

The Lion and The Lamb

Revelation 3:14-22

- We are at the final letter to the seven churches, and thus far we've read about the **Loveless church** (Ephesus), the **Suffering church** (Smyrna), the **Compromising church** (Pergamos), the **Corrupt church** (Thyatira), the **Dead church** (Sardis), the **Faithful church** (Philadelphia), and now the **Lukewarm church** (Laodicea).
- Every one of these churches had some good things about them > Ephesus although it was loveless it was hardworking and hated false teachers. Smyrna suffered through persecution and poverty, Pergamos even in the midst of false teachers did not renounce their faith and remained true to Christ, Thyatira was corrupt but a serving church, Sardis dead but dutiful church, and Philadelphia a faithful church.

V14-22

- **V14** we come to the last letter to the seven churches, there were hundreds of churches at the time but Jesus picks these specific churches to address why? Remember John was told by Jesus **Rev 1:19** "to write the things that you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this". The things that are, no doubt, are the seven churches, for in them are all the challenges that we will meet throughout the church age, which is why these letters are so important.
- As He has to all the churches Jesus addresses the letter the Pastor of the church of Laodicea and the first thing He does is describe Himself to him and them. Jesus is "The Amen" **2 Cor 1:20** says for all the promises of God in Him are yes and in Him Amen. He is the personification and the affirmation of the Truth of God.
- **Is 65:16** the word truth here is the Hebrew word "Amen" meaning He is The Truth and speaks The Truth, because He is The Faithful and True Witness. The beginning of the creation of God is not teaching Jesus was created, as "**Beginning**" in the Greek means the source or ruler, so Jesus is the source or ruler of the creation of God.
- **V15-16** before we get into what Jesus knows about the church of Laodicea lets examine what it was known for. Laodicea was located only about forty miles of Philadelphia, about thirty five yrs earlier it had been devastated by an earthquake but because it was a very wealthy city it had the financial means to rebuild itself.

- Its wealth came from manufacturing three main things > **1st** the manufacturing of a black wool cloth, **2nd** for manufacturing a special eye salve for people who have problems seeing correctly, **3rd** for its hot and cold springs, as they sat in between of Hierapolis famous for the hot springs, and Colosse known for its pure cold water.
- This made this city extremely wealthy as people would come from all over to buy the black wool cloths, or the eye salve, or to go to either the hot or cold springs. Something else this city was known for was its temple dedicated to the healing god Asklepios, from it came a famous medical school where people would come to study medicine and where they put the symbol of a staff with a snake wrapped around it, a symbol that is still used around the world today to symbolize medicine.
- As with the previous churches Jesus uses terminology that everyone in the city where the church was located would recognize, so the picture of being lukewarm connected with the church of Laodicea because of them being surrounded by either hot or cold springs, it caused their water to be lukewarm or tepid which for most was disgusting. You want your coffee to be either hot or cold but not lukewarm right!
- In the spiritual sense lukewarmness is a picture of becoming indifferent and compromising, you are always found in the middle, not taking a position either way, too hot to be cold, and too cold to be hot, so in trying to be both things you end up being neither, except to hear the words “I will vomit you out of my mouth”.
- Jesus tells them I wish you were cold or hot, for then He would change them in the manner in which was needed, but because they have chosen the deceptive playing of the middle in trying to please both the world and Jesus there was nothing for Him to do but call them a waste and spit them out. Laodicea is the only one of the seven churches that didn’t receive one compliment from The Lord, this shows you how dangerous of a spiritual condition being lukewarm is. How so, why is it so bad?
- **V17** lukewarmness causes you to lack spiritual awareness, as bad off as they were they didn’t know it, in fact they thought they were just fine. The Laodicean church had become so blind to its own needs that Jesus uses the same eye salve that had made the city rich as an illustration of their nearsightedness, but were unwilling to face the truth. Three times after looking at themselves they said > **1st** I’m rich, **2nd** I’m wealthy, **3rd** I have need of nothing, that’s how they saw themselves.

- Jesus on the other hand says you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, showing what Jesus saw in them is more important than how they saw themselves. People love to say well I don't see anything wrong with what I did, well that's not the most important thing, how does Jesus view it, that's what really matters.
- **V18-22** this is what Jesus wants them to do, buy from Jesus gold refined in the fire, that they may be rich, white garments that they may be clothed, remember Jesus said they were naked spiritually. Anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may receive spiritual sight, and be able to see. How can you buy these things from Jesus?
- You get them by humbling yourself, and having a change of understanding concerning your spiritual poverty. This comes by accepting the rebuke and chastening from The Lord, remember everything Jesus said about them they didn't receive it from Him.
- Once you do then make the decision to repent, and afterward a great invitation is given for this lukewarm church, as Jesus knocks to come in and have an intimate time with them, but they have to let Him in, and that won't happen unless they humble themselves and do what He asked of them first. **V21-22** is the reward for an obedient heart, you will be an overcomer and sit with Jesus on His throne amazing!