

## The Lukewarm Church (Message #11)

Revelation 3: 14-22

We have spent several weeks in Revelation and have finally come to the last of the 7 churches. Two of them were in good standing, but the other five had major problems. The problems began in Ephesus, as she lost her 1<sup>st</sup> love and have continued to worsen as we come to Laodicea, the lukewarm church. Let me remind you to always keep in mind that these letters can be viewed in 3 different ways: 1) Prophetically 2) Literally 3) Personally.

Now, Laodicea was a very influential city. It was founded sometime before 253 BC. It was located on a high plateau, very secure from enemy attack. It was destroyed by an earthquake in 61 AD, but they were so wealthy that they refused any aid or help from the Romans in rebuilding. They were, however, dependant on neighboring cities to supply fresh water through aqueducts. Water from hot springs in Hierapolis, 6 miles north, was piped in. Their cold water came from Colosse, 10 miles east.

It was famous for its wealth, a financial banking center; clothing and fashion, a luxurious black wool was produced there; and medicine, a medical school produced a tablet that was mixed with water to form a paste used to treat various eye problems.

Laodicea represents the church age from 1925-Tribulation. We are living in the Laodicean age. There is now much criticism and skepticism regarding the inerrancy of Scripture, creating a “lukewarm” attitude concerning the Lord and His Word. Let’s move through these verses as we consider the last church in our study: [Laodicea, the Lukewarm Church](#).

**I. The Condition of Laodicea (14-17)** – Jesus comes with no words of commendation for them. In fact, He sees nothing pleasing, only problems.

- Jesus certainly has the authority to address the church. He is the [Amen](#), the final authority. He is the [faithful and true witness](#), revealing truth about what He sees. He is also the [beginning of creation](#). He is the origin, the founder of the church. All that we do is founded upon Him. As Jesus views their condition, He reveals their problems. They had a problem with:

**A. Allegiance (14)** – [And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;](#) Notice the way Jesus addresses them, the church OF THE Laodiceans. Laodicea means “[the rule of the people](#).” The other churches were considered His church, but Laodicea was the people’s church. They simply didn’t care about the will of God. They operated as they pleased with no regard for what the Lord desired.

- We must never forget where our allegiance lies. This isn't my church, the deacon's church, your church, or even our church; it is the Lord's church! He purchased it with His own blood; He built the church and He sustains the church.
- Everything we do ought to line up with the will of God. We are not here to please ourselves or this world, but Christ our Lord! Our worship, our walk, and our witness must be centered on Jesus! When we stray from our allegiance to Christ we have become a Laodicean church.

**B. Indifference (15-16)** – *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.* They were neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm. Their lives at church mirrored the water they drank.

- They were not completely cold. They were attending church, but there was no zeal for the Lord, no desire to live for Him. They were satisfied with "their" church and had no desire for change. Jesus warned that He would spue them out of His mouth.
- You know, I don't really care for anything lukewarm. Apparently a lot of churches in our day love lukewarmness. They come together on a regular basis with no desire to serve the Lord. They are no longer moved by the sacrifice of Christ, the redemption of their soul, the need of themselves and others, or the wicked state of our world.
- "Well the Bible says that perilous times will come." Yes it does, they are here, but what are we going to do about it? A lukewarm, indifferent church will never grow and prosper for the Lord! I fear that Jesus is sick to His stomach with the modern church!

**C. Arrogance (17a)** – *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;* Remember this was a wealthy city. They refused Caesar's help in rebuilding the city. They were an arrogant people. They had all they needed and weren't interested in help or input from others. They felt as if they had arrived! Jesus saw them as lukewarm and pathetic, but they thought all was well.

- May I remind you that God hates pride! If we ever accomplish anything, it will be the result of what Jesus has done for us and through us. We cannot make it without Him.
- Who we are and what we need to accomplish are not about the buildings that we sit in, the clothes we wear, or the money in the building fund. Our service to the Lord isn't about us or our finances; it is all about HIM! I pray we will never get to the place that we feel we've arrived and see no need to press on or improve.

