

2009

Campbell Chapel Free
Will Baptist Church

Bob Bradley

Make No Compromise

Be Fully Committed to Him

CAMPBELL CHAPEL FWBC - SERMON

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Be Fully Committed to Him**

Sunday July 12, 2009

Bob Bradley

Revelation 3:14-22

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;

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

John is writing to the church at Laodicea. When you read in the book of Colossians 4; the church here at Laodicea is mentioned. John is, maybe, writing some twenty-five years after Paul wrote the Colossians. When he wrote the Colossians letter, he told the church there to make sure that the letter that he had wrote them was to be read in the Laodicean church. Also, the epistle that was from Laodicea; they were to read.

He also mentions that there was a fellow there, if we understand things correctly towards the last part of chapter four; his name was Archippus, if I am pronouncing that right. When you do a little studying about him, we find out that he was the pastor, the bishop there at the church at Laodicea. Paul instructs him to take heed to the ministry which God had called him into. In other words, "Let's get on with it. Let's get on with the project here. God has called you into the ministry. God has called you to be the pastor of this particular church and you need to take heed to that. You need to be doing your job." That's what Paul was saying to him there.

You might say, “Why would Paul do that?” The apostle Paul was a smart fellow. Not only that but he also wrote by the inspiration of Almighty God. God knew what the church at Laodicea was doing. God knew what the church at Laodicea was going to be doing. He wanted to instruct the pastor there to be more fervent, to get on with things and not be sitting around doing nothing. Take heed to the ministry. What God has called you to do, let’s take heed and get on with it. Let’s lay our hands to it and do the very best that we can.

When we get to Revelation chapter three here, Jesus is doing the speaking. We know that He was speaking unto seven different churches here. Laodicea is the last one. Keep that in mind. Probably, twenty-five years or so after the apostle Paul had spoke to the pastor there, now Jesus is speaking here to this church.

The word “Laodicea” or “Laodiceans,” when you look at it; means “when people rule.” What does that mean to us? That means a whole lot when you look at the church here at Laodicea and when you look at what even the word means “Laodiceans,” it means “when people rule.” You and I cannot and don’t have the ability to govern and rule a church. Get what I say.

I know we have pastors, we have deacons, we have trustees, and we have all kinds of things; there is order that we must have. There is government that we must have. However, the leadership of any church must come from Almighty God. Any church that is a spirit-filled, Holy Ghost-filled church; a church that is bringing glory to Almighty God, is a church that is Spirit-filled, a church that the Holy Ghost is having right-a-way in; but it’s a church here where the Spirit of God is leading the leaders. If we do not have that then we are going to get in trouble. When people start to rule, then my friend, we have serious problems. Don’t misunderstand. I know that God gave authority to the pastor and to the deacons; we understand that. We understand that we have to have government. However, friend listen; it takes the hand of Almighty God to make a church that is going to be alive, a church that is going to be a success, a church that is going to be on fire for God. It cannot be any other way, except the Lord be leading the people in that church.

Do you know what Jesus is going to say here now? He begins to write here first of all; He is going to speak unto the angel here of the church of the Laodiceans. He is speaking to the same individual here that no doubt, the apostle Paul could have been speaking to twenty-five years earlier. Do you know why He is doing that? It is because Jesus is looking, He’s watching and He is seeing some things in this church here that is not going right.

In the other six churches that He talks to here and gives them a message; He’s got something good to say about them. However, when He gets down to the church at Laodicea; Jesus Christ has not one good thing to say about this whole church. That would be a sad place to be. Wouldn’t it? When the God of Heaven, the God that we say that we are serving, the One that we say that has saved us—when He would testify about us, if He could not say one thing good about us then that would be a horrible place for a church to be.

Do you know what Jesus said? He begins to write unto the minister here, unto the pastor. Do you know why He is doing that? It is because ...wait upon the pastor of this church here to be able to take His Word and to take His message unto this church.

You may not like your pastor. You may not like who he is. You may not like how he preaches. You may not like what clothes he wears. You may not like anything about him. However, if he is a God-called man, then do you know what you had better do? You had better pay attention to him because he is listening to Almighty God. God is speaking. God has got a message for you and for all of us.

The Bible says this. He's writing here unto the angel, unto the minister, unto the pastor of this church. Jesus had a message that He wanted to get to these people and He is going through the pastor or preacher that is here.

