

# Revelation 3:14-22

Sunday 7/25/2010

I am here today because of the grace of God, as all of us are, if you want to know the truth. So we are here today to celebrate, I think, our salvation and to celebrate life. I thank you, Brother Bob. You have been so gracious to us yesterday and today. We do not deserve the graciousness that you have showed to us. Are you sitting over here? What are you doing back there? Back there in the back. All right. Preachers are supposed to be on the front row. You can hear me? All right. But he and Barbara have just been gracious to us, and we are so grateful and thankful. This is a wonderful congregation. I had no idea what I was getting into when I came up here. And you folks just outdo yourselves, and we are really grateful for that. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

I want you to do something with me today. Do you have Bibles in your hand? Now I want you to respond. Do you normally respond to Brother Bob, or do you just sit there like a knot on a log? I do not know. Okay. I want you to respond. I want you to stand up. I want you to take your Bibles. I want you to hold them up like this. Now I want you to listen to me. This is God's holy Word, divinely inspired by God, infallible and inerrant. It is my sword to fight the devil and his temptations. It is a comfort in time of trouble, a compass on life's journey, a lift in time of trouble, and my companion every day. Do you get that? Do you have it memorized yet? I am challenging your pastor to take that statement and preach it to you and teach this little saying to you because this is truly God's holy Word, divinely inspired by God, in a day when we find a lot of people not believing in the Word of God. It is time Christians spoke up and told them about what this Word is all about. If we do not do it, who will? No one will. It is up to us.

Let me pray with you. Father, thank You for loving us today. Thank You for the privilege of meeting with us. We are so grateful, Lord, and we are so thankful that You loved us enough to die on the cross for us that we could have eternal life. Thank You, and we give You praise in Jesus' holy, wonderful name. Amen. Please be seated.

## I. The Serpent of Sin

Several years ago, there was a man by the name of William Hardy who lived in Tyler, Texas. He was a young father. They had just had their first child. He was three months old. In the middle of the night, William got up like a lot of people do and headed down the hallway toward the refrigerator to be a midnight marauder to the refrigerator. Some of you know what I am talking about. As he passed the nursery where the little baby was sleeping, he noticed the bassinet was turned over on its side. He gulped and looked inside and saw the baby not there. Thinking his wife must have gotten the baby, he rushed back into the bedroom to see, but oh no, she was sound asleep and the baby was not there. Instantly, his heart began to freeze and shiver, and he ran down the hallway and down the stairs. Down at the bottom of the stairs to the left, the living room, dimly lit, was his 12-foot python that had escaped from the aquarium that he had it in. In the middle of that python was a big lump. True story.

Instantly, he, I almost cannot tell the story. Instantly, he ran to the back porch, grabbed a splitting maul that had been splitting wood, and it was sharp. He came in and began furiously chopping at the snake and killing it, chopping it into pieces. He ripped open the stomach, but yes, it was too late. There was his dead son. By then, the authorities had been called, and he ran out the door and he was screaming at the top of his lungs going down the street, later to be put in an insane asylum because of the tragedy of his son. What a tragic thing. I want you to think about that snake as sin, as you and me. Now, I want us to stop it there. I will pick it back up later.

## II. The Falling Away and Biblical Worldview

1 Timothy chapter 4 says that there will be a falling away from the church in the last days. That there will be a falling away. The church is not going to be as exuberant in the last days. Paul wants this young Timothy to know about that. He writes to him and says, be on guard, young man, you young preacher. There is going to be a falling away of the church in the last days today.

I want you to listen to these numbers closely. There are only 19% of people who call themselves born-again believers. I would assume that would be most of us in here this morning, only 19%. Let us round it off to 20% for your memory. 20% of born-again believers believe in a biblical worldview. You say, "Well, pastor, wait a minute. There are many people in evangelical churches that surely believe in a biblical worldview." And Barna says, "No, it is only 20%." You say, "Well, then what is the biblical worldview?" I am glad you asked because I intend to tell you anyway.

