

The Lukewarm

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MAIN VERSES

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Our Preformed Ideas

United States and the West, we already have our preformed ideas on racism. Whether we think we're still a racist nation or not, a lot of people think that because we have a black president, we're no longer a racist nation. And that's just not the case. And it's very clear in Scripture, at least the first century church, that racism was banned. It was not accepted, but it was everywhere, right? Even Paul makes strides to claim, listen, I'm a Benjamite. You guys realize that there are many factions of Jews spread out throughout the Roman Empire. Some of them spoke a different dialect. In Scripture we read that Paul had a certain dialect, and for some reason they thought he was an Egyptian at one point. But something about how he carried himself or looked a little bit different—it's very interesting, especially the chapter when Miriam's, I think it's [Numbers 12](#), when Miriam is upset with Moshe for marrying a girl from the land of Cush.

So we always have these preformed molds of why she was upset. But from reading, I have a better idea now. I can't wait to share that with you next week.

So this week, I wanted to speak about a phrase that we're so familiar with, being lukewarm. Everyone knows where that comes from, Revelations 3, right? Either be cold or be hot, but don't be lukewarm or I'm going to spew you out of my mouth. And we always know that verse. We never really read around it. So I started studying that. I was like, what does that mean? Because, here we go.

Right There on Patmos

I think we have it here. So everyone knows the backdrop of Revelations, right? We have a man by the name of John, and most likely it was not John the disciple. It was a man by the name of John the elder who actually worked around the area of the seven fellowships in Asia Minor over here. This is a Google map, by the way. This is a modern Google map of Turkey, and these are the seven fellowships that he was writing to.

And remember, he was stuck on an island, right? The island of Patmos. And that is actually this island right here. I don't know if you can see it. But it's an itty-bitty island right there.

And so when John was actually writing, he was seeing these visions and writing all these things down to the seven churches of Asia Minor. He may have been able to see the land that they were in from where he was sitting. I don't know. But he was right there. And I never realized that. I never realized that he was not just in the general vicinity, but right there, right? But we know the scriptures. We're going to read over it in Revelations 3. To the angel of the church of Laodicea. He writes, remember, we have Seven different fellowships that are written to in Revelations. And Messiah's speaking, and he's speaking to the messengers, the representatives of each of the fellowships through John. And to some he says, good job.

I Love You Too Much

You guys are doing great. You're rich, and you have everything in faith, even though you are physically poor.

And as you go down the list, he begins condemning more and more of the churches and judging them until he gets to the very last fellowship, the one in Laodicea. And that's the one that we're going to talk about. And he doesn't have anything good to say about this fellowship. It's actually kind of bad. He doesn't even hold back. But I love it because at the very end we're going to read, he says, I would not say these things if I didn't love you. And I really enjoy that because it almost makes criticism welcome.

See, I don't like criticism. I really don't. I'm very sensitive to it. I don't know if it's a personality type or whatnot. I try to avoid it if I know it's coming. Someone needs to come talk to me about something? No, no, no. But people wouldn't criticize you if they didn't care. In most cases, at least that's how it should be.

So the whole thing in [Leviticus 19:18](#), you should love your neighbor as yourself. That's why. Because if you see them sinning, if you see them going down a path that they shouldn't be going down, you love them by trying to make the effort to help them. Now we always think that means, "Oh, you're a sinner and you need to stop." No, to help someone stop. Listen, I think

that you have a problem. What can I do to help? Sometimes we don't make the effort, but I'm so sorry.

Neither Hot nor Cold

Revelations 3:14. I started getting distracted there. "To the angel of the fellowship in Laodicea write these words. These are the words of the Amen." Everybody say Amen. "The faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation." This is Messiah speaking. He calls himself the Amen. I love that. "I am the Amen." The Amen, Amen. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were one or the other. So because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of my mouth. You say, I am rich. I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing, but you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in fire so that you can become rich. Isn't it really cool that no matter how bad you get, there's always grace sitting there? I am about to spew you. I am about to reject you. But I love you too much to just shut the door in that relationship. That's a whole other message. Be earnest and repent. Here I am. I stand at the door and I knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person and they with me. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne just as I was victorious and sat down with my father on his throne. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the fellowships and the churches.