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;

Do you know what the first thing Jesus is saying here? When He speaks unto the pastor here; He is saying write these things down. These things "... saith the Amen..." Do you know what the word "Amen" means? When you hear something that is truth, do you know what we will do? We will say "Amen" to that. When someone is doing something that is bringing glory to God that is truthful then you know what we will do? We will say "Amen" to that and that's what we should do.

When the Word of God is preached and taught, then there is nothing wrong with saying "Amen" to what we know is truth. Not only that, but do you know what Jesus is saying here? When He looks at what is going on here, the word here actually means "the declaration of truth." Not only that but it means "the guarantee of something being true." It means something that is totally and completely trustworthy.

Do you know what Jesus is saying there to this church? He wants them to understand that what He is about to tell them; they can trust Him, they can trust what He is about to say. There are many people that we may not be able to trust, but the Words that Jesus Christ has to say, we can depend upon them, because He is trustworthy. Everything about Him, He is the truth... He is truth!

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;

Jesus is perfectly, He is completely, and He is totally honest. When I looked at that definition today, I got to thinking that He is that. Do you know what Jesus Christ does today? He tells everybody just exactly the truth. Do you know what God does not do, my friend? He does not pull any punches with anybody. When Jesus was here, the Bible testifies about Him, that He was a man that in His mouth there was no guile. Do you know what that means? That means that He spoke straight from the shoulder. What He meant is exactly what He says.

Jesus is going to tell this church something that was absolutely and totally truthful. He was not going to pull any punches. He was not going to sugar-coat anything; He wasn't going to do anything here just to

try to get somebody to like Him or to go along with Him. Jesus was going to look straight at them and tell them the absolute and total truth. We need that.

If you want somebody to tickle your ears, then you are in the wrong place. If you want somebody to tell you how good you are; then you are in the wrong place.

Jesus Christ will be honest with us. Jesus Christ will tell us the truth. Jesus Christ will tell us and show us who exactly we are. We need that. Mankind needs that. Every church in this world today needs a message from Almighty God; because Jesus Christ is faithful and truth and He will be absolutely, totally and completely honest with us. He is not like a lot of folks. A lot of folks say a lot of different things knowing that it is not truth. Jesus Christ is not like that.

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;

Not only is He faithful and true but He is the beginning of the Creation of God. The One that was writing and speaking these words here; He was the Creator. Not only was He the Amen—always faithful and truth; but He was the One, way back there at the beginning that created the heavens and the earth and everything that was there. It was Him. It was Him that was sitting on the right hand side of the Father when He was speaking these Words, but He was also the creator.

Do you know what He was telling the folks here at Laodicea? You need to be paying attention to what I have to say because I am the Creator. I am the embodiment of Truth. There is no guile about me. I'm telling you right. I'm telling you truth.

Friend, let's pay attention to what God has to say today. Let's look at His Word and let's listen to it. Let's pay attention to it. You and I need the hand of God and the blessing of God upon our lives today more than any time in all of history.

Do you know what America needs today more than we need another stimulus? We need to hear from heaven. This nation; we need to get on our faces before Almighty God and say "Lord, we have sinned. We have walked away from You and we need You." That is what we need in America today. We need to get on our faces before Almighty God and say "Lord, help us. If you don't help us, we are going to perish." America needs that today. Churches need to do that today. Individuals need to do that today. Mommies, daddies, husbands, wives, and children need to do that today. We need to get serious with God. We need to listen to Him because He knows what He is doing. He's God.

He won't lie to you. He won't deceive you. He won't tell you wrong. He will tell you just exactly who you are. He will tell you just exactly who He is. He will tell you just exactly what He expects of you. Get this. Then He will leave the decision totally up to you. Listen, we need people like that in our lives. I need people like that. I need people to tell me the truth. I don't want people lying to me. From time to time, I ask different ones "What do you think about this situation? What do you think?" We have board meetings with the deacons. I expect them to be honest with me and not just telling me what I want to

hear, not rubber stamping everything I say. I need people to tell me the truth and how that they feel; as long as it is based upon truth; not based upon your little feelings that you carry upon your shoulders.

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Here was a city; Laodicea, the city itself was a very rich place. When you look at the city of Laodicea, I don't know how many hundreds of thousands lived there. When you read some things, it will give you different things about how many people lived there. It was a very wealthy place. They had a financial system here that nothing in the world could compare to. When you have money, then you have a lot of different things. Anywhere you have a lot of money, and influx of money then you are going to have all kinds of other things.