1. Believing that absolute moral truth exists. That is why I had you hold your Bible up. In this Bible is absolute moral truth. Only 20% of born-again believers believe that to be true. Something has gone wrong. Something is not right.
2. That the Bible is accurate in all of its principles that it teaches. We believe that the majority of you in this service believe that today. But we are talking about people who call themselves born-again believers in evangelical churches, mainline, mainstream churches, only 20% believe that.
3. That Satan is a real being. Let me tell you folks, he is. A year and a half ago, about that, I began teaching in depth, verse by verse, the book of Revelation. I knew it was going to take a while. It took one full year, Sunday morning and Sunday night, almost a hundred messages. I told our congregation at the beginning of that, that the devil is not going to like this. Some did not believe me. I can stand here today and tell you he did not like it. If I went into detail, it would have appalled you at what took place in the last year and a half. But you see, the devil is real, and he does not like us bad-mouthing him. But let me tell you, he is a loser. Just figure it out. He is going to be locked up into the abyss in hell forever at the end of the Tribulation or at the end of the thousand-year reign forever. He is temporarily locked up during the Millennium, but he gets out for a little while, but he is a loser. He has lost. He knows that, but he also knows that if we are not careful, we will allow him to distract us and cause difficult problems. The devil is real. Might as well get used to it.

4. They believe that a person cannot earn their way to heaven by doing good works and being good people. You do not get there by works. You get there by grace through faith. That is number four.
5. That Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and that God is the all-powerful Creator of this universe and that He rules this universe. And He does. Only 20% of the people believe that.

Born-again believers believe that if this is true, what I have just told you, that only 20% of born-again believers believe in those five statements as a biblical worldview. If that is true, I have a question for you today. What has happened to the pulpits of America? Because you see, it is the pulpits that ultimately reflect that. And if that is all we believe, then what has happened to our pulpits? Without question, Paul is accurate in describing to Timothy that there will be a falling away in the last days, and there is today.

### III. The Laodicean Church: Wealth, Entertainment, and Lukewarmness

We see the reality of that in Revelation chapter 3 in the church of Laodicea. If you have not turned there, I have not asked you to yet. Turn there, Revelation chapter 3, around verse 14, and just kind of hang loose in there with it. I will be taking those verses piece by piece.

The first thing we see is that the church of Laodicea, and if you have ever studied that at all, you will find that the Laodicean church is a wealthy church. It had a lot of money. We see a lot of churches today that have a lot of money. I do not know, you guys may be filthy rich here. I do not know. I do not care. I can tell you, I know a church in Joplin that is not. But there are a lot of wealthy churches today. And the church at Laodicea was a wealthy church. It was a wealthy community.

But it also evolved around, and I want you to listen to this closely, entertainment. If there was ever a day of something that has swarmed in, if you would, into our churches, it is the entertainment aspect. I was so grateful for your music today. That young man that sang the one with the track about no tears welcome in heaven or something like that, let me have the name of that. I am going to learn that one. And the guy that played the guitar for our son, you can come down and play for us anytime you want. So I am grateful for the music you had today. But, you see, we have lost that. Because what happens is we try to get up, and we try to make it an entertainment rock festival on the platform. Now I can appreciate, no, no, I cannot. I just cannot say that. I cannot say that I appreciate all types of music. I wanted to say that, but no, I cannot. And I certainly dislike some others.

But we are geared for entertainment. Laodicean Church, geared for entertainment. In fact, in the Laodicean city, where the church was, they had a 30,000-seat amphitheater, an outdoor theater, and there the Roman fair went 24/7. You could go, you would see something of an entertainment basis 24/7 in that city. So the modern-day Laodicean Church, which I believe we are in the modern-day Laodicean time, is the time, crazed for entertainment. Let me tell you something about entertainment. I want you to listen. If you hook them by entertainment, you have got to keep them by entertainment. But if you hook them with Jesus, it is not a problem to keep them

with Jesus. Let me tell you, there is a difference. There is a big difference in that. And I realize what I am telling you today probably is not too popular with some of my buddies that I have got in this state. But that is okay. I did not agree to be popular anyway, so it is all right.

There is also something else they were famous for. They were famous for being known as the lukewarm church. Now, I do not know if you are aware of why Jesus would say that to them or not, but in Hierapolis, the city a few miles upstream, so to speak, from Laodicea, was an area then in western Turkey where they have these hot springs. So the people at Laodicea wanted some of that hot water down in their city. So they built an aqueduct from there down to Laodicea, but the engineers miscalculated, and by the time it got to Laodicea from Hierapolis, it was lukewarm. It was not hot. And you see, the people at Laodicea would understand the term lukewarm by that alone. And Jesus said, "I wish you were either hot or cold. I do not want you to be lukewarm." For you see, if you are hot, Jesus can use you. Amen? If you are cold, at least He can speak to a cold heart. But if you are lukewarm, you just kind of go around with this Prozac smile on all the time. You just kind of, "Oh yeah, everything is nice and easy. It is all right. No problems." Baloney. That is not how we are to be.

