***“Reviewing Revelation”—Chapter 3:14-22--Laodicea***

**The Church of Laodicea, Rev. 3; 14-22, 1900-today. Lukewarm. Today’s churches. Makes Jesus sick; He will “spew them out.” Strong rebuke for this church. Will go through the tribulation. Customs and manners; ecumenical movement, new age, and accepts all false religions. Hebrews 6:4-6, “4For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,5And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,6If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”—apostate, impossible to correct. Sin will be judged. Danger of permanent “lukewarmness.” The book of Acts covers the first 30 years of the church, while the book of Revelation covers over 2000 years of the church. Goes back to 2000 B.C., in 240 B.C., Antiochus II rebuilt the town after his wife Laodice, who later killed him when he divorced her. A trade city; traded clear to China. Earthquake in 62 A.D. that devastated the city. Wealthy citizens, who had need of no help. Prosperous neutrality—like a modern day Switzerland. Principle products—textile manufacturing, a special kind of black sheep’s wool—black wool was their specialty. They had a medical school that was famous for an ointment that was renowned, good for eye problems. Part of a tri-city (Hierapolis), 6 miles away, and had famous hot springs, and the cold-water city of Colossae but by the time it got to Laodicea it was lukewarm; Laodicea was between the two. Could have been founded by Epaphras, and Paul addressed a circular letter, which it may be Ephesians. Colossae and Laodicea were instructed to exchange letters. REMEMBER: Proverbs 25:2, “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.”** It is also interesting to note that Paul addressed seven churches: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Phillipi, and Thessalonica (some also note with interest that Jesus gives seven "Kingdom Parables"). Early commentators on the Book of Revelation emphasized that as seven is a number of completion and fulfillment, so Jesus and Paul wrote to seven churches as an indication that they were in fact speaking to the complete church, not just these seven congregations. Speaking to seven churches means speaking to the church in perfection, *in completion and totality*. As one commentator puts it, "The churches of all time are comprehended in seven."

**14And 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;**

**Each church receives a message composed of seven parts: (1) Name of the Church, (2) Title of Christ as sender, (3) Commendation, (4) Concern, (nevertheless), (5) Exhortation (advice/threat), (6) Promise to overcomer, and (7) Closing: “he that hath an ear”….**

1. **What is the (1) Name of the Church? The church of the Laodiceans**: *Laodicea* was an important, wealthy city, with a significant Jewish population. Like other cities in the region, it was a center for Caesar worship and the worship of the healing god Asklepios. There was a famous temple of Asklepios in Laodicea, with a more famous medical school connected with the temple. After an earthquake devastated the region in a.d. 60 Laodicea refused Imperial help to rebuild the city, successfully relying on its 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.' "**The church of the Laodiceans**: 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." **The church of the Laodiceans**: 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 insufficient water supplies in the city, and the supplies coming into the city could be easily cut off. Therefore, the leaders of Laodicea were always accommodating to any potential enemy, and always wanted to negotiate and compromise instead of fight. 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 unappetizingly lukewarm.
   1. **See Colossians 2**:**1, “**For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;” **and 4:16, “**And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” **The church of the Laodiceans**: The church at Laodicea is mentioned by Paul - in a somewhat unfavorable light - in Colossians 2:1 and 4:16.
2. **What is (2) Title of Christ as sender?** These things say the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God. What is the title of Christ in verse 14?
   1. **Discuss “the Amen.” Use 2 Corinthians 1:18-22, “**But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.19For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.20**For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us**.21Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts,” **Revelation 1:6-7, “**6And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.7And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation,” **Revelation 1:17-18, “**When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? 18But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay,” **Isaiah 65:16, “**That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.” **John 14:6, “**Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me,” **These things says the Amen: Jesus is 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."*** Jesus is "the personification and the affirmation of the truth of God." **John 19:30**, “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”
   2. **Talk about “the Faithful and True Witness.” See Revelation 1:5, “**And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” **Psalm 89:36-37, “**His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me.37It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah,” **Isaiah 55:4, “**Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people,” **and John 18:37, “**Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered; Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” **The Faithful and True Witness: This is Jesus, and this was a contrast to the Laodiceans, who will be shown to be neither faithful nor true.**
   3. **Elaborate on “the Beginning of the creation of God.” Review Colossians 1:13-15, “**Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15**Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”** Jesus draws on His foundation: “beginning of the creation of God”—first origin, first cause, ruling authority—Col. 1:15. Beginning of the creation of God: The idea behind the word for beginning [the ancient Greek word *arche*] is that of a "ruler, source, or origin," not of first in a sequential order. This verse does *not* teach that Jesus was the first being created, but that He is the *ruler, source,* and *origin* of all creation. It has the idea of *first in prominence* more than *first in sequence*.