Sharing a Meal

When we were in Israel at this camel ranch we went to—awesome camel ranch—my new favorite place in Israel, I used to love going to Jerusalem. Now I love this little camp out in the middle of the desert. It's absolutely gorgeous. Land that Abraham walked. So we offered to pay to have dinner there or breakfast. And typically in Western culture, we have each individual plates. I want a steak or I want pasta and they bring you a plate.

Well, when we sat down for dinner, we sat on the floor with each other on this little table and there was just all this food. Where's my plate? Oh, you want a plate? Oh, that'd be nice. So they brought us blank plates. And we got to pick out of the same dishes and share the meal with each other. See, we think of sharing a meal as when you get your plate and with your spouse you split it in half. No, this isn't sharing a meal. Sharing a meal is family-style dining. It is an intimate moment where you are in fellowship with one another, literally picking off people's plates and eating them. How would you like to do that with Messiah?

Like Mouthwash

One thing that we always notice is this verse. This is the more popular one. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

Now, when we read this, we think he's drinking water. We think of Yeshua up there, and he has a cup of water. He has a hot glass and a cold glass and a lukewarm glass, and he takes the hot glass and... And he swallows it, and it's really good. And so he puts it down, and he takes the cold glass. Oh, that's pretty good too. Or maybe actually, no. And then he takes the lukewarm glass, and we always picture him. At least this is just me. Maybe you weren't taught this. He takes a sip of the lukewarm glass, swishes it around, and spits it out like mouthwash, right?

The Greek word here is *amaio*, and it means to vomit, to throw up, to reject with extreme disgust. So this isn't just swishing it around your mouth and spitting it out. This is something that you've swallowed and that you're disgusted by and that you're going to vomit it back up. Anyone ever eaten something nasty? Or maybe it wasn't nasty until it got inside you and it started messing with your belly. Can you imagine eating something so disgusting, it's making your stomach hurt, that you don't even want to complete the digestion process? So you run to the bathroom and you throw it up. You can't stand it being inside you anymore.

Matt, that's pretty graphic. It's what Yeshua said. "I'm going to vomit you out." Well, things just got serious. I don't want to be thrown up.

Rethinking Hot and Cold

Traditionally we think that it's better to be hot or cold and not lukewarm. We think of these things as, "Well, hot's over here and cold's over here and lukewarm's in the middle," and that's true. But we always think of hot as being on fire for God. It's better to either be on fire for God, "I'm burning in the Spirit," or cold, which is the opposite of hot. So automatically in our Western minds, we think, "Oh, if we're cold, we're just not even a believer at all." It's better to be either not even a believer at all or on fire with God than to be a believer and only have a little bit of faith. Anyone else been taught that? Does that make sense?

A little bit of faith got Peter out of the boat and walked on water. I'd like to have that faith. I might fall in. I've always been perplexed at that. It's better to be an unbeliever than to have a little bit of faith. And that's what I've always, that's what I was taught. And maybe not everyone was taught this. So that kind of forced me to re-examine these scriptures and to start studying.

And what was going on here? I found some very interesting things because I'm not a big Revelations guy, right? I like black and white scriptures—do this, do that—you shall not put a stick in front of a blind man and make him trip. Well, that's a pretty clear-cut static scripture. Revelation, and the beast came out of the pit with hair like a woman and a breastplate of this, and it's a metaphor of this, and it means this, and it's just very out there. I'm not a fan of that. I study Revelations, but it's not my favorite book. And so I began studying these things, and I realized that John is actually speaking to these fellowships that he knows about.

And so I realized, this is Google Maps, and this is modern-day Turkey. And I went ahead and put down three major fellowships that were in the area that Paul actually wrote to and that John is writing to. The first one is down here—it's Laodicea. That's the one that was the seventh one in Revelations 3 that Yeshua really didn't have anything good to say about—not even a good job with anything. Like, guys, you're just failing here. And then to the right, about nine and a half to ten miles to the east, over here is Colossae, where the Colossians were. That's who the book of Colossians was written to. And then way up north, you have Hierapolis, which is a really, really interesting place. It was actually a place of worship.

