**BBC Men’s Bible Study – A Study of the Book of Revelation**

**Hope in the Darkness #3**

**Jesus’ Work of Revival –** Revelation 2-3 demonstrate Jesus’ great love for his Bride, what he wants in his church, and his ongoing work of preparing her for the wonders of the life to come.

**Eph. 5:25-27** – “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”

**LOVE: To my beloved in Ephesus**: “You have a great history and serve me faithfully in the face of persecution and false teaching. But you have forsaken the love you first had for me. I want your hearts, not just your hands.”

**SUFFERING: To my beloved in Smyrna**: “You have suffered much; you will suffer more. Fear not, for I am in control and I love you.”

**TRUTH: To my beloved in Pergamum:** You love the gospel and defend the truth of my Word. Continue to do so… faithfully

**HOLINESS: To my beloved in Thyatira: “**You love me well, but there is a raging war going on for your hearts. Take the power of seduction seriously”.

**REALITY: To my beloved in Sardis: “**I weep when I think of you. You are living like my Bride in name only. When did the comforts of the world begin to charm your hearts more than the embrace of my love”?

**MISSION: To my beloved in Philadelphia:** “Look up, my Bride! Don’t despise your smallness and weakness. When you are weak, I am strong”.

**HUMILITY: To my beloved in Laodicea:** Wake up, my Bride! Stop trusting in yourselves and your “wealth.” When you are “strong,” I am gone. I resist the proud but give multiplied grace to the humble”.

**To the Church in Laodicea**

**Rev. 3:14-21** - “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. 15I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

 17You 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. 18I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

 19Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. 20Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

 21To 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. 22Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

**KEY THOT**: There is no greater violation of the mercy, grace and love of Jesus than for us to live as though we no longer need the Gospel. Every one of us needs the Gospel today as much as the first day we collapsed on Christ as desperate, needy, grateful, thirsty sinner-saints.

**Questions for Reflection and Conversation**

1.How did this lesson and talk impact you personally? What was timely, convicting, and encouraging?

2. The easiest thing for us to do would be to shift our conversation away from our own walk with Jesus, onto what we think revival/renewal would look like at BBC, or the church in general. That’s a valid question, but let’s go in this direction:

* When you hear Jesus lament “lukewarmness” in the hearts of his Bride, how does that “word” land on you? What was it like when you first came alive to the grace of the Gospel and the love of Jesus? Do you remember that season? Maybe that’s the season you’re in right now!
* Would a few of you share how Jesus is calling you from “lukewarmness” into a new season of intimacy with him and dependence upon him? Perhaps it’s been through the challenges of suffering, parenting, financial pressure, or simply the Holy Spirit is making your thirsty again for Jesus. Serve each other by sharing your stories of embracing weakness and getting low, knowing that “grace always runs downhill.”

**Brothers**: What could possibly be sweeter or more necessary than for you to receive Jesus into your chaos and crisis right now? He comes dressed to serve you as the perfect Bridegroom to a very needy Bride. Read this passage out loud before you close with prayer:

 **Luke 12:35-37** “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he (Jesus) will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and serve them.”

**Astonishing...** Jesus is coming back to serve us. To open the door to his knock now, and then, is to be served by Jesus. Truly astonishing. Close with a season of thanking Jesus for being such a loving Savior/Bridegroom, and also taking time to pray for each other, and our church.