

## THE END TIME CHURCH – LAODICEA

Revelation 3:14-22

### Introduction:

1. The last church to receive a letter from Christ was this church.
2. Woven within the confines of each church are truths that apply to all.
3. But if ever a description of a church more up-to-date than the morning newspaper of today's events, it is the description of this church.
  - A. This church describes the church of the end days before the rapture.
  - B. It describes the typical church and Christians all over America.
4. This church was located in a prosperous city of clothing and woolen trade, a medical center of that day, with public baths and fabulous shopping centers.
5. The church folks of Laodicea were self-sufficient and said they had need of nothing (v. 17).
6. Laodicea's major weakness was their own lack of an adequate and convenient water system.
  - A. Located in vicinity were hot boiling mineral springs.
  - B. Laodicea's water supply came through large pipes six miles away from Denizli.
  - C. This hot mineral springs water would be lukewarm and repulsive as it came out of pipes six miles later at the industrious city of Laodicea.
7. When Jesus visited the church, He used the topography of the land of which all were familiar as it emptied into the city and said, "You and your church have become just like your water system—lukewarm, distasteful, and nauseating to drink.
8. The "Water of Life" that can produce wells of living water to gush from your soul says, "I've seen some things you haven't" and His evaluation and the churches self-evaluation didn't concur.
9. The spiritual evaluation of the churches from the first to the seventh had declined.
  - A. It all began in the first church when their love for Jesus had waned, and they had left their first love, and now this church has completely locked Jesus out.
  - B. (v. 20) Jesus is trying in the end times to gain re-entrance into the church He purchased with his blood.

[There are 3 areas of evaluation the Lord gives to the Laodicean church]

### I. (v. 14) CHRIST THE AUTHOR OF THE CHURCH.

- A. The Lord identifies Himself to this assembly.
- B. The Lord sees little if any good in this church.
- C. The Lord strengthens His case as the Eternal Evaluator in 3 ways:
  1. The Final One – "These things saith the Amen."
    - a. Amen means truth, so let it be and indeed He is the final truth from God.
    - b. Hebrews 1:1-2 – ***God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.***
  2. The Faithful One – "The faithful and true Witness."
    - a. The Lord has never nor will ever fail us.
    - b. John 14:18 – ***I will never leave you comfortless; I will come to you.***
    - c. Our Lord makes intercession for us in life and death.
      - 1) Hebrews 7:25 – ***Christ ever lives to make intercession (prayers) for us.***
      - 2) Psalm 23:4 – ***Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me.***
  3. The First One – "The beginning of the creation of God."
    - a. John 1:3-4 – ***All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.***
    - b. The wealthy church needed to know that everything they boasted of was made by God and not man.
    - c. The Lord has made 3 great creations across the pages of time for the purpose of magnifying Himself.
      - 1) The NATURAL Creation – God placed Adam as its Head.
      - 2) The NATIONAL Creation – God placed Abraham as its Head.
      - 3) The NEW Creation – God placed the Lord Jesus as Head.

[Not only Final One and Faithful One, but:]

[The Church is not what Christ desires, but he is still the Author:]

## II. (vv. 15-17) CHRIST'S ADMONITION TO THE CHURCH.

1. This church was nauseating to the Savior.
2. Lukewarmness just covered the whole organization.
3. Members were fence-sitters and straddlers, grandstand Christians, and middle-of-the-roaders or moderates.
4. Moderate – Webster – Mild; calm; gentle; average or medium quality, scope or range." (Moderate weather) is example = not too hot and not too cold.
5. This moderate (lukewarm movement among religious circles) would be one of the end time symbols among churches.
6. Half-heartedness will paralyze any effort.
7. There were two broad areas that needed the admonition of the Lord.
  - A. (v. 15) The spiritual apathy or indifference of the church.
    - 1) They didn't want to be ice cold, but they didn't want to be too zealous (being hot for God).
    - 2) They didn't want to be a religious fanatic.
    - 3) People today fear folks who are in love with Jesus because they make them feel uncomfortable.
    - 4) The fire and zeal for God had gone out in their souls.
    - 5) They refused to admit their true spiritual condition.
    - 6) John 9:39-41 – ***And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they who see not, might see; some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If you were blind, you should have no sin. But now you say, We see. Therefore, your sin remains.***
  - 7) Members had no enthusiasm, emotion, zeal, nor urgency.
  - 8) It is possible to love a large amount of doctrinal correctness without the fire and affection of Jesus being alive in the furnace of your soul.

[Is this church and its church members beginning to sound familiar? Apathy and indifference]

## B. (v. 17) The spiritual arrogance or ignorance of the church.

- 1) The Laodiceans said, "We're ok." We've got a little agreement with the Lord. The man upstairs and me, we talk. I'm satisfied where I am with God.
- 2) The "Water of Life" looks at this proud bunch of self-satisfied, spiritual peacocks and says, "You make me sick, and I'm going to spew you out of my mouth."
- 3) (v. 17) Jesus says, "Here is what I see through your stained-glass windows, chandeliers, and padded pews; you in your millions are wretched (distressed), miserable, poor, blind, and naked."
- 4) A deacon once showed a prospective pastor all the fancy, immaculate church facilities as a means to impress him. The young man asked, When was the last time the altar was wet with tears, and when was the last time you had revival and God met you here?" He replied, "Oh, we don't have revivals, we don't need that sort of thing here."

[We've seen the Author of the church, the Admonition to the Church, Now the heart of Jesus is bleeding over the Church He purchased and we see some Grace and Hope.]

## III. (vv. 18-20) CHRIST'S APPEAL TO THE CHURCH.

1. Christ's work is always redemptive to the last straw.
2. (vv. 18-20) With nail-pierced hands for the church, Jesus reaches out and admonishes the church to do 3 things:
  - A. (v. 18) Admit spiritual bankruptcy.
    - 1) (v. 18) Deny your gold and take my gold, which is the riches of God paid for in my blood. Gal. 6:14—***God forbid that you should boast except in the cross.***
    - 2) (v. 18) Deny the rags of your sins and spiritual nakedness and exchange them for robes of righteousness, which are cleansed by the blood of Jesus.
    - 3) (v. 18) Deny your physical eyesight, which has led you to spiritual blindness and get heaven's eye salve that you may see how wretched you are, then your spiritual eyes will be opened. In Romans 7:24 it says, ***Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?***  
(Admit your spiritual bankruptcy)

- B. (v. 19) Acknowledge Christ's Love and Discipline.
- 1) The love of Christ is pure and will never condone sin in our lives.
  - 2) Hebrew 12:6 – God loves and punishes his own.

[Admit your spiritual bankruptcy, Acknowledge Christ's Love and Discipline]

- C. (v. 20) Admit Christ back into His own church.
- 1) Holman Hunt has a famous picture with Christ knocking on the door.
  - 2) Someone said, "You made a mistake for there is no latch on the door," to which he said, "No, Christ stands knocking and the latch is on the inside . . .
  - 3) He says to the church and Christians, "Open up and I'll have supper and fellowship with you."
  - 4) Greeks had 3 meals – Breakfast; small noon meal – didn't even leave the workplace; and supper - a full meal with fellowship.
  - 5) Jesus is knocking through marital problems, health, death, prayer, testimony, yes, this sermon right now is for you . . .

**Conclusion:**

The table is spread now from heaven. The invitation from the Master is "Come and dine." As he knocks on your heart's door will you open the latch? He wants to have eternal, saving fellowship with you. To the hungry and thirsty he says, "Open up, and I'll come in for an eternal supper." How much louder could Jesus knock than to die for you? When Jesus was on the cross, you and I were on his mind!!!