**15I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.**

1. **What is the (3) Commendation? NONE!**
2. **What is the (4) Concern, (nevertheless) ….** Religionist far above a cold-hearted sinner…..**You are neither cold nor hot**: This picture of lukewarmness would immediately connect with the Christians of Laodicea because the water they drank every day was lukewarm. Jesus said, "Just as the water you drink is disgustingly lukewarm, **you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot**." 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. In trying to be both things, they end up being nothing - except to hear the words, "**I will vomit you out of My mouth**." Did Jesus mean to say that these Christians were intrinsically cold, but warmed up by their religious trappings? Or, that they were essentially hot, but cooled down by their apathy and self-reliance? Both are possible, but since He spoke to His church, there is an emphasis on the later. Satan will have us any way he can get us, but he prizes a lukewarm.
   1. **Discuss:** “**I could wish that you were cold or hot.”** also points to another aspect of lukewarmness, as a picture of *uselessness*. **"Hot water heals, cold water refreshes, but lukewarm water is useless for either purpose."** It was as if Jesus said, "If you were hot or cold I could do something with you. But because you are neither, I will do nothing." The lukewarm Christian has enough of Jesus to satisfy a craving for religion, but not enough for eternal life.
      1. **Use Revelation 3:19, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”** But how could Jesus say, **I could wish that you were cold**? We know His deepest desire is that they be **hot**, with an on-fire love for Him (see Revelation 3:19, where the word *zealous* is associated with this same word **hot**). Yet if they would not be **hot**, Jesus *preferred* **cold** rather than **lukewarm**. "So the Lord is saying, 'If instead of being lukewarm, you were so cold that should feel that coldness, then the very feeling of your need might drive you to the true warmth, but now in your lukewarmness, you have just enough to protect yourselves against a feeling of need.”
      2. **Define** **Lukewarm**: Such prayers mock God. "O my brethren and sisters, have you ever really thought what an insult it is to God when we come before him with lukewarm prayers? There stands the heavenly mercy-seat; the road to it is sprinkled with the precious blood of Jesus, yet we come to it with hearts that are cold, or we approach it leaving our hearts behind us. We kneel in the attitude of prayer, yet we do not pray. We prattle out certain words, we express thoughts, which are not our real desires, we feign wants that we do not feel. Do we not thus degrade the mercy-seat? We make it, as it were, a common lounging-place, rather than an awful wrestling-place, once besprinkled with blood, and often to be besprinkled with the sweat of our fervent supplication."
      3. **Take note of the “Laodicean” name**. The name *Laodicea* means "rule of the people." This church well represents a church run by majority rule instead of God. "Its name designates it as the Church of mob rule, *the democratic Church*, in which everything is swayed and decided by popular opinion, clamor and voting." **This is reflected in Jesus' address to the church: *the church of the Laodiceans* (Revelation 3:14). For the other churches, it was *the church of Ephesus* (Revelation 2:1) or *the church in Smyrna* (Revelation 2:8) or *the church in Sardis* (Revelation 3:1).** But here, it is *the church of the Laodiceans*.
3. What is **(5) Exhortation (advice/threat)?**  **I will vomit you out of My mouth**:
   1. **How are churches in the mouth of Jesus?** They are in His mouth because they spread His Word. They are in His mouth because He prays for them constantly.

