

The Seven Churches
Part 7
Laodicea

Revelation 3

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 you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so 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 that person, and they with me.

21 To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.

22 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Vs. 14

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

- *Laodicea* was an important, wealthy city, with a significant Jewish population.
- Like other cities in the region, it was a center for Caesar worship.
- Laodicea was also a noted commercial center, and some of its goods were exported all over the world. "It is frequently noted that Laodicea prided itself on three things: financial wealth, an extensive textile industry, and a popular eye-salve which was exported around the world."

- One of their problems was a poor water supply that made Laodicea vulnerable to attack through siege. If an enemy army surrounded the city, they had an insufficient water supply in the city, and the supplies coming into the city could be easily cut off.
- Their main water supply came on a six-mile aqueduct from the hot springs of Hierapolis. Because the water came from hot springs, it arrived undesirably lukewarm.

Vs. 14b

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

the Amen, the "so be it," the "it is done." As [2 Corinthians 1:20](#) says, *For all the promises of God in Him are "Yes," and in Him "Amen."*

the Faithful and True Witness, and this is a contrast to the Laodiceans, who will be shown to be neither faithful or true.

ruler of God's creation. The idea behind the word for **ruler** (from the Greek) is that of a "ruler from the beginning, He is the source, or origin of Creation".

- Not that he was the first to be created, but that He is the *ruler, source, and origin* of all creation.

- In other words before Caesar was, He is the "I Am"

Vs. 15

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!

- In this spiritual sense, lukewarmness is a picture of *indifference* and *compromise*.
- It tries to play the middle, too hot to be cold and too cold to be hot.
- But in trying to be both things, it ends up being neither.

The church of Laodicea exemplifies empty religion:

- Is there any soul harder to reach than the one who has just enough of Jesus to think they have enough?
- Tax collectors and harlots were more open to Jesus than the scribes and Pharisees.
- Satan will have us any way he can get us, but he prizes a lukewarm religionist far above a cold-hearted sinner. The thief on the cross is a great example: He came from a world that was opposite from God and cold. When placed beside Jesus and he clearly saw his need.
- The Danger of the halfway Christian is they don't clearly see their need for him.
- The lukewarm Christian has enough of Jesus to satisfy a craving for religion, but not enough for eternal life.

There is an old saying "He is either Lord of all or he is not Lord at all."

Lukewarm Christianity works like an Immunity Shot...

An immune shot is just enough of something to keep you from getting the real thing...

It's taking in small doses so that the real thing doesn't effect you...

Jesus says, **"I wish you were either one or the other!"**

- Lukewarmness carries a picture of *uselessness*.
Hot water heals...
cold water refreshes...
but lukewarm water is no good for either...
- Jesus is saying, "If you were hot or cold I could do something with you. But because you are neither, I can not."
- Deep down, there is no one more miserable than the lukewarm Christian. They have too much of the world to be happy in Jesus and too much of Jesus to be happy in the world.

Vs. 16

So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit (vomit) you out of my mouth.

- Simply put, they were once in him and are about to be removed...

Jesus makes it clear; there is no room in me for those who blend in with the world... Who are room temperature... who are not set apart and who do not stand out from the world.

Jesus was a picture of standing out in this world and those who follow him should also be like him; in this world but not of it...

Vs. 17,18

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 you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

This is true of Laodicea:

Laodicea prided itself on financial wealth, industry, and a popular eye-salve which was exported around the world."

After an earthquake devastated the region in A.D. 60 Laodicea refused Imperial help to rebuild the city, successfully relying on their own resources. They didn't need outside help, they didn't ask for it, and they didn't want it. "Laodicea was too rich to accept help from anyone. Tacitus, the Roman historian, tells us: 'Laodicea arose from the ruins by the strength of her own resources, and with no help from us.' " (Barclay)

Thus the Lord confronts their securities: "You say I am rich: I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing."

What does God compare to Gold in the Bible?

Psalm 19

9

The fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever.

The decrees of the Lord are firm,

and all of them are righteous.

10

They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;

Psalm 119:72

The law from your mouth is **more precious** to me **than** thousands of pieces of silver and **gold**.

1 Peter 1 NLT

6 So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. 7 These trials will show that **your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold...**

The Gold Jesus Offers us:

1. The Fear of the Lord
2. The Decrees (Official order, Instruction) of the Lord
3. The Laws from your mouth (Word of God) that is more precious than Silver and Gold
4. Your Faithfulness to God in the midst of difficulties and trials

- This is the Gold he counsels the Church to buy from him so they can become rich;
- and have white clothes to cover their nakedness;
- and salve to put on their eyes, so they can see.

Vs. 19-22

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 that person, and they with me.
21 To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.
22 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

This is the word of God for his Church, those he loves...

Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline...

So be **earnest** and **repent**.

Vs. 20

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 that person, and they with me.

With God restoration is possible...

He says Here I am... God is persistent with us...

This is the hope we have with God, He is the God of Reconciliation...

If anyone **hears my voice** and **opens the door, I will come in**

The same ones who use to be in him and were vomited out he now says If you will be earnest and repent, hear my voice and open the door, I will come in... We can share fellowship together again...

Oh how good it is to be in Christ and Christ to be in us...

21 To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.