The Geography of the Three Churches

And so what I wanted to show you was there's a river that runs through here that connects with the Meander River, and it feeds into it, and it's called the Lycus River. Oh, come on. There it is. And here's how it travels—down and around—and it actually connects to ancient Colossae right there. And what's amazing is up north up here in Hierapolis, see, they didn't have any fresh water coming in from springs or rivers, but they have hot springs. To this day, it's an actual tourist destination. I think I have a picture. Yeah, here we go. So this is a picture of Hierapolis. It looks like a bunch of snow, right? That's not snow. That's limestone. It's a type of sediment that's called travertine, I believe. And when the hot springs come up, they have this mineral, and when they sprout and they flow down the mountain, they leave behind this mineral, and it creates the white limestone, right? So it's cool. I'm looking at pictures right here, and it looks like snow, and you got people in bathing suits and girls in bikinis walking around like tourists. What are you doing? It's just completely white. It's a beautiful, beautiful area.

And so you have these hot springs up here that fed those places, and this is what Hierapolis was actually known for. It was built right next to these hot springs because—I don't want to say pagans or Romans—everyone thought that the hot springs were healing places. It would be a place of healing, right? For one of their Phrygian gods. And ironically, when they were

excavating this area, they found one of the largest graveyards in Turkey. Didn't work. But regardless.

The Founding and Strategy of Laodicea

And so what's amazing is Laodicea was actually built by Antiochus II. Everyone knows Antiochus IV, I think, Epiphanes. This is like two generations before him—about 100 years before him. And he went up and he built the city, Laodicea, and he named it after his wife, which was like Justice of the People. It was a very strong name. And he founded the city, and it was on a plateau that was 100 or 150 feet in the air—very strategic fort. That's why it was built. The only problem was it had no springs or water to it originally. And still to this day, there's nothing that hits it—no fresh water that hits it.

And so very expensive aqueducts were built to bring water into the city. And they had two places to get it. It was pretty cool. They had Hierapolis with their hot springs to come down south. This is very expensive, but we're going to get into Laodicea, why they were so rich here in a minute. They could afford this. So they grafted hot springs all the way—miles long aqueducts, all the way down—and they connected with the Lycus River. And most scholars believe that it was connected somewhere around Colossae, right? So it could be managed and whatnot. And so they had cool spring water running in from their eastern gate and hot spring water coming down from Hierapolis from the north. And they were tip-top shape. Their only strategic disadvantage is, of course, if they were attacked, someone could clog up the aqueducts and, of course, everyone would just die. But regardless, good fighting position.

Neither Hot Nor Cold

I would submit, guys, that when we read Nor Hot Nor Cold—Cold is not a bad thing. Cold is refreshing. And the waters from Hierapolis were known for their healing. So perhaps a context with neither hot nor cold. I bid you not to be hot like the salubrious healing waters of Hierapolis or cold like the refreshing waters of Colossae. See, the thing about the aqueducts was they were great because they worked depending on however they're built. But there's no way to maintain the coolness from the Lycus River or the heat from the volcanic activity that's up north. And so when it would arrive to the city, it would be lukewarm. There's nothing special about it. I mean, lukewarm water is not nasty, right? Comes out of your tap. Pretty good, I think. Some people put ice in it. It's not nasty, but there's nothing unique about it. There's nothing special about it. It's just standard water. It's not even—compared to the rivers of the Lycus, cool refreshing spring water, or the healing waters of the north. What's so special about

you in your spirit? Can you not take what you have and actually do something with it? Can you not use what you have and be refreshing to those around you? Can you not use what you have—the faith that you have—and use it to heal others in the name of the source that gave it to you? No, it's lukewarm, just like all the water that comes into your city, Laodicea.

