

Advent Devotional December 14, 2021

Scripture

Revelation 3:14-22

¹⁴"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation:

¹⁵"I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷For you say, 'I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.' You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. ²⁰Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. ²¹To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²²Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

Devotional

The Rev. Carolyn Cranston '99

Jesus, "the Amen, the faithful and true witness, who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end," loves God's children with the same passion he desires from us in return. It is easy to become complacent and lukewarm, and we may wonder if Jesus will spit us out from his mouth. A personal inventory would help us evaluate our lives as to whether we are rich materially or spiritually. If we have no spiritual depth, Jesus may say to us, as he said to the Laodiceans in John's vision, "You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."

What litmus test would demonstrate that our hearts are on fire and have a zeal for Jesus Christ? Passionate Christians invest in God, not the world. We worship God, not because we have to, but because it is our greatest desire. Our esteem does not come through the eyes of others. We stop caring about what other people think of our actions and become concerned with what God thinks of our heart.

Rather than fearing the penalty of sin, we strive to be free from sin. We believe that life in Christ is far better than our old ways of living. It becomes exhilarating to share the knowledge and love of Christ with others.

Most importantly, we give up control of our lives, loving God with our entire being. People who are passionate about God walk in faith, not knowing what lies ahead but trusting God in all things.

Jesus stands at the door and knocks, with the great hope that we will open the door and invite him into our lives. He does not barge in where he is unwanted. Jesus waits expectantly, with great patience. Will we open the door and invite him to enter? It is Christ's greatest desire and our only hope.

Prayer

Jesus, we trust that you want the best for us and only discipline us out of your great love. Ignite a fire in us, Lord, that we might live as your faithful disciples. When you knock on the door, Jesus, open our ears that we might hear and invite you into our hearts. Amen.