They manufactured clothes here; when you study about Laodicea. They had a clothing factory where they made all kinds of clothes. Not only that, but also they had a school of medicine here. They had a place where they were known all over the world because of the medicine they made for different people's eyes. This church and this city here was very wealthy. They had all kinds of jobs. Everybody here was rich except for the slaves. When you study a little bit about this, even the people that went to this church here were very wealthy. However, Jesus is going to say something.

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Jesus Christ knew exactly what all was going on in this church at Laodicea. If we went down the street and when you come up to the church at Laodicea; they probably would have thought that they were doing great. They probably had a new building. Everything was probably landscaped. Everything would have been in order around that. There wouldn't have been any trash or anything lying around. It probably would have been a very beautiful place to worship.

It is one thing to be pretty on the outside, but I want to be pretty on the inside. When the Lord looks at my life, do you know what I want to be? I want to be right with Him. For this church, we need to keep it clean, most definitely. We need to keep it as pretty as we can. I want people to see that. However, do you know what I want more than that? I want people when they come into this place; they can feel the presence of the Holy Ghost. I want them to understand that there is a real God living in the people of this place. That should be more important to us than any building that we may ever construct. If we don't have Him then why would we want to do anything else? I'm glad we have Him. Aren't you? I'm glad that He's here.

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Do you know what He is saying here? That is a good thought when you read that. Do you know what the church at Laodicea was doing? They had all kinds of programs. They were doing all kinds of stuff. They probably were feeding the poor. They probably had missions going around the world. They had all kinds of things going on in the community. They had program after program; but He says "I know thy works..."

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Do you know what the church at Laodicea was doing? They were taking some of the truth on this side and they were taking a bunch of stuff over here that was false and they were trying to mix it together. Do you know what they were doing? They were drawing a great big crowd.

That is what our world is doing today. they want to take this little bit truth and whole lot of error and they want to bring it over here, put it in a pot and stir it all up; then they want to dip it out and give it to people. That is what many folks in this want. They want something, but they don't want the truth. They would never quit coming to church because their conscious would never let them do that. They don't want to be hot and they don't want to be cold; they just want to be lukewarm. That is a serious place to get. When we get lukewarm, when we try to take a little truth and little bit of error and mix it together then it's a dangerous place to get.

Do you know what Jesus wanted people here to do? He wanted people to be hot, or He wanted people to be cold. Do you know why? When you are cold, you know that you need some clothes. You know that you need some heat. When you are hot, you understand that you need to cool off a little bit. When you are lukewarm, you don't really understand that you really have a need. You are comfortable.

It is just like sitting in the easy chair at the house. You snuggle up in it. You turn the air conditioner on and you turn the TV on and it is not very long until you are asleep. We have a lot of Christian people sitting in the pews today, asleep. They don't see the need of being hot. They don't see the need to be doing anything for Jesus Christ. On the other hand, they don't think they are doing anything bad because they are coming to church. They don't see their need. They are satisfied right where they are at. You might say, "What's so bad about that?" When you can't see your need of Jesus Christ, then you've become just like this church at Laodicea had become.

They were wealthy. They had all kinds of programs. They had a wonderful building. They probably had everything that should have made them successful. However, they have come to the place that they did not think they needed Jesus Christ anymore. They took a little truth, and a little error; then they mixed them together and they said "This is what we are going to do."

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

If you are lukewarm; you are satisfied with your surroundings. You are satisfied with self. You are satisfied with what is going on.

Get this.

I hope as a church that we never get comfortable. I hope as a church, that we will never get to the place that we say "This is all we need." I hope we never get to the place that we say, "We don't need to see anybody else saved." I hope that we never get to the place that we don't see the need for evangelism. I hope that we never get to the place that we don't see the need of going out visiting, calling, talking to people. I hope we never get to that place. When we get there, we are in the same shape that Laodicea was, and we are about to be spewed out of the mouth of Almighty God.

Serious stuff!

Do you think that could happen to you? Do you think that could happen to a church like Campbell Chapel? It can happen to anyplace when we forget how much we need Almighty God. When we quit listening to the voice of God, when you quit listening to the voice of God at your home—I'm talking to everybody sitting here tonight—when you quit listening to the voice of God at your house, is the day that you started going backwards in your relationship with Almighty God. Some of you may have never listened to the voice of God. Some of you may not know who God is. But you that are saved tonight, you that have been born again tonight; the day that you quit listening to the voice of God is the day that you started going backwards in your relationship with Almighty God. I don't care who you are. I don't care how much you think you know. I don't care how long you have been on the way. The day that you quit listening to the voice of God is the day that you started going backwards. It's a day that you become comfortable. We get that way. People get that way; we get comfortable.

