I've got essays to write. I've got work to do. I've got projects to do. I've got things to build.

And yet, the beginning of God's creation is right here. Everything came from Him and will be, the destiny is to be like Him and yet in the middle we've completely ignored Him.

If you're that person, come back to the hallway. Find Him and sit down with Him. Maybe it's because you're also afraid to talk about some things that you know He'll have to talk to you about. And finally, for those who actually, you don't know what I'm talking about at all. You're just like, actually, my house is completely fine. He's not here. I'm just saying, actually, what I'm saying to you is I'm not here to give you all the answers.

[40:06] I'm not here to say, you're wrong. I'm right. What I can say to you is start asking questions. Ask the right questions. And just something completely maybe off topic but practical, go into nature.

Go into nature. If you're feeling stressed, if you're feeling busy and your house is, yeah, you are in control of your house, good for you, go into nature. Tell you what nature does for me. Nature reminds me of how small I am. If I just sit in nature and I look at the trees and I look at the birds and I look at the waves, I'm like, there is a world that's happening around me without me knowing.

The sun rises and sets without my control at all. There is a symphony happening around you from a creator who is singing a song to you trying to get your attention.

Give him some time. And let me tell you this. Give him some time because he's the Lord or he's not. And if he's not, then you're safe. Then you carry on doing your house thing.

[41:07] You do your thing. But if he's Lord, it means he's got something even better for you. So would you just hear that knock? Would you hear his voice? And the truth is, what is he trying to do here?

He's trying to get relationship back with each of us. He says, buy from me clothes that you may clothe yourself so that the shame of your nakedness may not be seen. He's reversing the original sin.

What was the original problem? Right from the very beginning. Adam and Eve choose their own way and what do they do? They are filled with shame. They're like, oh, I'm naked. We're naked. Hide yourself.

Here's a leaf. Let's hide behind the bushes. And then God says, where are you? He's saying, buy from me garments that you can clothe yourself and that you won't have that shame anymore.

Sit with me. Be faithful unto the end and to the one who conquers, I will let him sit with me on my throne in the heavenly places. Why? Because I also conquered.

[42:14] Why? Because I was rich but then I became poor for you. I was fully clothed as a prince of heaven and yet I took off my robes and I became naked on a cross for you to have my robes so that you don't need to be naked.

I was blinded by Roman soldiers. They blindfolded me and they whipped me and they said, who's hitting you? Prophecy. Tell us who's hitting you. You can't see behind that blindfold.

He became blind for us so that we may see. Did he know who was hitting him? Of course he did. But he became poor for you. He became blind for you.

He became naked for you. That itself is enough for you to trust him to let him into your house, to let him into your living room, to let him into any room, to any closet, any drawer because he sits here having given himself utterly, utterly for you.

The only response, the only appropriate response is for you to give yourself utterly to him. Anything else, anything short of that is a crucifixion of your intelligence.

[43:21] It violates the moral law. This person, this Jesus, moves towards you, moves towards me, even in our lukewarmness.

would you hear his voice and would you open up the door? These people said, I need nothing.

I think the best way to reverse that is to simply say, I need you. we've got a little bit of time now and there's two things I want to do. I want us to respond and we're going to respond in two ways.

We're going to respond one through a song which is something that's pretty typical that most churches around the world do and then the second is actually for us to respond in community together.

This is the bit that's usually a little bit more awkward but it's also completely okay because it's just, because if we're gathering here together then we want to share each other's lives and you may not know the people around you but I want you to start thinking.

[44:22] As I've shared and I've just blurted out hope into stuff, what's the thing that hits you the most in this? What's the thing that you're reminded of? Whether you've been at church for 70 years

[illegible]