#### IV. The Compromising Church and People's Rule

Laodicea was known as something else that I think is probably more prevalent than all. It was known as a compromising church. How many times have I seen churches compromise to try to bring people in? "I am not going to preach the hard truth that you are a sinner." Let me tell you folks, every one of you in here today is a sinner. And I hope you are all saved by grace. If you are not saved by grace, you can be before you leave here today. We are all sinners. I did not like that when I heard it the first time. I said, "No, not me. I am a pretty good fellow." So I thought, until I began to examine myself against the life of Christ.

But they compromised. We see more compromising today in these last days than I have ever seen in my life. I remember the 50s and early 60s. I know I do not look this old, but I really am. And I remember in the middle to late 50s, we used to have, and I do not know, I know there are several of you in here younger, you probably do not remember the old Brush Arbor days. Any of you? Yeah, I did not think I would get much of a response there. But what they would do, and we just lived down the road about less than a quarter of a mile from a corner, and they would go in and they would cut down trees and they would saw logs, and you would sit on rough saw logs, and they would put brush over the top of that, build it up about eight or 10 feet high. And that brush would keep the sun off on Sundays and on the nights before the evenings, before the sun went down, and kind of shade them a little bit, called Brush Arbor meetings. And I was just a young boy in grade school. We lived down the road, and they did have some electricity up there at that time. And I remember eight, nine, 10 o'clock at night hearing those old preachers preach and preach and preach. I did not go up there very often. But I remember that those people knew what the heart of God was. And they were not going to compromise one bit. But today, in order to try to get people in our churches, we likely will compromise something. God forbid that ever takes place in this church or our church in Joplin. I refuse to do that because I know what the truth of the Word is, you see.

In Revelation chapter 3, verse 14, Jesus addresses the church this way. This is important for you to understand.

*Revelation 3:14*

*And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

It says, "unto the church of the Laodiceans." You say, "Well, what is wrong with that?" If you recall, when Jesus addressed the other churches, He addressed them this way. He would say, and you can look it up, "to the church at Ephesus," "to the church at Sardis," "to the church at Thyatira," and so on. All six of those other churches, it was "to the church at." This one is "to the church of." You say, "Well, what is significant about that?" The significance is this, is that this church of Laodicea was led by the people, not God. That is the difference. This was the people's church. There is significance in this because Jesus wanted them to know that this was a church led by the people, not of God. The pastor had very little to say about it. That is an indication that God was locked out of the church. In fact, if you go on and read a few verses on down, you will find that Jesus is standing at the door, knocking, wanting to come in to this very same church. He is locked out of the church because it is a people church. This is their church. This is of them. It is being run by them, not God.

In fact, that is what Laodicean, if you would, means in the original language in Greek. That is what it means. Laos or laity means people, and decay means decision or rule. What happens is, in other words, it is like people decide, people rule, if you would. It is a church that is not guided by the Lord whatsoever. It is like their gig. It is like their little movie. It is like their church.

I was shocked to death back in the early 70s. I was with a traveling quartet, and we were in Atlanta, Georgia. We were scheduled to sing at this church. I will not give you the denomination name, although it does not matter. It is all right, but I will not do that. We walked into this church. For the first time, we were going to set up our equipment and get ready and all of that. We walked into the foyer. It had a large foyer, nice, big, beautiful building, a lot of money. This was one of those money churches. Walked in, and there in the foyer, I pointed at this round thing that had sand in it, and I said, "Hey, what is that?" He said, "Well, that is an ashtray." I said, "What?" See, I come from Arkansas. Sometimes I speak my piece pretty loudly, and I said, "What?" He said, "That is an ashtray." Well, when the people started coming in, smoke started bellowing. They would put them out in that sand before they would go in the auditorium. I was shocked to death. You see, that is a compromising church. I was shocked. I am still shocked today. That is 40 years ago almost. That was a church that was run by, listen to me, run by the people. Biblical authority had no place in that church or in the Laodicean church of today.