**17Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:**

1. **What does Jesus have against this church? You say, "I am rich and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing."** The church at Laodicea lacked a sense spiritual poverty. They looked at their spiritual condition and said "**rich**." They looked again and said "**wealthy**." They looked a third time and said, "We **have need of nothing**."
   1. **Discuss Matthew 5:3, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,”** **the** opposite of *blessed are the poor in spirit* Jesus spoke of in Matthew 5:3. The Laodiceans put their trust in material prosperity, in outward luxury, and in physical health. They felt like they didn't need anything. "The loss of a sense of need, as the drowsiness that besets a freezing man, is fatal." (Newell)
   2. **Who are “the wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked**?” It wasn't that the church at Laodicea wasn't spiritually poor - they were, they were simply *blind* to it. Jesus looked at their spiritual condition and said, "**Wretched**." He looked again and said, "**Miserable**." A third time Jesus looked and said, "**Poor**." He looked again and said, "**Blind**." A final time Jesus looked and He saw that they were spiritually **naked**. **1. Wretched, 2. Miserable, 3. Poor, 4. Blind and 5. Naked. Their perception of themselves was wrong. THE NUMBER FIVE IS ALWAYS INDICATING PART OF A WHOLE. 5 FINGERS, 5 TOES….NOT COMPLETE.**
      1. **Note the historical references implied here**. The city of Laodicea was famous for its **wealth,** but the Christians of the city were spiritually **wretched, miserable,** and **poor**. Laodicea was famous for its **healing eye salve**, but the Christians of the city were spiritually **blind**. Laodicea was famous for its fine **clothing,** but the Christians of the city were spiritually **naked**.
         1. **Elaborate on the shocking contrasts to the actual condition of this church**. The contrast between what they think they are and what they really are. The contrast between what they see and what Jesus sees. The contrast between the wealth and affluence of their city and their own spiritual bankruptcy
         2. **Contrast the Laodicean Church with the Church of Smyrna in Revelation 2**:**9, “I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”** The church in Smyrna thought they were poor when they were really rich (Revelation 2:9), but the church of the Laodiceans believe they are rich when they are really poor.

**18I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. 19As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 20Behold, 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.**

