

# LAODICEA: NOTHING?

## REV 3.14-22

Revelation 3:14-22

14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' "

Laodicea has the grim distinction that the Lord of the Church found nothing good He could say-

- This is the seventh historic church.
- This is the seventh type of Christian
- This is the final age of Christ's church.
- This is perhaps the church that is most prevalent today.

Let's look again at the facts:

The book of Revelation is divided into three parts by the author in (1:19) :

- 1) The vision of Christ - chapter 1
- 2) The vision of Christ's church - chapter 2, 3
- 3) The vision of Christ's conquest of the world - chapter chapter 4-22

In chapters 2-3 we see Christ writing to seven churches. A select group in a circular loop. One Bible teacher has described them thusly:

1. Ephesus= careless church that left it's first love.
2. Smyrna= Crowned church that suffered persecution.
3. Pergamus= Compromising church that tolerated evil.
4. Thyatira= Corrupted church that joined the world.
5. Sardis= Feeble church that wasn't on guard.
6. Philadelphia= Faithful church that was pleasing God.
7. Today Laodicea= Foolish church that needed nothing.

Again, the sixfold division:

Assembly-author-approval-admonition-appeal-assurance.

#### PART ONE MEET THE ASSEMBLY

14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,

These are some powerful insights we can draw from this ancient city.

*Laodicea was:*

- ✓ **THEY WERE WEALTHY:** A very wealthy banking and commercial center. AD 17 devastated by a quake. Needed help. AD 60 devastated by a quake. Needed no help. Tacitus wrote, "One of the most famous cities in Asia, was overthrown by an earthquake in AD 60 and in that same year recovered itself with no outside assistance." Look at verse 17. Because of great wealth Laodicea boasted of no needs...no even God was needed!  
⇒ Beware of *Trusting in Riches* lest it be God that is *Neglected!*  
Remember the Kings of Israel trusted their armies and neglected to call on God and were sadly defeated.
- ✓ **THEY WERE FASHIONABLE:** Laodicea was secondly a renowned center for clothing. A glossy jet black wool was produced into garments called trimita. These were much in demand and a source of great income. Look again at verse 17. "You are naked" - they were so proud of their clothes they were like the king in Hans Christian Andersen's tale, they didn't know they were naked before God.  
⇒ Beware of *Focusing on Externals* lest it be God that is *Forgotten*.

- ✓ THEY WERE INSECURE: Laodicea was truly indefensible and vulnerable because it had not water supply thus it sought to never offend anyone just keep the peace. Look at verse 15-16. Not hot (zestos, zeo boiling) or cold, just ok.  
⇒ Beware of *seeking for peace to the point of compromise*. Lest it be God that is *offended*.
- ✓ THEY WERE HEALTH CONSCIOUS: Lastly, Laodicea was a center for medical discoveries and advancements, especially in the temple of Carian. A special eye salve called kollurion had been developed that could heal infections and was sought far and wide. Look at verse 17. "Blind" - They were so trusting in their medicine, they felt perfectly able to care for their sight.  
⇒ Beware of *depending on human progress* lest it be God's hand that is *ignored*.

So, a wealthy, commercial, peace seeking, medically advanced city called Laodicea was the home of this assembly.

PART TWO  
MEET THE AUTHOR  
JESUS CHRIST  
Verse 14b

‘These things says the Amen,  
the Faithful and True Witness,  
the Beginning of the creation of God:

Jesus Christ reveals himself as:

- JESUS IS GOD'S LAST WORD TO THE UNIVERSE: The amen - a word put at the end of a solemn statement affirming its truth. Listen to Hebrews 1: 1-3. *Jesus is God's last word to man*. Therefore, listen to him.
- JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GOD: *The faithful and true witness*. Listen to John 1: 18. Only Jesus explains God. Therefore, believe in him.
- JESUS IS THE CREATOR: *The beginning of creation of God*. Listen to John 1:3. All things came who being by him, without him nothing. Col. 1:15-16 All things by him and for him. *Jesus is the source of creation all things find their beginnings in and for him*.

PART THREE  
THE APPROVAL  
NONE!

None! There is grimly missing in this letter is any good word.

They were tepid, thoughly evangelical just not evangelistic! Tepid is the condition where conviction does not touch ones conduct, heart or decisions. Tepid is when the cross brings a delight as an ornament not a grisly reminder of how we must die to our self, flesh and pleasures daily!

This church had facilities, rograms, budgets and respect. They lacked humility, contrition, depth of prayer and passion for the lost. Worship was a service not a personal longing poured out to God!

Isaiah 64:6-8 But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away. 7 And there is no one who calls on Your name, Who stirs himself up to take hold of You; For You have hidden Your face from us, And have consumed us because of our iniquities. 8 But now, O Lord, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.

