

THE TEACHINGS OF MORRIS VENDEN

HARVEST INSPIRATION DISCOVERIES LECTURE SERIES

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CHAPTER SIX- MORE DANGERS ACCORDING TO VENDEN

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LISTING OF VENDEN'S BOOKS-MAGAZINES-CAMPMEETING TRANSCRIPTS

BOOKS INCLUDED IN THIS TOPICAL STUDY

[SBF] - "Salvation by Faith and Your Will," Morris L. Venden, Southern Publishing Association, 1978, 128 pages, paperback.

[FTW] - "Faith that Works," Morris L. Venden, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1980, 375 pages, hardback.

[ROE] - "The Return of Elijah," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 110 pages, paperback.

[DO] - "Defeated Demons," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 16 pages, paperback booklet.

[GN] - "Good News and Bad News About the Judgment," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 96 pages, paperback.

[TP] - "The Pillars," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 109 pages, paperback.

[MCR] - "How to Make Christianity Real," Morris Venden, Concerned Communications, 1982, 168 pages, paperback.

[OOF] - "Obedience of Faith," Morris Venden, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1983, 95 pages, paperback.

[TKG] - "To Know God," Morris Venden, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1983, 125 pages, paperback.

[NWI]- "Never Without an Intercessor." (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Assn, 1996).

I've added the review of this book at the end of this document.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES INCLUDED IN THIS TOPICAL STUDY

[TTI-1] - "Morris Venden Talks to Insight, Part 1," Morris Venden and Editor, "Insight" Magazine, May 8, 1979, pages 7-11.

[TTI-2] - "Morris Venden Talks to Insight, Part 2," Morris Venden and Editor, "Insight" Magazine, May 15, 1979, pages 6-11.

[TCT] - "The Christmas Tree," Morris L. Venden, "Adventist Review," December 24, 1981, pages 4-5.

[SAS] - "What Jesus said about sanctification," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, January, 1982, pages 6-7.

[SAFR] - "What Jesus said about faith and relationship," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, March, 1982, pages 8-9.

[SAH] - "What Jesus said about Himself," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, May, 1982, pages 18-19.

[JSAP] - "What Jesus said about perfection," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, July, 1982, pages 8-9.

[SAPJ] - "What Jesus said about a pre-Advent judgment," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, September, 1982, pages 14-16.

[SITP] - "What Jesus said about the prophets," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, November, 1982, pages 22-23.

CAMPMEETING SERIES TRANSCRIPTS INCLUDED IN THIS TOPICAL STUDY

[1-7 AUC CM] - Sermon Series at Atlantic Union Conference Campmeeting, Summer, 1979. (This was a seven-part lecture series, and each sermon is numbered: 1 AUC CM, 2 AUC CM, etc.)

Of the above materials, "Good News and Bad News About the Judgment," and "The Pillars," are among Venden's best books, for they tend to deal with doctrinal aspects on which he is more in agreement with traditional Adventism. To these two books should be added nearly all of the August through December sections of "Faith that Works." By the end of July, Venden had covered the means of salvation and had turned to other topics. Thinking, doubtless, that his audience was smaller, he gave some unusual material in his "Insight" articles and AUC Camp meeting Series. Seven of his nine published books were issued since 1981.

CHAPTER SIX: MORE DANGERS ACCORDING TO VENDEN

PHARISEEISM: TRYING TO GET OTHERS TO OBEY

"Another scripture, Matthew 23, describes the goodness of the Pharisees in Christ's day. Apparently their condition was the same as in Laodicea, and it has been a lasting problem, the great danger of depending upon our morality or external ethics to commend us to God. 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves' (verse 15). Christ

declared that those who campaign for others to be externally good as they are themselves will only make them twofold worse off than themselves." SBF, 51.

LAODICEANISM: WHAT IS A LAODICEAN?

"Laodicea doesn't know that it is lukewarm. They take credit for external goodness. They think they are ready for Jesus' coming because they don't smoke, drink or dance. They think they are Christians because they wouldn't think of doing a heinous act or deed. Being good by not being bad is not being good." 1 AUC CM.

LAODICEA'S FORCED GOODNESS

"Laodicea's biggest problem is its self-sufficiency and resulting external goodness. It is known for its morality, but not for its genuine righteousness or for its faith. Therefore the goodness of Laodicea is forced, and God tells them what He thinks about their calculated goodness, He wishes they were either hot or cold. He considers external goodness worthless in terms of salvation and sanctification. Further, He declares that He is going to reject those who are only externally good, for He has no place for them." SBF, 51.

THE LAODICEANS: THE PROBLEM OF THE LAODICEANS

"The problem of the Laodiceans is not that they are short on works." G N, 82.

LAODICEA NEEDS TO REPENT OF MORALITY

"We need to understand what it is that Laodicea needs to repent of. It is not primarily immorality. Laodicea is quite moral. Laodicea is known for its external goodness. But in spite of that, the Saviour is standing on the outside, knocking, seeking admission. What Laodicea needs to repent of is its morality, its many good works apart from Jesus." FTW, 149.