1. **What is Jesus’ advice to this church? Discuss each article mentioned.**
   1. **What does “to buy” imply?** To ‘buy’ is a figure used by God through Isaiah: [***Isaiah 55:1***](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa%2055.1)***-3, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. 3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*** The exhortation is to make an equal effort to understand the word of God as is made to obtain the necessities of this life.
   2. **Gold tried in the fire. Use I Peter 1:7, “**That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”  **I counsel you to buy from Me**: **Gold, clothing, and eye salve represent the three major industries of Laodicea: banking, textiles, and medicines.** Gold, spiritual riches ([I Peter 1:7](http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/bible.show/sVerseID/30382/eVerseID/30382" \o "verse)), contrasts with the word "poor," and fire symbolizes trial. [God](http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/CGGBOOKLETS/k/421/God-Is-What.htm) advises them to obtain spiritual riches produced through trials, which the self-sufficient [Laodicean](http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/CGGBOOKLETS/k/452/World-Church-Laodiceanism.htm) avoids by compromising.
      1. **See** [**Hebrews 11:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb%2011.6)**, “**But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”  **But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**
      2. **Review I Peter 1:7, “**That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”  Peter connects faith with gold. As gold is refined by the heat of a furnace and the dross is melted out so faith is tried in affliction and our character is refined. [**1 Peter 1:7**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%201.7) **That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**
      3. **Reference 2 Timothy 3:15.** To buy gold is a figure for strengthening our faith by diligent application to the word of God accompanied by prayer. Paul exhorts Timothy [***2 Timothy 3:15***](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%203.15) ***And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.***
   3. **White garments, that you may be clothed**: If they received from Jesus the pure, righteous covering He gives, then they would **be clothed**, and no longer would **the shame of your nakedness . . . be revealed**. The merchants of Laodicea were famous for a glossy black wool they used to make beautiful garments. Jesus says, "I know the beautiful black that the world can clothe you in. But I have **white garments, that you may be clothed**." "White garments" contrast with their nakedness. Clothing helps us to distinguish people and groups. Because of the differences between men and women's clothing, sexual distinctions can be made. Clothes reveal status: A man in a well-tailored suit falls into a different category than a beggar in rags. Clothing provides a measure of comfort and protection from the elements. It hides shame and deformity. Biblically, God uses it to symbolize righteousness **(****Revelation 19:**[**7-8**](http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/bible.show/sVerseID/31026/eVerseID/31026)**, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”).** He instructs the Laodicean to dress himself in the [holiness](http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.topic/ID/214/Holiness.htm) of God to cover his spiritual nakedness, self-righteousness.
   4. **Eyes with eye salve**. Eyesalve - Greek ‘kollourion’ A preparation composed of various materials and used as a remedy for tender eyelids. A Phrygian powder mentioned by Galen, for which the medical school of Laodicea seems to have been famous (see Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia) The figure of anointing the eyes with an apothecary’s preparation for improving vision denotes an application to restore their spiritual vision. This can only refer to applying themselves to the will of God as revealed in scripture. Their need of eye salve contrasts with their blindness. Commentators understand it to represent [God's Spirit](http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/RA/k/1648/What-Is-Holy-Spirit.htm) coupled with obedience. The combination of the two gives a Christian the ability to see - to understand spiritual things. "But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God" (**[I Corinthians 2:10-11](http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/bible.show/sVerseID/28405/eVerseID/28406" \o "verse), “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”).** "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of [wisdom](http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.topic/ID/439/Wisdom.htm); a good understanding have all those who ***do*** His commandments" (**Psalms 111:10, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.”).**
   5. **Discuss “love.**” The word for **love** in **as many as I love** is not *agape*, but *phileo*. Jesus' heart to this church is, "Even though I **rebuke** you and **chasten** you, I am still your friend. I love you deeply as My friend."
   6. **What kind of repentance is required of this church? Compare it with the word “hot” in Revelation 3:16, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”** The ancient Greek word **zealous** comes from the same word as *hot* in Revelation 3:16. Though Jesus detested their lukewarmness, He would really rather them be *hot* with zeal rather than cold.
   7. **Elaborate on this much, mis-used phrase,** “**Behold, I stand at the door and knock**:” Jesus gave this lukewarm church *The Great Invitation*. He knocked at their door, asking entry to come and **dine with** them, in the sense of sharing warm, intimate time. It only happens as we respond to His knock, but the promise is made to all: **If *anyone* hears my voice**. The idea of Jesus **at the door** applies to the sinner and to the saint just the same. Jesus wants to **come in to** us, and **dine with** us, in the sense of having a deep, meaningful relationship. **I stand at the door**: Sadly, Jesus stood on the outside, knocking to get in. If the church at Philadelphia was "The Church of the Open Door," then Laodicea had "The Church of the Excluded Jesus." **I stand at the door and knock . . . If anyone hears My voice and opens the door**: This statement of Jesus expressed a profound mystery. Why did Jesus **stand** outside the door? Why did He **knock**? Why did He wait until someone **opens the door**? He had every right to break down the door, or enter some other way on His own accord, but He didn't. The sovereign, omnipotent Jesus lowered Himself to work out His eternal plan by wooing the cooperation of the human heart.
      1. **Compare this with Solomon 5:2, “I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.”** Jesus comes to the door as the lover in the Song of Solomon. This is similar to - or perhaps a quotation of - Song of Solomon 5:2: *It is the voice of my beloved! He knocks, saying, 'open for me, my sister, my love*.' The key to opening the door is to first **hear His voice**. When we give attention to what Jesus says, then we can be rescued from our own lukewarmness and enter into a "zealous" relationship with Him.
   8. **What is the promise here?** **I will come into him**: What a glorious promise! If we open the door, He **will come** in. He won't ring the bell and run away. He promised to **come** in, and then to **dine with** the believer. When Jesus said **dine with him**, He spoke of a specific meal known as the *deipnon*. "The *deipnon* was the main meal of the day and was a leisurely affair, not a hurried snack." This speaks of *fellowship*. This speaks of a *depth* to the relationship. "*Supper* (*deipnon*) was the main meal of the day. This was the meal at which a man sat and talked for long, for now there was time, for work was ended . . . it is not a mere courtesy visit, paid in the passing, which Jesus Christ offers to us. He desires to come in and to sit long with us, and to wait as long as we wish him to wait." *This* is where Jesus wants us, in the place of fellowship with Him. Everything He said to the Laodicean church up to this point must be seen in light of this loving desire for fellowship. "Rebuke and chastisement are no signs of rejection from Christ, but of His abiding and pleading love, even to the lukewarm and careless."
   9. **What is the real theme for “Revelation 3:20?” Revelation 3:20, “**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**” Sum up this verse. Is it an invitation to the non-believer? This is not an altar-call verse. The knob is on the inside. Jesus never appears after the resurrection without eating. In context, where this verse stands is the final indictment for the Church at Laodicea. He is outside of the church, not inside. He is not in the midst of them. He is trying to reach the individual, in spite of this church.** 
      1. **The call here is to an individual, and not to this church. Why? If anyone: Notice that Jesus gave the call to *individuals*. He didn't say, "If any church," but if any*one*. "We must not talk about setting the church right, we must pray for grace each one for himself, for the text does not say, 'If the church will open the door,' but 'If *any man* hear my voice and open the door.' It must be done by individuals: the church will only get right by each man getting right."**