Paul's Letters to the Cluster

You see, the geography here is really cool because when we read in Colossians, chapter 4, we have Paul writing. So the city of the north was called Hierapolis, city of the west is Colossae, Colossians, and then you have Laodicea. Now it makes sense. We have a mental image here in Colossians chapter 4. Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Messiah Yeshua, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those also at Laodicea and Hierapolis. Right there. Paul's writing to the Colossians. Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea and to Nympha and the fellowship that is in her home.

I love that because that confirms that the first churches didn't start out with steeples and stained glass windows. They started out in someone's living room. That's where we started. That's where pretty much every Hebrew Roots Messianic—I have friends in Sunday churches. Same thing. In your home because that's where relationships start. I love that. Excited when I read stuff like that. See, he was in prison in Rome when this was happening. But now it makes sense who he was writing to. He's like, listen, get this letter out there, and I send another letter to Laodicea, and make sure you read it to them. And also in Hierapolis. He's writing to this cluster of fellowships that are within 10 miles of each other.

The Wealth and Commerce of Laodicea

Facts about Laodicea. You know me, I love history. It was founded by Antiochus II, and he named it after his wife. The first settlers, I think it was around 250 BCE, somewhere around there. The first settlers were actually from Syria, and most of them were remnants of the Babylonian Jews, ones that went into exile, right? Intensely strategic position for war, as we discussed, and it was located at the junction between Ephesus, which goes from east to west, and Pergamos, or Pergamum, which is north to south, right? So at this junction between two major crossroads is where they set up their city. Everyone who's traveling anywhere has to cross through it. Kind of like if you had a gas station right in the middle of every single interstate where they cross. It's a good business plan. Everybody's going to stop in and buy goods from

you before they continue their journey. So they took advantage of this. They actually became a very major banking center and commercial center. They developed several real estates. One of their real estates was a healing salve for eyes and ears. Any ladies in here ever made that from Pinterest? You could do a little salve, healing salve? So imagine having your little Pinterest store with the healing salve. My wife makes it. At the intersection of all major roads, you're going to sell it. And they also had a very special type of black wool that they made their clothes out of and sold. It was very soft. It was very particular. It wasn't white wool. It was black, and it made it kind of exotic.

Now maybe we can get some clues of what John is hearing from Yeshua in Revelations 3. You say, I am rich. I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing. But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in fire. Buy from me something that is refined, that has no impurities in it. You can resell it at a very good value. It's your best investment that you can make in a business-minded setting. Something that's going to last so you can become rich. And white clothes to wear.

Follow me so I can give you white clothes to wear, not the luxurious black clothes and wool that you have that you're sporting all the time. I love you, so therefore I rebuke you.

From John to Paul on Modesty

We see Paul talk a lot. This is John. I'm going to shift back to Paul. In his letters to Corinth, specifically, he talks about modesty a lot, right? We see modesty, and I didn't actually prepare this route of study, but we always see modesty because we're western-minded—we think of bikinis and thongs and showing off your skin and tight jeans and so on and so forth. Or is that just me? That's what we think of. I would submit to you that's not what he's talking about.

You see, he gets on to women about wearing head coverings a lot, right, and not wearing head coverings a lot. And one of the routes of thought is this: in the culture, especially in Roman culture, at your own house in a casual setting, if you were hosting a party in someone's house, you wouldn't really cover your head because you're at home. It's kind of like when we get home and kick our shoes off—you take your head covering off. But when you're out in public or when you're at a formal event, you would cover your head. That was the sociocultural reasoning behind that.

And so Paul gets on to these ladies about having fellowships in their homes and not having their heads covered and dressing immodestly, with beads in their hair and stuff. What are you dressing for? He accuses them. It's interesting because the word that he uses to describe what

they're treating the fellowship like is akin to a casual wine party at their house with their heads uncovered and just casual and getting ritzed up. And that's why they're coming together—to have a social club. In Roman culture, that was a big deal: a social club. Come to my house. We've been to social clubs at people's houses before. You get the wine, and you dress up a little bit, but you dress up for a certain reason, and that's to make a good appearance amongst your friends at this social club.

Modesty.