We get comfortable. We want to come to church. We let the choir sing three songs. We want to take a few prayer requests. We want the preacher to talk twenty minutes, fifteen minutes or maybe ten—if he can hurry. Then we want to dismiss and we want to leave. We get comfortable. I hope that I don't let you get comfortable. I hope that you don't.

Get this.

I'm not pulling any punches on anybody tonight. I'm talking to everyone sitting here. Don't say I'm talking to your neighbor, husband, wife, or children; I'm talking to you tonight. Your eternal soul is at stake. Your children's future is at stake. Your grandchildren's future is at stake. Are we going to get lukewarm, sitting in our chair, taking it easy? "Preacher don't tell me that stuff. I know more than you know." There is a God in heaven that you don't know as much as He knows. He knows everything that there is to know about you. Not only that but He says being lukewarm means that you are half committed. You are not totally committed in your relationship with God. You are just halfway committed. Do you remember what I said? We take a little bit of truth and a little bit of error and we try to mix them together; is being half committed to God.

Jesus would rather have somebody that has no commitment at all; than to have somebody that is half committed. That is what He says.

Do you know what brings a lot of reproach upon any church? It is not the un-saved living around us. Do you know what brings reproach upon a church? It is the members. Do you know what Jesus is saying here? If you are not going to be hot for me, then I'm going to spew you out of my mouth. In other words, if you are not going to live a right kind of life for me, if you are not going to live a holy, dedicated, and consecrated life for me then I am going to spew you out of my mouth. Do you know what He is saying? Do you know what brings reproach? Do you know what gives people a reason to justly talk about churches today? It is how the members live. They live like the world. They act like the world; curse, scream, holler, and drink but then on Sunday and Wednesday they are at church. People are not stupid.

Your neighbors are near as crazy as you think they are. You don't have near the things hid that you think you have hid; from your husband, your wife, your children, your neighbors. Almighty God knows everything that you are doing.

This church was half committed. They were half committed to Christ. They were half to proclaiming Christ. They were half committed to teach His Word. They were half committed to evangelism. They were half committed to many different things; but they were just partially committed to living a Holy, consecrated, dedicated life. They were not totally committed to that. They were just partially committed to living a self-sacrificing life. They were just partially committed to that.

Too many people live like that today. They want to be "good people" on Sunday, but the rest of the week... we get lukewarm. We become lukewarm. When we get that way, then it affects all of our life; from the top to the bottom.

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

Do you know what the church here was saying? "Lord, we really don't need you. We don't need you in our programs. We are rich." He says here they were making a statement; He says, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing..." That is what they were saying. "Lord, we don't need you. Lord, we really appreciate what you have done here, but we don't really need you any longer. We have plenty of money and building that is all paid for. We have all kinds of programs; we have all kinds of people. That is what a lot of people are saying in their own lives. That is self-centeredness. That is self-sufficient. That is being independent. There are many things good about being independent about some things; however, a Christian cannot be independent. We have to have Him.

They were self-centered. They became prideful. They became very conceited. They thought they were better than Almighty God. They did not need Him. He was old fashioned. He wants us to talk about the blood. He wants us to talk about a cross. He wants us to talk about self-denial and living a pure and holy life. "Lord, we don't need that any longer. That was good back 20 to 30 years ago, but we don't need that any longer. We will just live the way we want to live. Lord, we are doing good. Attendance is up. Offerings are doing well."

Friend, you need Him today. We need Him today. He says, "Don't you know that you are wretched."

When you look at what "wretched" means; it means "the wretched one," it means "to be afflicted spiritually," it means to be "spiritually in trouble," it means to be "suffering spiritually." Wouldn't it be sad to say if Jesus could look at my life and your life and say "You are a wretched one? You are suffering spiritually. Your life spiritually is in a mess." Not only that but He says "You're miserable." The word

“miserable” means “despicable.” The God of heaven is looking at a church full of people and saying “You are spiritually in trouble. You are despicable people. You are saying that you love me. You are saying that you are worshipping me.” All along you are saying “We don’t need you any longer. We don’t want you in our assembly. We don’t want you around. We have all that we need. Just go somewhere else where they want you.”