**21To 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.**

1. **What is (6) Promise to overcomer? To him who overcomes**: Jesus' promise to the overcomer, even at Laodicea, showed that we *don't have to be* Christians who are compromising and lukewarm. If we are, we can change and become one of Jesus' overcomers. **What is the promise to the overcomer in verses 21-22? Shall sit with “my father and His throne.” Christ in His throne….David’s throne in the Millennium.** 
   1. **I will grant to sit with Me on My throne**: Those who overcome the battle against indifference, compromise, and self-reliance, receive a special reward. They enjoy a place with the enthroned Jesus (**as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne**). "This is the worst of the seven Churches, and yet the most eminent of all the promises are made to it, showing that the worst may repent, finally conquer, and attain even to the highest state of glory."

**22He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

1. **What is (7) Closing: “he that hath an ear”…. ? He who has an ear, let him hear**: Few want to identify themselves with the church of Laodicea. We would much rather identify ourselves with the church at Philadelphia. **Let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**: We *must* hear what the Holy Spirit says here, because He speaks **to the churches** - including us. May God deliver us from the self-reliant, compromising lukewarmness that marked the church of the Laodiceans!.
2. **Compare the church of Laodicea with today’s modern Christianity. What is the “take away” for you personally?**

***And, here are the promises:***

[**Romans 10:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%2010.17)**, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”**  
  
[**2 Timothy 3:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%203.16)**, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”**

[**Ephesians 2:10**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Ephesians-2-10/), **“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”**  
  
[**2 Peter 1:4**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/2-Peter-1-4/) , **“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”**  
  
[**2 Corinthians 1:20**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/2-Corinthians-1-20/), **“For all the promises of God in him [are] yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”**

**Clarence Larkin, *The Greatest Book on Dispensational Truth in the World* (1918)**

*Ephesian*: a.d. 70 to 170 - "The backslidden church."

*Smyrna*: 170 to 312 - "The persecuted church."

*Pergamite*: 312 to 606 - "The licentious church."

*Thyatiran*: 606 to 1520 - "A lax church."

*Sardian*: 1520 to 1750 - "A dead church."

*Philadelphian*: 1750 to 1900 - "A favored church."

*Laodicean*: 1900 to the end - "A lukewarm church."

**Wrap-up on the Revelation letters**

1. **Which three letters have the promise to the overcomers as a postscript? Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos**
2. **Which two letters have no commendations at all? Sardis and Laodicea**
3. **Which two letters have no condemnations at all? Smyrna and Philadelphia**
4. **Which church is promised “to go through the tribulation” if they do not change? Thyatira (hinted at: Sardis)**
5. **Which church is promised “to escape the tribulation?” Philadelphia**
6. **Do all these letters apply to all churches? Yes**
7. **Which church is the “dead church?” Sardis**
8. **Which four churches has specific references to Christ’s Second Coming? Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea**
9. **Which church is the “persecuted church?” Smyrna**
10. **Which church is married to the world? Pergamos**
11. **Which church had the woman Jezebel? Thyatira**
12. **Which church is known as the missionary church? Philadelphia**
13. **How many churches hear the word “repent?” Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea…..only Smyrna and Philadelphia did not!**
14. **“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” phrase occurred seven times, once in each letter. However, compare Revelation 13:9, where it says, “If anyone has an ear, let him hear.” Where is the reference to the church? Has the church already been raptured, since it is not mentioned here? Comment.**
15. **Four of the letters refer to Jesus’ Second Coming? Re-read Revelation 2:5 (Ephesus), Revelation 2:16 (Pergamos), Revelation 3:3 (Sardis), and Revelation 3:11 (Philadelphia). Compare.**

