

97-02

No Phonies!

Avoiding the Games that Make Jesus Nauseous

14 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. 15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17 You 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. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so that you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so that you can see.

19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. 20 Here 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 him, and he with me.

21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. (NIV)

1. Who Are We Fooling? (vv.14a, 17)

A. _____

B. _____

2. Jesus' Words for Pretenders (vv.14b-22)

A. " _____ "

B. " _____ "

C. " _____ "

Discussion Questions

These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's message and to prepare you for participation in one of our small group studies. If you need more information about when and where CARE groups are meeting this week see the display in the lobby or call Matt Banks.

1. It appears that the church in Laodicea was recognized in the New Testament as a fairly solid, spiritually growing church. Jesus though had a very different view of this church. It seems to have enjoyed a good reputation and yet it was filled with people that did not measure up in God's estimation. What things lead to a good "reputation" for a church these days?

What kind of reputation to you believe PCC has?

Do you think it is possible for our church to enjoy a good reputation and yet be largely filled with people that are not in tune with God? In your opinion, to what extent is this possible or not possible?

2. How successful can a person be at appearing to have a relationship with God and yet not actually have one? Do you think it is possible to fool everyone except God?

Have you fooled anyone in this way? Explain.

3. How can real, genuine Christians play these kinds of games?

Have you feigned a spirituality that does not really exist in your life? Explain.

4. Jesus is pictured in our passage as standing outside of his own church knocking and calling out to be let in for genuine interaction with his congregation. Though one cannot see the difference (Laodicea's reputation is proof of that), how do you suppose it feels when Jesus is actually "inside" the church as opposed to "outside"?

5. What can you do to insure that you are not just going through the motions?

What can those in your CARE group do to help?