Listen.

I hope that you never think that. I hope that you never get to the place that you think that.

He uses the word “poor.” They thought they were rich. Jesus said, “You are actually poor.” They thought they could see. They thought they had all kinds of spiritual insight. Jesus said, “You are actually blind spiritually.” They thought they were clothed in all kinds of righteousness, but Jesus said, “You guys concerning my righteousness are absolutely naked.”

Isn’t that some kind of a testimony?

Keep this in mind. He’s truthful. He’s honest. He shoots straight from the shoulder. There is no guile in his mouth. What he was saying was absolute truth. To say these things about a church full of people, that’s what he was saying.

I hope tonight that you don’t fit in that. I hope that you’re not miserable. I hope that you are not wretched. I hope that you are not despicable. I hope that you’re not poor, blind, and naked. I hope that you are none of those things. I hope that you are not.

Jesus gave the answer here. He gave them some advice in verses eighteen through twenty.

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Jesus wasn’t mad at these people. He wasn’t mad at them. He was just telling them the absolute, total truth. He says here, “As many as I love...” He uses the word “phileo.” There are different words in the Greek here for love, but the word “phileo” means “as you would love your friend.” That’s the word that Jesus used here. Jesus is talking and telling and bringing all these things to their memory and bringing it back into the open; not because He is mad at them, but because He loves them. Jesus is a friend that

sticks closer than a brother. Jesus is a friend that will tell you the truth. He will tell you absolutely, how you stand, where you are at and He will tell you where you are going if you don't straighten up. He's your friend.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Do you know what that means? He was correcting them. He was doing everything He could to correct them, and to get them straightened up. Do you know what He wanted? The Bible says this in the next verse.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

This church was one time on fire. It was a church that was doing great. It was a church that was doing all kinds of good things. However, do you know what happened? When they started mixing things that were not true with the truth, when they started compromising, do you know what happened? Jesus Christ moved out.

Here He is here in verse twenty:

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

We use that for an invitation and that's all good, great, and fine. But He is talking to a church. Jesus Christ was standing on the outside of the church door knocking, knocking; standing on the outside of the church door knocking, wanting somebody to open the door and let Him in.

That's sad. Do you think?

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

"If any man will hear me speaking, if any man will hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Do you know what that means? Do you know what Jesus is pleading? "Somebody let me in. Somebody open the door and let me in. I want to come in and sup..."

Do you know what the word "sup" means? It means "to have fellowship." It means "to have companionship." He wants to come in and have fellowship with people. Jesus Christ; that's what He wants in people's lives.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Do you know what? The decision is ours today. The decision is yours today. Do you know what Jesus is doing? He is standing today on the outside of a lot of people's lives, standing on the outside; people

who once done great things for the Lord. They used to sing and testify. They used to do all kinds of great things for God. They were committed to praying. They were committed to Bible Study. They were committed to supporting the church. They were committed to evangelism. They were committed to a lot of things, but through life and through choice; they have become half committed to a lot of different things.

Jesus Christ is standing, knocking and saying "I want in."

What I want you to learn from this tonight is this; if you are not totally and completely committed to Almighty God then He's not in your life. That doesn't get too many Amen's, but that's truth.

He's standing on the outside of this church. Do you know why? It was because they were half committed. They were half committed to Him. They were lukewarm. He was standing on the outside.

If you are half committed to Him today, then my friend He's not in your life. Do you know what He wants? He wants you to repent. (I missed that. I didn't read that, did I?) He actually tells them that they need to be zealous therefore and repent. Do you know what that means? That means to run to repent. The word "zealous" means to go very quickly and repent.

That is what we need to be doing today. We need to ask God to forgive us, to turn around, going this direction then start going this direction to repent. To repent means to go in a different direction than we are going in. Repent means to think differently about the way that we think about sin. Repent means that we need to confess and that we need to agree with God that we have sinned. Confess that we have been half committed to Him and we are going to be totally committed to Him from now on.

That is what God wants in our lives.

If you are not willing to do that, then there are some rough days ahead.

If you listening to me today wherever you may be at; you're just half committed or maybe you have never been committed, maybe you have never been born again; it would be a great time for you to come this evening and make things right with God. He loves you. Jesus Christ loves you enough that He went to Calvary, suffered, bled and died for you. He also loves you enough tonight that if you are just half committed to Him, He is warning you, as a true friend would warn you. He is telling you the consequences of being half committed to Him.

Come this evening—