**Assignment for next week:  Read Revelation 4 and 5, seven times. and the Book of Ruth. Read I and II Thessalonians and I Corinthians 15. Discover: Who are the 24 elders? Lampstands? What is the rapture? When do you think the rapture will occur?**

**Review the “Signs of His Coming”--Grouping of Signs**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Matthew** | **Luke** | **Revelation** |
| **False Christ’s** | **24:4-5** | **21:4** | **6:1-2** |
| **Wars** | **24:6** | **21:9-10** | **6:3-4** |
| **Famines** | **24:7a** | **21:11** | **6:5-6** |
| **Death** | **24:7b-8** | **21:12** | **6:7-8** |
| **Martyrs** | **24:9** | **21:24** | **6:9-11** |
| **Global Chaos** | **24:10-13** | **21:25** | **6:13-17** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION, Chapters 2 & 3** | | | | | | | |
|  | **Christ** | **Commendation** | **Rebuke** | **Exhortation** | **Alternative** | **Promise** | **Historical**  **View** |
| ***Ephesus***  ***(2:1-7)*** | Holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks in the midst of the seven candlesticks (1:20). | Works, labor, patience, cannot bear those who are evil, judged the false apostles, hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans. | Left their first love. | Remember, repent, do the first works. | I will come quickly and remove the candlestick out of his place (1:20) | Will eat of the Tree of Life. | The Church of the first century. |
| ***Smyrna***  ***(2:8-11)*** | First and the Last, Who was dead and is alive. | Works, tribulation, poverty. | — | Fear not, be faithful unto death. | — | Will receive the Crown of Life, Will not be hurt of the second death. | The persecuted church of the second and third centuries. |
| ***Pergamos***  ***(2:12-17)*** | Has the sharp sword with two edges (Heb. 4:12) | Works, Hold fast Jesus’ name, have not denied the faith. | Hold the doctrine of Balaam. Hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. | Repent | I will come quickly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth. | Will eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white stone with a new name written within it. | The Church from about 312 (Constantine) to about 500 A.D. |
| ***Thyratira***  ***(2:18-29)*** | Eyes like flame of fire, feet like fine brass. | Works, charity, service, faith, growth in works. | Tolerated false prophet, Jezebel, to teach immorality and idolatry. | Repent, hold fast to that which you already have until I come. | Great tribulation, children will be killed. | Will give power over the nations, will receive the Morning Star. | The Church of the Dark Ages till the 16th century. |
| ***Sardis***  ***(3:1-6)*** | Has seven spirits and seven stars. | Works, a name (reputation) of being alive… | …but are dead. | Be watchful, strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die. Remember how you have received and heard, hold fast, repent. | I will come on you as a thief. | Will be clothed in white raiment. Name will not be blotted out of the Book of Life. Jesus will confess his name before the Father. | The Church of the Renaissance and the Reformation. |
| ***Philadelphia***  ***(3:7-13)*** | True has the key of David. | Works, has kept Jesus’ word and not denied His Name. Has kept the word of His patience | — | Hold fast that which you have… | …That no man take thy crown. | Be kept from the hour of temptation. Be made a pillar in the temple of God in the New Jerusalem. Jesus’ new name will be written on him. | The Church of the revival of the 19th century. |
| ***Laodicea***  ***(3:14-22*** | The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning (originating source) of the creation of God | — | Lukewarm, neither cold nor hot. Wretched and miserable, and poor, and naked. | Buy from Jesus refined gold white clothes, and eye salve. Be zealous and repent. | I will spue you out of my mouth. | Fellowship with Christ – I will come in to him and sup with him and he with me. | The end-times lukewarm church. |

Comments: All churches begin with a description of Jesus. All but the church of Laodicea receive some sort of commendation. All receive a rebuke of some kind and are told to repent except for Smyrna and Philadelphia. All are offered gracious options if they obey the exhortations.