

The Unbelieving Believer

Pastor Don Brock

Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!

Open

In today's message, Pastor Don will be taking a look at how we can move from living a life of "practical atheism" where our understanding of God has absolutely no effect on how we live our lives to a passionate pursuit of all that Jesus has for us. Our passage this week comes from the book of Revelation in the New Testament where Jesus gives instructions to a church in Laodicea (located in present-day Turkey) which needed to move from indifference to intentionality. So to get started, let everyone share about a time when someone they respected (other than a parent) had to correct them or their behavior. What happened, and how did it feel when a coach, teacher, boss, etc. had to have that painful conversation?

BIG THOUGHT

Jesus is clear that His desire is for us to be fully devoted followers who live in complete and confident dependence on Him rather than trusting in our own self-reliance.

Dig

1. Read Revelation 1:2,4. Who is giving this message? Who is receiving it? And who is it eventually meant for? Now read Revelation 3:14 (the church's "angel" probably refers to the pastor who serves as God's messenger). Talk as a group to discuss how Jesus' descriptions of Himself in this verse apply...
2. Read 3:15-16. How did Jesus describe the church at Laodicea? Does it surprise you that He would rather them be cold toward Him than lukewarm? How would you describe a hot, cold, or lukewarm follower of Jesus? Finally, what response did Jesus promise to the Laodicean church because of its behavior? Does this seem too harsh to you? Appropriate? Explain.

3. Read v. 17. What self-image does Jesus give as the cause for their noncommittal attitude toward Him? And then what does Jesus say is their *true* state of being? Do you agree that trusting in our own resources can dull our devotion to God? Why or why not?
4. The city of Laodicea was known for its banking industry, black wool, and medical clinic specializing in eye diseases. Knowing this, what do you Jesus is pointing out by specifically contrasting these things in v. 18? Do you think His followers today could use a similar re-focusing? Explain your answer.
5. Now read v. 19-21. What does Jesus affirm about His care for the church? Verse 20 is sometimes used as an example of Jesus' concern for people who don't know Him, but who is He actually talking to? And why does that make it an even more devastating rebuke? Finally, what does Jesus promise in v. 21?
6. Read 3:22 to finish. What are some things we can do to make sure we're listening to the Spirit as we spend time reading the Bible?

Take it Further

Talk with God about the things that are getting in the way of following Jesus with complete dependence, and then ask for His help in loving Him with all your heart, soul, and strength!

Daily Readings

Day 1: Deuteronomy 13:4

Day 4: John 14:21

Day 2: Matthew 6:24

Day 5: Deuteronomy 10:12

Day 3: 1 Chronicles 16:11

Day 6: Colossians 3:23-24

Memory Verse: Revelation 3:20



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