This church, the Laodicean church, is the most polished, uptown church that you could find in that day and age in Laodicea, and that is the way it is today. God's presence is nowhere to be found. Have you ever walked into a building, into a church building, and it felt cold? Now I am not talking about temperature-wise, just cold. I want to tell you folks, you melted me down today. I mean, we have a friendly church, but I am not sure we kind of meet up with you yet. I mean, everywhere somebody would just come, "Hey, hey, Bob," I do not know what all you said

about me, but whatever it is, figure it out and do it again at my church, will you? Now we have a great church. We have a wonderful church. Love the Lord, the Spirit is good and great. It is that way here too, and I am grateful for that. But if you went downtown to the First Church of the Refrigerator, you would find something different. You would find a six-foot icicle up there trying to speak, and he would not know what he is talking about because you see, it would be compromising. Let me tell you, that church was powerless. It was sinful, and it was putrid, the Laodicean church. It was compromised for the sake, listen to me, for the sake of popularity.

## V. The Laodicean Mindset in Modern Christianity

This is an end-time tendency today because the Laodicean mindset is all around us. It is here. It is kind of like this, so-called Christian television shows us that. What do you mean, so-called Christian television? Well, get ready. Large glass cathedrals, bringing in popular sports figures and movie stars and letting them tell their positive story to the congregation. They rant and rave about how positive their life is and how good everything is and wonderful, never, ever hardly mentioning the name of God, and then leaving that time and going their way back into society again where they will do their R-rated movies and everything else that they do. So-called Christianity. Let us think positively about what is going on in life.

But you say, "Well, so what? That does not bother me too much." Well, get in an airplane and fly down to Houston, Texas, and go to a church down there to where he will teach you how to be prosperous and wealthy and feel good about yourself, by the name of Joel Osteen. I guess I will call names, but I guess that is all right. And if it is not, you can lock me up. You see, you can go down there to the largest church in the United States and learn how to be positive and get rich and feel good. You say, "Well, that is okay. That does not bother me too much." Well, get on your saddle and go out west to Saddleback Baptist Church and learn how to be politically correct and feed the poor and invite presidential candidates in to interview. You say, "Well, that is okay. Well, but that does not bother me too much." Well, then get in your canoe. Paddle up Willow Creek to Willow Creek Community Church, South of Chicago, Brother Bill Hybels, and listen to people that he brings in that do not even believe in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, that are Marxist people.

Now listen to me. It is a Laodicean mindset, for you see, we just want to be able to encompass everything and everybody. I will tell you one thing. Those churches will not tell you that you are a sinner. They will not tell you that there is sin in your life and it needs to be cleaned up by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. And who do we think we are as Christians today to think that we can hodgepodge with all of these entities and expect God to bless our nation today? It will not happen. God is not going to bless that way. The lukewarm church is about a positive mental attitude put into Christian terminology, and it does not float. It is people stuff. It is the people rule stuff. It is a Laodicean mindset. People rule, you see. And these churches will not teach you that you are a sinner and that you have rebelled against God and that you are going to split hell wide open if you do not repent. They will not tell you that. They would rather you walk around and be happy and have a happy church and keep that little Prozac smile on. Makes you feel good and fuzzy, does it not? Until it wears off.

## VI. Jesus: The Amen, The Origin of Creation

Now the last part of that verse says, "These things saith the Amen." Why would Jesus refer to Himself as the Amen? Why would He do that? Amen means very simply, "so be it." That there are certainties. There are certainties. There are absolutes. Not just some wishy-washy theology, but there are absolutes in God's holy Word. And what happens is everybody just seeks God in their own way, we say. Just let everybody have their way and they will find their way up the mountain to heaven one way or the other. We are all going to get there and go into the same place. Is not that right, pastor? No. We all want to go to heaven for the most part, except for that guy who wears that T-shirt that says, "I am going to party in hell with all my rowdy friends." He will have a rude awakening, will he not? There will not be much partying there.