I don't think the first century believers in Rome had tight dresses or were showing too much cleavage or so on and so forth. They were dressing up for reasons that were outside the scope of what fellowship meant.

Buy from me refined gold so that you can be rich, and I will clothe you in white clothes to cover your shameful nakedness—the things that you are doing.

The Sacred Calf of Money

I'm going to have another sacred calf here. So in the West, we always assume that riches and wealth are great. I'm kind of nervous because I don't like talking about money anyway, but now we're going to take the sacred calf of money. So whenever I say sacred calf, if you've been here long enough, that's like I'm the calf killer. Just whoosh.

See, in the West we think about money as an unlimited entity. We think that if you come to America and work hard, you can be rich, no excuses, right? Everybody can be rich if they're not lazy. Is that not what we're kind of taught with the American Dream, right? No excuses.

An alleged autobiographer of George Washington, Parson Weems, writes this in his book, *The Life of Washington*. I cropped out a little piece of it here if you can read it starting right here: "In a land like this, which heaven has blessed above all lands, a land abounding with fish and flesh pots of Egypt and flowing with the choicest milk and honey of Canaan."

See, he's in America and he's saying, man, this is that rich land that God promised Israel. In other words, what he's saying is if you're poor, you're lazy. Because there are no excuses in the West and there are no excuses in America, because wealth is unlimited. Everybody should be able to have wealth and be wealthy.

Wealth as a Limited Resource

But Yeshua is over here saying, "You're always going to have the poor." And in the East, and you'll see this—if you have people from other nations as friends and family, you'll start to realize this. You see, in the East wealth was looked at as a limited resource like a pie, right? And everyone has a little bit of the pie, but if you have a big piece of the pie, that means that everyone else has to have less.

And so if you were extremely wealthy, or if all you went after was wealth in your life, you were looked at as a sinner. Remember Zacchaeus? They called him a sinner because he was rich, right? That's why. If you're going after wealth and you're getting rich, that means that you're taking away from everyone else. And if you're hoarding all of the money, then everyone else is going to starve, going to be homeless, going to be naked, going to be thirsty because you have all the money. That's the mindset that scripture was written in.

Well, I don't like that because I'm in America and we have the American Dream, and I work hard for my money. And don't get me wrong—the concept here is not that having nice things or being wealthy is a sin, but if your goal is wealth, then you're destroying others by taking away part of the cake.

Something that we're taught in America is that we should go after the dollar. We should get a good job and then get a better job and go to school while we're getting that job, right? I'm not saying these are wrong things. I mean, that's how I was raised. But looking back, I'm like, wow, that's why.

The American Dream and Eastern Mindsets

It's because we're taught that if we continually work hard, there's no excuse why we shouldn't be rich. Don't get me wrong. It's just a different mindset, okay? It's not necessarily a wrong mindset. It's what America was based on. But in the East, that wasn't the case. The mindset was different.

And so we read scriptures like [Psalm 52](#), right? "Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold, but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others." Okay, well, he didn't trust in God, and he destroyed others to get rich. That's a bad man.

What this is, guys, is a great example of what some scholars call a synonymous parallelism. Basically, it's when the author, David, is taking two points, right, that look different, but they're really the same thing.

And so what most scholars believe this verse should read in the context is: "Now here is the man who did not make God his stronghold, but trusted in his great wealth, destroying others by growing strong." Why did he destroy others? Because he trusted in his great wealth, and he destroyed others because he took a bigger piece of the pie than everyone else.

The Sin of Riches and Self-Focus

"You call yourself rich, but you are pitiful and poor. You are disgusting. You are lukewarm. I'm going to spit you out because you don't care for anyone else but yourselves, and this is your goal."

Money is the—how does the verse read? "The love of money is the root of all evil." That's why I want the biggest piece of the pie. This connects to what many scholars believe about the worship of Ishtar, or Ishtarte, in Canaan. The fertility goddess. Fertility goddesses in the Near East were not sex deities. I mean, in a sense, but they were fertility and blessing goddesses. If you want to be rich, you pray to them. And if you were rich, then how would you worship them? You would show off the things that they gave you—the car that your god of blessing and fertility gave you, the watch, the suit, the house, the TV, so on and so forth.

