

# Letter to the Church in Laodicea

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Text: Revelation 3:14-22

This is the seventh and final lesson in a series on the seven churches of Asia addressed in Revelation 2-3. Through John, Jesus sent a letter to each church, which He also shared with the others and with us as well. The letters described challenges they were facing, what they were doing well, what they needed to correct, and more. In studying these seven letters, every church can find encouragement and/or warnings that apply to them. We will notice these as we go through our study.

## About the City of Laodicea

- Three towns together – Laodicea, Colossae, Hierapolis; Laodicea is mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament (Colossians 2:1; 4:13, 15-16)
- Several points about Laodicea that correspond to the spiritual condition of the church in that place – it was a banking center, so it was prosperous; it was known for making rich garments of black wool; it was home of a medical school that made a powder for treating eye problems; yet the church was described as “wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked” (v. 17)

## Letter to the Church

- Description of Jesus – the Amen (v. 14), sure, true, Jesus often said, “Verily, verily” or “Truly, truly”; faithful and true witness, testifying of what was right; beginning of Creation, first born (Colossians 1:15), created all things (Colossians 1:16; John 1:3)
- Current circumstances – no mention of persecution; no false teachers causing havoc; yet they were “lukewarm” (v. 16); complacent, mediocre, comfortable in their present condition
- Commendations – none; only church that Jesus had nothing good to say about them
- Condemnations – trusted in their riches (v. 17); thought they did not need God, yet they needed His spiritual blessings, forgiveness, and enlightenment (v. 18)
- Punishment for sin – the Lord would spit them out of His mouth (v. 16), rejecting them as His people; needed to be zealous and repent (v. 19); needed to open the door for Christ (v. 20)
- Reward for faithfulness – sit with the Lord on His throne (v. 21); reign with Christ like Thyatira (Revelation 2:26-27)

## Main Lesson

- Depend on the Lord – they believed they were self-sufficient; this is good to an extent (2 Thessalonians 3:7-9), but they started to think that they did not need God; this

resulted in a state of spiritual mediocrity (“lukewarm”); not appealing or useful to the Lord

- This is the lesson for us today – we need to recognize our dependence upon the Lord; He is the source of every blessing (James 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:17; Ephesians 1:3); forgiveness of sins is only found in Him (Ephesians 1:7); without His word to guide us, we would be hopelessly lost (Jeremiah 10:23; Psalm 119:105)

## **Conclusion**

- It is hard to imagine a church or a Christian who believes that they do not need the Lord – yet prosperity can deceive us; we begin to put our trust in material things rather than in God
- We need to be zealous in the Lord’s service – look to Him for blessings, forgiveness, and guidance