I have a brother-in-law. He grew up just a couple of three years younger than me. Became a hippie back in the 60s. Got in his little Volkswagen van and traveled across the country painting. He is an excellent artist. Some of the last words, he is still alive, but some of the last words that he has spoken to my wife, she sent him an email here about a year and a half ago. And he wrote back and chewed us out royally. "Yeah, you are just a bunch of bigots and you do not love people and that is not the way it is." And he just went on and on, broke my wife's heart. She knew how he felt, but to hear him say it was very unkind. He calls himself a universalist today. He has been a Wiccan. He has been everything. He married a lady that was a universalist. Now, I do not know if you are familiar with universalism or not, but I will not go into any of that other than the fact that pretty much everybody is just okay. But let me tell you, universalism does not cut it. Universalism will not get you to heaven. The blood of Jesus Christ gets you to heaven. And people say, "Well, everything is just one big entity with God and we can just all be happy together." No, it does not work.

The Archbishop of Canterbury a year ago told the Anglican Church of England, which is the Episcopal Church, told them, told all of his parishioners, his people in that country, to address God as Allah. Do you hear what I just said? He told the Church of England to address God as Allah. You ought to gasp for breath. Let me tell you, Mr. Archbishop, I do not serve Allah. I serve a living God by the name of Jehovah. Do not tell me to address God as Allah. But that is what is happening. That is what is going on. I do not serve God. Listen, Muhammad did not die on the cross for me. Allah did not create this universe and whatsoever. Jesus said, "I am the Amen. I am the so be it. I am the absolute." That is who Jesus is. He is a faithful and He is a true witness, it says. That is who Jesus is. That is the one I serve.

But then He says something else in this verse. He says He is the beginning of the creation of God. Now, let me share something with you. Many people who start cults will use this verse against you. What do you mean they will? This verse is often used by cults to say this. They say, "Jesus is the beginning of the creation of God. So that means He must be the first one that was created. So if He is the first one that was created, then that means that He cannot be co-equal with God because He was created." No, no, that is not true. Jesus is co-equal with God. He is God. Let me tell you how you can win that battle because they misinterpret it. It is pretty simple when you think about it. The Greek word for beginning there is Arche, A-R-C-H-E. And that word in the Greek is origin. It means origin. Jesus is the origin of creation. That means He

created it all, you see. So Christ is the origin of creation, and He is the one that created it. And Colossians tells us that all things were created by Him and for Him.

## VII. The Creator Question and Evolution

Now I raise this point to ask you a question. And the question is this. Why would Jesus be telling this church in the last days that He was the origin of creation? Why would He be telling us that today? Why would the Word say that to us today? Real simple. Because in the last days, in this day that you and I live, there is a question about who the Creator is. There is a big question about who the Creator is. The issue of evolution looms large today. Our school systems teach us now, not in theory, but in fact, on evolution. And that this universe is over 200 million years old now. It used to only be two or three million years. They keep changing it all the time because they do not know. But they teach it as fact.

Listen, if you ever teach your children anything at all, teach them that evolution is a theory by Darwin, and it has no credence. It is of no value. God created this world about 6,000 years ago. I do not care whether you believe it or like it. It is what I believe. And in the last days, there is going to be many people who will be driving their Chrysler vans. There are many vans. There are Ford Aerostars down the streets. And on the back, there is going to be a little fish symbol on the back of it. You say, "Well, that is kind of cute." It may be cute, but it is not right. That is a Darwin fish. And anytime you see one of those, you will know that that person believes in evolution. It is kind of like this. These are happy people with happy smiles on their face that go to happy churches. Oh, they are happy. Just flaunting down the street in their little vehicles, smiling and laughing, playing their music loud, just having a great, wonderful time. But that little Darwin fish sends a message to our society.

You see this young mom in the front seats, kind of like this, you see the young mom in this front seat. She has two beautiful children in the back seat, all strapped in their seat belts, and they are driving their little minivans down the streets. They seem and look like an all-American dream family. We have all dreamed about them. However, here is the message that she sends. Mama is saying this to her kids, "You came from slime, kids. You are going to live like slime, and you are going to die, and your life is meaningless. And there is nothing after this life." How sad. That is what she is saying. "Hey, you came from slime. You are going to live like slime. And when you die, it is all over." Evolution. One of the most godless things that ever got into our society in the world. Ever got into our society in our school systems. In the last days, the days we are in, the question of evolution looms large. You hear me? Looms large.