That's immodesty. Immodesty.

1 Timothy 3, 1 speaks of this: "Here is a trustworthy saying: whoever aspires to be an overseer desires to have a noble task." And Paul is giving Timothy instruction on leadership. He's giving him the prerequisites for leadership, basically, in the fellowships. "Now, the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, of good temperament, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not giving in to drunkenness, not violent and gentle, not quarrelsome, and definitely not a lover of money."

We could talk about a news article that's out right now. But I'm not going to talk about someone that I've never met or have no idea about.

Set Your Mind on Things Above

Colossians 3.2: "Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things."

See, when we focus on money as our main drive in life, when we focus on getting the biggest piece of the pie, in the Eastern worldview it's not my pie, it's everybody's pie. That's the concept in any non-westernized culture. Even the wealthy people do not wear nice, nice, nice clothes. If

anything, they try to keep their wealth a secret because they don't want to be looked at as a destroyer of lives.

Soldier or Mercenary

When that becomes your focus, you lose track of the mission because you're no longer a soldier, you're a contractor. Know what I'm talking about when I say contractor? How we won the war in Iraq—paid contractors. We can give them tasks that soldiers won't do and so on and so forth. So you can either be a soldier or a mercenary, and that's really what it comes down to. That's why he's attacking, criticizing Laodicea. When you're focused on your goal and not the goal of the commander, then you can be driven and taken any which way.

1 Timothy continues: "For we brought nothing into this world, we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that, right? People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction."

We always interpret this as meaning that the men who are falling into ruin and destruction are the people who are getting rich. He wouldn't have written men if he meant people. He would have written them. This goes back to [Psalms 52](#), verse 7.

This is the mindset. That's why it's written this way. [Matthew 25:31](#).

Laodicea had a problem. Their problem was that they signed up to be soldiers. They signed up to be part of the believing community. They wanted to be part of the covenant of Abraham, and so they did. They enjoyed wearing the t-shirts. They enjoyed saying that they were believers, saying yes, I'm a follower of Messiah. But they also enjoyed their wine parties, their black wool, and the wealth.

Why are they criticized for having wealth? I mean, wealth can do a lot of good. Wealth can change the world, right? If someone gives the ministry money, then we need to figure out a way to take that money and use it to affect the lives of others. That's why I press you guys on this Costa Rica trip. Consider it. Consider it. Because in America, with the mindset and culture that we're in, we don't really see what poverty is. And we sure don't get to see what ministry is about because we don't get to participate.

Seeing Beyond Our Bubble

I've never been to an orphanage and hugged an orphan. I painted some guy's house once as part of a teen thing in Pittsburgh. But when Nathan was speaking about the Costa Rica experience years back, he was talking about the indigenous people—the poor that live in Costa Rica who walked two days to come and fellowship with Joel and the other teachers there and the teens to be witnessed to, to be comforted, to be ministered to. I've never walked for two days like those families did, just to be with people who are like-minded in their beliefs, to be ministered to.

Messiah speaks about this. He speaks about it in the parable of the goats and the sheep. Did you guys get this? See, I have the goats and the sheep right there on the TV, and that's the lukewarm in the middle. I figured it was subtle.

The Parable of Sheep and Goats

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence. And he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on the left."

It's amazing because there's not a whole lot of difference between the sheep and the goats. I mean, you can see a difference. But for the most part, they're flocks. When you have the Passover, you can choose either one as your Passover sacrifice. I mean, they're about the same thing, right? One is a little bit more annoying than the other, I feel, but that's beside the point. They look the same.

How do you tell them apart? Horns? Do rams have horns? Their covering? I like that. When we were in Israel, we passed a lot of people—they call them veteran tribes. Essentially, they're people who have gone out to the desert and built these communities. And it sounds all fun and games, but when you pass them, they build the communities out of trash, anything they can find. And they just have these flocks of goats or sheep or so on and so forth. They're on the hilltops. And when they're a couple miles away, you can just see this flock and this one guy up front just walking them around. They're nipping at the little grass on the ground. I can't tell the difference.

