



CHURCH OF LAODICEA

<p>14 “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of <u>the Amen</u>, the <u>faithful and true witness</u>, the <u>beginning</u> of God's creation.</p>	<p>*The word 'amen' is used to strongly affirm a declaration. So, by calling himself 'The Amen', Jesus means that he affirms the message to the church in Laodicea or perhaps even the whole revelation. It could also mean that Jesus himself is the one who is affirmed by God (Mat 3:17, Heb 1:1-2).</p> <p>*As 'the faithful and true witness', Jesus is trustworthy unlike the Laodicean church that is not.</p> <p>*The word 'beginning' (arche) can mean originator or ruler. Jesus has authority over God's creation shown by the miracles he did on earth, and he is the one through whom all things were made (John 1:3).</p>
<p>15 “ ‘I know your works: you are <u>neither cold nor hot</u>. Would that you were either cold or hot! 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I <u>will spit</u> you out of my mouth.</p>	<p>Rebuke v15, Warning v16</p> <p>*Laodicea piped in water from Hierapolis hot springs as well as cool water from Colossae. In both cases, the water became lukewarm by the time it came to Laodicea, so this would be an appropriate metaphor for them. Since hot water was useful for medicinal purposes and cold water was useful for refreshment, being lukewarm would mean that the church in Laodicea was useless and ineffective in God's Kingdom. The metaphor could also refer to their own spiritual fervor or their response to the gospel. Jesus wishes that they were either deeply devoted (hot) or not at all (cold). At least those who are cold know that some change would be needed if they were to commit their lives to him.</p> <p>*The metaphor of Jesus spitting them out of his mouth would mean he completely rejected them. But notice that there is still hope because the tense is a conditional future ('will' mello in Greek). The rejection will occur if they do not repent.</p>
<p>17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I <u>need nothing</u>, not realizing that <u>you</u> are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 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</p>	<p>Rebuke v17, Warning v18</p> <p>*The underlined word 'you' in this verse is emphatic in the Greek showing there is a big contrast between how they viewed themselves and their actual condition (...you are actually the ones who are wretched, pitiable...). Just as their wealth caused them not to need any help from Rome, so also they thought they didn't need anything from Jesus.</p> <p>*These verses allude to the main industries in Laodicea: The banking industry - they were spiritually poor and needed to</p>



BLUEPRINTS OF A DANGEROUS CHURCH
STUDY KEY

<p>yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.</p>	<p>buy gold from him. The textile industry - they were shamefully naked and needed to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ. The medical school - they were blind and needed salve (God's Spirit and God's Word) for spiritual insight and overcoming their self-deception. What are some ways to prevent spiritual blindness?</p>
<p>19 Those whom I love, I <u>reprove and discipline</u>, so be zealous and <u>repent</u>.</p>	<p>Warning</p> <p>*To reprove (elencho) is to state that someone has done wrong, with the implication that there is adequate proof of such wrongdoing.</p> <p>*To discipline (paideuo) is to train someone in proper behavior.</p> <p>*Both reproof and discipline are expressions of love because if they don't recognize their blindness, there is no hope of healing.</p>
<p>20 Behold, I stand at the door and <u>knock</u>. If anyone <u>hears my voice</u> and opens the door, <u>I will come in to him</u> and eat with him, and he with me.</p>	<p>Hope</p> <p>*The spiritual condition of the church in Laodicea was such that Jesus is not pictured as being among them. He is standing, calling and knocking on the outside.</p> <p>*Notice that when a person or church opens the door to Jesus, he comes in to be where they are at, not where they pretend to be. True fellowship (eating) with Christ means there are no facades. Are there any 'doors' in your life that you don't want to let Jesus in to? What would 'letting him in' look like practically?</p>
<p>21 The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, <u>as I also conquered and sat down with my Father</u> on his throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' "</p>	<p>Hope v21</p> <p>*There are two points of similarity between Jesus and those who follow him. The way they 'conquer' is the way of the cross and their reward is reigning with him.</p>