[The sin of Laodicea Is worldliness and living apart from Jesus. Morris hardly ever speaks negatively about worldliness and sin. In his presentations, that which is dangerous is right doing, not wrong doing.]

THE LAODICEAN SIN

"There's only one answer. Laodiceans, lukewarm people, have gotten used to finding their security in something other than the righteousness of Christ, and faith and love and the Holy Spirit. They have found their security in the external things they have been doing. Strong people can find security in externals, because strong people can live good moral lives on the outside." TKG, 123.

LUKEWARMNESS: LUKEWARM AND LAODICEAN

"A lukewarm person [Is] one who is hot on the outside, but cold on the Inside. It's the kind of person who knows all the rules and regulations, who has beaten a hard path from his home to the church door, who knows all the forms and ceremonies, but who still keeps God at arm's length. The Laodicean is one who wouldn't think of doing anything wrong, who is trying to get to heaven by his good works, and who is so busy being good that he doesn't have time day by day to spend with God in His Word and in prayer." GN, 76.

[In his books, Venden consistently never mentions people who are worldly as being sinful; it is only the ones who are trying to obey God who are pictured as the bad people. To so delineate the situation occasionally is one thing, but to do it incessantly is quite another.]

WHAT IS LUKEWARM?

"What is lukewarm? It is a combination of hot and cold. Matthew 23 is a hard speech against the leaders. Good on the outside, but inside not good, whitewashed! It was not the Romans who crucified Jesus. It was the religious leaders of that day, Sabbath keepers, tithe payers, health reformers, faithful in family worship. They had to go back from the cross in time for family worship." 1 AUC CM.

[MY RESPONSE TO WHAT IS THE LAODICEAN CONDITION]

[Laodiceanism results from tuning, instead, to inner messages that unwittingly either make obedience the basis for our security or attempt to offer security by grace without obedience.]

The Laodicean message must be proclaimed with power; for now it is especially applicable. Now, more than ever before, are seen pride, worldly ambition, self-exaltation, double-dealing, hypocrisy, and deception. Many are speaking great swelling words of vanity, saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Yet they are miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked (RH Sept. 25, 1900). {7BC 962.8}

Let us make an application of the words of Christ to our own individual cases. Are we poor, and blind, and wretched, and miserable? Then let us seek the gold and white raiment that He offers. The work of overcoming is not restricted to the age of the martyrs. The conflict is for us, in these days of subtle temptation to worldliness, to self-security, to indulgence of pride, covetousness, false doctrines, and immorality of life (RH July 24, 1888). {7BC 966.3}

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The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to His people by ministers whom He has called to warn the people is not a peace-and-safety message. It is not merely theoretical, but practical in every particular. The people of God are represented in the message to the Laodiceans as in a position of carnal security. They are at ease, believing themselves to be in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments.

What greater deception can come upon human minds than [BEGIN P.253] a confidence that they are right when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and His testimony must be correct. {

It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life. They need a deep and thorough work of self-abasement before God before they will feel their true need of earnest, persevering effort to secure the precious graces of the Spirit.

God leads His people on step by step. The Christian life is a constant battle and a march. There is no rest from the warfare. It is by constant, unceasing effort that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. As a people we are triumphing in the clearness and strength of the truth. We are fully sustained in our positions by an overwhelming amount of plain Scriptural testimony. But we are very much wanting in Bible humility, patience, faith, love, self-denial, watchfulness, and the spirit of sacrifice. We need to cultivate Bible holiness. Sin prevails among the people of God. The plain message of rebuke to the Laodiceans is not received. Many cling to their doubts and their darling sins while they are in so great a deception as to talk and feel that they are in need of nothing.

They [BEGIN P.254] think the testimony of the Spirit of God in reproof is uncalled for or that it does not mean them. Such are in the greatest need of the grace of God and spiritual discernment that they may discover their deficiency in spiritual knowledge. They lack almost every qualification necessary to perfect Christian character. They have not a practical knowledge of Bible truth, which leads to lowliness of life

and a conformity of their will to the will of Christ. They are not living in obedience to all God's requirements.

In my last vision I was shown that even this decided message of the True Witness had not accomplished the design of God. **The people slumber on in their sins.** They continue to declare themselves rich and having need of nothing. **Many inquire: Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the Testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and with grievous sins? We love the truth; we are prospering; we are in no need of these testimonies of warning and reproof.** But let these murmurers see their hearts and compare their lives with the practical teachings of the Bible, **let them humble their souls before God,** let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales will fall from their eyes, and they will realize their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir.

END OF MY RESPONSE TO LAODICEA]

INCREASING OUR LOVE FOR GOD

"Now let's talk about faith as one of the first things we need to leave the lukewarm condition. We should also dwell on love. Love is also spontaneous and natural when you get acquainted with someone. Trying to work on love is a dead end street," 3 AUC CM.

NOTE: ANY REFERENCES NOTED CAN BE FOUND IN MAIN DOCUMENT