And they're all believers. How do we tell the difference between the sheep and the goats in the community? You guys know the rest of the verse, right? It continues:

"Then the king will say to those on his right, which are the sheep, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.'"

The Controversy of Righteousness

I'm about to make a statement that's going to be very controversial, and I may regret it. Oh, here he goes.

You see, we talk about keeping Torah. And we keep the Sabbath, and we don't do dishes on the Sabbath. My child came into the kitchen, I almost washed the dishes, and I stopped them. No, don't wash the dishes on the Sabbath. Or I'm really hungry on the way home. No, I'm going to be strong, and I'm going to be righteous, and I'm not going to buy something to eat, which is good. I don't buy on the Sabbath.

Argue about what calendar we should go on, and so on and so forth, because we want to be righteous. Yes. Argue about how to say the name of God because we want to be righteous and we want to be righteous before God and we want to condemn all the pagans, anyone who does anything pagan because we want to be righteous like Joshua.

A friend of yours says, "I'll see you on Thursday." No, it's Thursday. Pagan, don't say that. Everyone who laughed—I was one of them, I'm sorry.

Flip out because you meet someone who says they're a believer and they celebrate Christmas or Easter. Flip out, pagan. That's where we were.

Blessed Are You

The sheep on the right. Blessed are you, those who kept the Sabbath. Blessed are you, those who kept Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot, Yom Teruah. Blessed are you, those who said my name correctly. Blessed are you, those who kept the correct calendar. Blessed are you for destroying all those pagan people or at least condemning them in Walmart when you passed them. Blessed are you. You're going to inherit the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you, for I was hungry and you fed me. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was homeless and you gave me shelter. I was in prison and you came to visit me."

Then the sheep say, "Master, we never once saw you. When did we give you something to drink?" "If you did it to the least of these, you did it for me."

People want to condemn so many others out there when there are people out there who keep Torah better than I do because that's Torah. That's what the justice and righteousness of our King is all about.

Acting Like Your King

You see, in a kingdom, the ambassadors, the emissaries, the citizens are supposed to reflect what their king does. That's what it's all about. If your king is gracious to you, then you're supposed to be gracious to others because you're supposed to spread the reign of your king. That's the purpose, right? It's like the card game War. You're supposed to expand the kingdom with the reign of your king. How do you do that? By acting like your king.

Torah is awesome. I love Torah. This is Torah, guys. This is the justice and righteousness that Abraham pursued before God. These are the weightier matters that Yeshua himself speaks about.

Remember, he's criticizing the Pharisees because they're in their herb garden. Anyone have an herb garden? Mine's like this big. It's in my kitchen. And the first fruits, I guess, is what they're doing, and they're clipping off the tenth of their herbs—cilantro, a little handful. That's the tenth. That's the tenth. "I'm righteous, and I'm going to tithe exactly what I need to God because I'm so righteous."

And Messiah yells at him: "I mean, you're doing good, guys. You're doing really good. It's awesome. You're zealous over God's word. It rocks. But what about the weightier matters of Torah? What about feeding the hungry? What about comforting those who are mourning? Do you guys know what a hug does for somebody? Do you know what a hug does for somebody who needs one?"

The Weightier Matters

The weightier matters of Torah are what the sheep do. You can't really tell a big difference between the goats and the sheep. Both are flocks. Both can be Passover. But one kept the weightier matters of Torah and the other one didn't.

The most controversial statement I'm going to make right now is this: I believe Mother Teresa kept Torah better than I have. Oh, doesn't that hurt? If you're Hebrew roots.

Because she pursued these things. Now what does that mean for us when we have the truth of Torah? Well, we know when Shabbat is. The rocks, right? We know what Passover is all about. I mean, not only the remembering of the redemption of the blood of the Lamb leaving Egypt, the place of bondage, but the redemption through the blood of Yeshua from the land of sin that we were slaves in.