Now here is the question. Did God really, listen, listen, did God really create us, or are we a result of a fortuitous concurrence of accidental circumstances? How do you say all that together? What are we? Are we here because of some little accidental circumstance, or did God create us? You see, God created me. I do not know about you. You may not be created, but I am. No, you are also. It is kind of like this lightning striking a primordial soup that makes a one-cell animal. It begins, it sprouts its legs. It turns into a frog that turns into a monkey that turns into you. It is kind of like this, "from the goo to the zoo to you." I wish I had thought of that as an original, but I did not. Is that who we are? Of course not. But the Laodicean mindset today is, yes, that is who

we are. And Jesus is saying to this last church that I am the Amen, the faithful and true witness. I am the origin of creation.

## VIII. The Pulpit's Failure and God's Wrath

I asked you earlier, what has happened to the pulpits in America? If what I told you, that 20% of born-again believers only believe in a biblical worldview, only 20% do that, then what has happened to the pulpits in America? Here is what I believe.

6. Our pulpits do not want to offend. We are afraid to offend because we want a lot of numbers. I used to be that way several years ago. Man, I had this great majestic dream that I was going to be pastor of one of the largest churches in the area. It has not happened yet. Probably will not, but that is not my dream anymore. My dream is to say whatever God has given me to teach those people the truth of God's holy Word. I will let Him take care of the other stuff. I am not big enough to do it anyway.
7. Our pulpits do not contend for the faith of Jesus Christ. They are not contending for the faith. I can take you to services today in our little town, not even concerning the big city that you are in here, in our little town that will not tell you that you are a sinner and that you are going to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. I am not going to tell you that. We are not contending for the faith. Not any longer.
8. Our pulpits have forgotten who paid the price for sin.

Who paid the price for sin? Now, if you would, in your memory, go back with me to the very beginning of that illustration. William Hardy had every right to chop that snake into pieces. A few extremist animal rights people would say no, but as far as I am concerned, he had every right to do that, to chop it up, get rid of it. Although it had done its damage, had it not? If William Hardy had the right to do that, do you not think that God today has a right to show His wrath against sinners like you and me? Stay with me. Do you not think that God has every right to destroy us because of our sin and who we are? Absolutely. I deserve nothing but death, period. And it is only by His grace that you and I are able to stand here and preach the gospel and listen today and sing worship songs.

But I want you to think of it in this term. Think with me closely and listen close. Instead of William Hardy taking that splitting maul and chopping up that snake, think about Jesus Christ coming down and taking that splitting maul out of his hand. And instead of chopping up that snake, instead of chopping up you and me and killing us, He takes that splitting maul and He begins to take it on Himself, hitting Himself in the head, in the forehead, in the body, and taking out the wrath of sin on Himself because that is exactly what He did when He hung on that cross. And He hung on that cross and He suffered pain. He suffered the beating. He suffered death because of you and me today and our sin. And we want to know why the church is falling away because we do not look to the blood of Jesus. Listen, we do not look to the blood of Jesus Christ to save our sins. We just want to come to church and feel good. Let us sing those little feel-good songs. Let us not sing about the power of the blood of Jesus Christ or power in the blood. Let us not sing about it being well with my soul. Oh, what a song that one was. Let us not sing that song at the cross where my Savior died. Let us just sing those little feel-good songs and all go out just

feeling wonderful. Listen, the only way you are going to walk out of here and feel good today, I hope, is because your sins have been forgiven by Jesus Christ and you are free in Christ. That is what Jesus did. He took that splitting maul, took the penalty of our sin on Himself, and beat Himself, mutilated Himself. It was His decision, not yours. That is why you and I today, that is why we can come to the foot of the cross and ask for forgiveness for our sins and know without question that He loves you and He died for you.

## IX. Invitation to Salvation

Would you bow your heads, please? Close your eyes for just a second. Brother Bob is going to come. Every head bowed and every eye closed. Maybe you are here today and you heard the message. And I guarantee you one thing, I guarantee you everybody in this room today right now, inside your heart, you know whether you are going to heaven or whether you are not. You are not sitting there today wondering which way it is. The Holy Spirit of God has either borne witness with your spirit that we are the sons of God or He did not. Charlie did a great job, but it was not really the preaching of Charlie. The preaching of Charlie was just the plowed ground by which the Holy Spirit of God walked up and down these aisles, and He is the one that touched your heart, and He is the one that is telling you right now. And I think the most important decision you will ever make in your life is that decision to know for sure that if you died today that you would go to heaven.