PART FOUR  
LISTEN TO THE ADMONITION

Revelation 3:15-17

"I know your works,  
that you are neither cold nor hot.  
I could wish you were cold or hot.  
16 "So then, because you are lukewarm,  
and neither cold nor hot,  
I will vomit you out of My mouth.

17 "Because you say,  
'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do  
not know that  
you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked

Admonition or accusation. Lukewarm - needed nothing - spit you out!

A SPIRITUAL LESSON  
FROM GEOGRAPHY

Again, the setting is graphic. Colosse (Colossians) only six miles away. Known for cold, crystal clear waters that spring up. Hierapolis close at hand with hot springs steaming up from ground. Therefore, hot (Hierapolis) or cold, (Colosse). Remember, there was NO water in

Laodicea so they had a six mile aqueduct from Colossee, but by the time they got that cold water it was lukewarm.

### A SPIRITUAL WARNING FROM JESUS

Here's an insight to ponder - perhaps the lukewarm borrowed, second hand water was a portrait of borrowed second Christianity. They were not getting the water themselves out of the rock, they relied on others!

- ✓ Do you drink daily of Christ living water? Or does someone have to give you a bottle?
- ✓ Do you feed on the manna of God's word? Or does someone have to spoon feed you?
- ✓ Is your experience of transforming divine power in salvation second hand or personal?

Watch out- if it's not zestfully, hotly yours, Christ will spue you out!

### PART FIVE THE APPEAL

Revelation 3:18-20

18 "I counsel you to

- ✓ buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; GIVE
- ✓ and white garments, that you may be clothed, SEEK
- ✓ that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; PLAN
- ✓ and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. STUDY
- ✓ 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. LEARN
- ✓ Therefore be zealous and repent. RETURN
- ✓ 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. COMMUNE

How incredibly Christ loves, evensuch unbelief and unconcern as these had, even to them he appeals with these SEVEN STEPS TO JOY:

1. JESUS SAYS GIVE ME YOUR TREASURES: "I advise you to buy from me" What's this? It's Christ saying remember Laodicea's riches. Without endured suffering there is no possession of lasting riches. What's the gold? It's faith refined by suffering.
  - ✓ II Timothy 3:12 "ye, all that are Godly will suffer".
  - ✓ I Peter 1:7 "That your faith, may be proved genuine, come forth gold".
  - ✓ Job 23:10 "When I am tried and purified, will come forth gold".

2. JESUS SAYS SEEK FROM ME REAL CLOTHING: "And white garments" Remember the black wool. What's this? *It's Christ saying whoever pursues holiness possesses eternal life.*
  - ✓ Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.
  - ✓ Hebrews 12:14 "And holiness" without which none see God!
  - ✓ 1 Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."
3. JESUS SAYS PLAN FOR THE ULTIMATE DAY: "that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed" start thinking today about the final moment of our earthly life when we explain what we did with our days to Jesus.
  - ✓ Romans 14: 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.
  - ✓ 2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
4. JESUS SAYS STUDY TO KNOW ME: "and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see". Remember the ophthalmological advantages? *Without needed awakening there is no entrance into spiritual sight.*
  - ✓ Acts 26:18 - Open eyes.
  - ✓ John 3:19 - Men love darkness not seeing !
5. JESUS SAYS LEARN WHERE I AM TAKING YOU: v. 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten."
  - ✓ Hebrews 12:5-8 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.
6. JESUS SAYS RETURN TO ME FROM WANDERING: "Therefore be zealous and repent." Like the Prodigal's Father Jesus waits to receive us, forgive us, welcome us, clothe us anew and feast with us. He only waits for us to look up from the pig pen and think of Him!
7. JESUS SAYS COMMUNE WITH ME DAILY: v. 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me". Holman

Hunt the British artist, painted the famous picture of Christ outside knocking. As displayed a friend quietly pointed out, he had missed a tiny detail, the latch handle on the outside of the door... "No, the latch" Holman said, "is on the inside, we control the opening." But what does it mean that Christ wants to dine with us?

Those who lived in the Ancient world usually had three meals.

- ✓ AKRATISARA = bread dipped in wine/am.
- ✓ ARISTON = a snack eaten noontime at work, or roadside.
- ✓ This word is DEIPNON, evening meal, the main meal of the day, lingered over after long days work.

Open the door of your life to Jesus as Lord and He lingers forever as Lord and Savior. But the handle of salvation is on your side lost friend. The handle of fellowship is on your side Christian.

PART SIX  
THE ASSURANCE  
Revelation 3:21-22

"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I  
also overcame  
and sat down with My Father on His throne.  
22 "He who has an ear,  
let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' "

TRUE BELIEVERS HAVE INTIMACY WITH GOD Revelation 3:21 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. (KJV)

- ✓ INTIMACY IS A PROMISE: John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (NKJV)
- ✓ INTIMACY IS A PERSON: John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (NKJV)
- ✓ INTIMACY IS PERMANENT: Revelation 21:7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. (NKJV)