So we got that. That's awesome. I didn't have that 12 years ago. It's a coat of rocks. It's going to rock even more when Messiah returns and we'll be going to Jerusalem and doing what we do now outside Jerusalem. It's going to be awesome to be able to bring our first fruits in the millennium. It's going to be awesome to hear our God's name spoken by his Son, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, on earth.

Changing the World

These aspects of Torah we did not grow up with. But you know what's awesome is the fact that we can do what we used to do with the icing on the cake of the reign of our King. We can feed the hungry and keep the Sabbath together.

Why are we not changing the world? We love to argue about stuff that doesn't matter. A bunch of sheep and goats fighting out in the field. What would it take to change the world? With the truth of Torah, with the ambition that we have, and with the Spirit that resides in us, what would it take? I don't know. But I would hope that we would have the ability to do it. I think that's the expectation of the sheep.

Then the king will turn to those on the left and say, "Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons."

The Lukewarm Faith That Will Be Vomited Out

For I was hungry and you did not feed me. I was thirsty and you did not give me a drink. I was a stranger and you did not invite me into your home. I was naked and you did not give me clothing. I was sick and in prison and you didn't visit me. But you kept the Sabbath and you believed in me as your salvation. Good job. You're just not going to get as many jewels as the sheep, right?

Goats, you were not passionate and you did not want to take the thing that I gave you to its fullest potential of being hot or cold, healing others or refreshing to those who thirst. You just maintained it as this lukewarm faith and I will vomit you out of my mouth because you did not take care of the kingdom that I reign over. The task that I gave you, you just had your own interests as your goals.

That's a scary scenario, guys. Scary scenario.

What Are Our Goals?

What are our goals in our life? Who are we willing to help and who are we not willing to help? Are we willing to help? That's the bigger question. Will this generation die out like the rest and be forgotten? Or will this be the generation that the Messiah wants to return for because it is his perfected bride?

I don't want to just die away, but we need to do this together. We need to be hot or cold with the faith that we're given, with the spirit that we're given, not lukewarm. Oh, if I can just make it till I'm dead and still be a believer, I'm sealed. I'll be resurrected. It'll be great. Just make it there.

We're alive because we have a job to do, and that's the job of the sheep. And that's something I think that we forget from time to time because of the culture that we're in, because of society that we're in.

The Job of the Sheep

Making a living for your family is your job. For those of you who are the heads of your household, that's your job. Scripture says that if you don't provide for your family, you're worse than an infidel. It's rough stuff, but there comes a time when you have to follow orders and do the job that the commander tells you to do.

And sometimes we like to have goals in our life that have absolutely nothing to do with the kingdom. And that's all fine and dandy until those goals completely knock out the plans of the kingdom. That's when you become a Laodicean. That would be when I become a goat.

Breaking Covenant Through Lawlessness

I would actually debate or argue that when Messiah says: "Depart from me, those who never knew you. I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity."

Of course, we know iniquity means breaking the Torah, right? It's lawlessness. Everyone who doesn't keep Sabbath, depart from me. See, we know that the covenant language of to know someone is to be in covenant with them, right? Adam knew his wife. I don't believe that was a sex thing. That was covenant. I know you. They perish for lack of knowing or knowledge. To know someone in covenant.

Yeshua said: "I never knew you. Depart from me. You're not in covenant with me. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity."

Then they responded: "But Lord, we did all these things in your name." I could argue, yes, I'm sure Torah's a big deal, the details of Torah, but the whole Torah they were not keeping. If you're not keeping the weight of Torah, the matter of Torah, what does everything else stand on?

Something to Think About

That was what I studied this week, and that was what pricked my heart this week, because I don't want the Messiah to throw me up. Man, that's a really graphic image that you would even say such a thing. That's what the book says. Extreme disgust that you puke it out.

Something to think about this week. May not have been the most encouraging message anyone's ever given, but it's something to think about because the riches that we have on earth are awesome and great, but we didn't come into this army with anything and we're not going to leave with anything but what we've accomplished in our missions here as soldiers of Messiah.

Watch or listen: foundedintruth.com/bible-teachings/the-lukewarm/

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