**D. Ignorance (17b)** – *and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:* Their perception and their reality were totally different. They thought all was

well, but Jesus saw a much different point of view. They were proud, but Jesus said they were **wretched**, miserable, in need of pity. They were wealthy, but actually they were **poor**, spiritually bankrupt. They thought they looked fine, but they were **blind**, no spiritual vision. They had the highest fashion of the day, but they were **naked**, uncovered before God, unclothed in His righteousness.

- We must keep ourselves before the Lord, in His fellowship, so that we don't reach spiritual ignorance. It is a sad day to think all is well, when in reality all is lost!

### **I. The Condition of Laodicea** (14-17)

**II. The Counsel for Laodicea** (18) – Jesus has addressed the problem and now He offers counsel to achieve a godly solution. These include:

**A. A Proper Investment** (18a) – **I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich**; Jesus says to invest in those things that will last, those that are eternal. Physically they were rich and increased in goods, but they hadn't invested in the Lord. **Mat.6:20 – But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.**

- We are raising a generation that is spiritually bankrupt. They are financially secure, but lacking in Christ. What good will wealth, houses, and land do for their soul at judgment?
- The future generations of our families and this church depend on the investments we make. It is time for the church to invest in the Lord! We wouldn't be here today if previous generations hadn't invested in Jesus.

**B. A Proper Garment** (18b) – **and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear**; Jesus encouraged them to put on white raiment, clothed in His righteousness. His salvation is the only way to stand acceptable before God.

- All that will feast at the Marriage Supper will be clothed in white raiment. There is no other way to find forgiveness from sin. Blood bought salvation cleanses our sin and guarantees acceptance. The lost need to be clothed in white raiment, holy before the Lord.

**C. A Proper Ointment** (18c) – **and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.** Jesus knew of the pride they had for their eye salve. He wasn't concerned as much with physical sight as He was a spiritual perspective.

- It is hard to do, but we need to ask God to open our eyes that we might see. We need to see ourselves as we truly are. We need to see this world as it truly is. The church needs those who see through eyes of faith and obedience.
- We have lost our vision. We need a vision for repentance, holy living, humble service, and lost souls. There is far more to our relationship with Jesus than just church attendance. There is a life to live and a work to do outside these four walls!

### **I. The Condition of Laodicea (14-17)**

### **II. The Counsel for Laodicea (18)**

**III. The Consolation for Laodicea (19-21)** – Even in their pitiful condition, Jesus loved them. In fact, He loves all of mankind. There is hope and consolation in His love.

**A. The Perfection of His Love (19)** – *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.* Jesus' love is perfect love. He loved us too much to allow us to die in our sin. That is why He died on the cross, that men might be saved.

- He loves the saved too much to allow them to stray from Him and continue in sin. His love **confronts** (rebukes, convicts), it **chastens** (corrects), it **commands** us to be zealous, and it **changes** by leading to repentance. Jesus loves us too much not to discipline our sin.

**B. The Intention of His Love (20)** – *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

Jesus is standing and knocking. These verbs are in the perfect tense, revealing a continual action. He continues to stand and knock upon men's hearts desiring to be let in! Jesus wants to dwell within the heart of all men.

- He wants all to enjoy a relationship with Him. This cannot happen unless we open the door of our hearts. Jesus wants no one to die lost. If you do, it will be because you refused to answer the door! He is knocking right now. Won't you let Him in?

**C. The Provision of His Love (21)** – *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* For those who open the door and let Jesus in, there is eternal reward. They will be granted access to His heavenly home.

- Just forgiving our sin and missing hell would've been enough, but Jesus is preparing a place for the redeemed! That is sure.

No doubt, the church in Laodicea was filled with lost church members. Where do you stand with the Lord tonight? If you are lost within this church, you can be saved?

Christian are there some areas that you need to bring before the Lord? Is your life neither cold or hot, just lukewarm before the Lord? Let's have a pure heart before Him.