I will tell you something else that goes along with the Laodicean mindset. It is the concept that we are going to live forever. The concept that there is no judgment, there is no face-to-face reality with God, that we are just going to go on forever and that death always happens to the other person. But yet the Bible says there is a point in the men want to die and after this the judgment. Both not themselves will tomorrow for they will know it is not what a day may bring forth. What is thy life but a vapor that appeared for a little while then fadeth away?

Now let me ask you a question. Every head bowed and every eye closed. If you are here this morning and you do not know for sure if you would die right now you would go to heaven, and the Holy Spirit of God has spoken to your heart this morning, with every head bowed and no one looking around, would you allow me to pray for you? Would you right now in the quietness of this moment, if there is any indecision in your heart, in your life whatsoever, this very moment while our heads are bowed, would you just simply raise your hand and by raising that hand say, "Bob, I am not sure if I died today I would go to heaven," and allow me to pray for you? Anybody at all? Anybody at all? "I am not sure if I died today that I would spend an eternity with the Lord." Put it up so I can see it. Thank you, sir. Thank you, ma'am. Anybody else? Thank you. Let me put it back down. Anybody else? "I am not sure if I died today that I would go to heaven to be with the Lord Jesus Christ." This is the decision. This is what needs to be made today in your heart, in your life. Anybody else? We are just going to wait for a few moments.

Our most gracious heavenly Father, we do thank Thee and praise Thee for the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, I thank You for the message today. I thank You for the messenger. I thank You, Father, for the fact that Your Word will never return void. It will always accomplish the thing whereunto it was sent, and we are thankful today for what we heard. We are challenged, we are encouraged as

our own church, knowing that we are in everything that we do strive to be a Philadelphia church in the midst of the Laodicean church period. But Lord, it is so hard, and even in that, the people that we talk to, the people that You deal with, they have today, as Charlie said, no idea what Jesus has done for them. Now I pray for these two folks that raised your hand today. Lord, I cannot go any farther with this any more than Charlie can. Now we have done everything humanly possible. We have done what You have asked us to do. You said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me," and we have done that. Holy Spirit of God, we ask You to do the work of Your office right now. We ask You, Father, to take this invitation. You know the hearts and the minds and the people here, Lord, and only You can do that work. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name.

Every head bowed and every eye closed. Just one more, a few more moments. Now look, if you are here this morning and you are a young man or a young lady and you are not sure today if you would die you would go to heaven. I have some men and some women in the back here who would love to take you into the privacy of my office and open up the Bible and show you how you can know for sure you can be saved. There does not have to be any question about it. The Bible says,

*1 John 5:13*

*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

Now here is what I would like for you to do. Our heads are bowed, no one is looking around. We do not play any music here. Nothing wrong with churches that do, but if you move and make any kind of decision today, I want it to be solely based on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit of God doing the work in your life. Our heads are bowed, our eyes are closed. If you are a young man or you are a young lady, a mom or a dad, maybe you raised your hand and maybe you did not. Maybe you did not do it, but you know you need to be. Right now, while our heads are bowed, my men are across the back and my ladies are across the back. Here is what I want you to do. Just stand up right now, and I will have one of my young men come and take you. One of my young ladies come and take you, whatever it needs. Stand up right now. Casey. How about it, sir? You want to know for sure? Just stand up right where you are at, and one of my young men will come and get you, just like this young lady did. Anybody? Anybody else? Be the greatest decision you have ever made in your life, but it is a decision that needs to be made. One more time across. Anybody? Maybe you raised your hand and maybe you did not, but you want to know for sure. Do not leave today without knowing for sure that your sins have been forgiven. Anybody else? Anybody else?

Thank You, Father. We love You. We thank You for what we have heard today. We pray now Your blessings on the rest of this service this morning, and then as we, Father, go over to celebrate the baptisms and to celebrate through our fellowship for the church that You have given us here, Father, we thank You for that, and let us always be mindful, Lord, that none of this would be possible without what You did on Calvary's cross. Sometimes we enjoy it so much, and we should enjoy it. Sometimes we get so caught up in it and love it so much, and we should love

it, that we do forget the price that was paid that we might even exist as this church. We thank You for that. We will ask it now and bless this young lady as she is dealt with in the Word of God, and for anyone else as we are done today that they can come to me, and we will take a Bible and show them how to be saved. But we thank You now in Jesus' name, for His sake, we ask it. Amen.