

pray . fast . give . 

Living Lent | Day 22

Restoration

“I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.”

Revelation 3:18: ESV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

What a disappointment it is, when attracted by the aroma of coffee to discover upon a first sip that it is tepid. To leap into a sparkling pool on an August day and find it as bathwater. The Laodiceans were content, smugly self-reliant. How precarious it is to feel in need of nothing and to forget the benefits of stretching. They believed themselves to be in good condition: wealthy, well-dressed, and of superior vision. Economically sound, Laodicea was known for its production of glossy black wool and eye-ointment.

Yet Jesus saw the Laodicean congregation as poor, naked and blind. They, like Adam and Eve long before, had chosen the wrong “material” with which to cover themselves, and in doing so revealed their short-sightedness and their sickness of the soul.

Last year, many of us found that our closets, not lacking in dress clothes and heels, crisp shirts and ties, were ill-equipped for virtual schooling, telecommuting and Zoom meetings – a chasm between previously perceived needs and newfound reality.

It has been often observed that one can determine the passions of others by

examining their checkbooks (these days online statements). For some of us, the pandemic reduced our spending – no shops, movie theaters, concerts, sporting events, restaurants. No seasonal lipsticks.

This Lenten season of self-examination is an opportunity to look at what remained in our scaled back, stripped down expenditures. What did our compelling interests turn out to be? Where were we passionate enough to channel our discretionary dollars (and hours)?

Fervent worship and zealous Bible study without a resulting passion for works is a cup half empty and lukewarm. If I cannot muster as much passion for my devotion to Jesus and his guidelines for living and giving as I do for football, politics or keeping an orderly household, I risk being like the Laodicean church: pitiable indeed.

Challenge to Prayer and the Exercise of the Privilege of Generosity

Lord, in 2021 help me to make wise use of how I invest my time and resources. As I look to the resurrection and renewal of Easter, fan the flames of my desire to engage fully the talents you entrusted me with to serve your mission, your people, and your children of all ages – those who know you and those whose eyes have not been opened to your love.

As you pray and sacrifice through fasting throughout this Lenten Journey, will you take this opportunity to pay forward in generosity a gift of at least \$1 per day throughout the 40 days for the Children of Morningstar?

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Contributor

Phyllis H. Thompson, Statesboro, Georgia, is a passionate reader of the Liturgy. Having been raised in Savannah, she has made Statesboro her home for the past 40 years, graduating at Georgia Southern University with a degree in journalism. She has found Morningstar to be a haven for creating home for children of Georgia, a cause to which she has dedicated both time and resources.

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