

Revelation Chapter 3 Second Continued

In this lesson, we will look at the church at Laodicea. This church is certainly a look at the apostate churches of our day. This is a church afraid to show its emotions. One that is a very sophisticated group really to the point of being very ineffective in winning people to the Lord.

Revelation 3:14 "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;"

The Danger of Luke Warmness, 1900 A.D. to Current. The Apostate Church.

Traveling 45 miles southeast from Philadelphia, one would arrive at the fortified city of Laodicea where several major roads converge. Medicine, production of eye ointment, wool distribution, manufacturing, and banking brought fame to this city. It is interesting to note how Christ related His message to these qualities of the city (in verses 17-18). The people of Laodicea felt they needed nothing. They boasted of their riches, yet they were spiritually poor. Although they were famous for their eyesalve, they were spiritually blind. They were known for their fine wool, but they were spiritually naked. How do you know if you are lukewarm? Ask yourself these questions:

- (1) Are you committed to evangelism and missions?
- (2) Are you committed to living a holy life?
- (3) Are you committed to your local church fellowship?
- (4) Are you committed to spending time in prayer, worship and the Word?
- (5) Are you committed to other believers in the Body of Christ?
- (6) Are you actively supporting God's work with your finances?

The people at Laodicea were spiritually lukewarm and Christ said their condition must be remedied. He commanded them to do three things which we also must do if we want to eradicate our lukewarmness:

- (1) "Buy of me Gold, Tried in the Fire". Gold is refined by the fire. Let the Word of God refine you spiritually and burn away the lukewarmness in your life. The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times (Psalms 12:6).
- (2) "Buy of me White Raiment". Allow God to change you by making a renewed commitment to righteous living. Eph. 4:24 "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."
- (3) "Anoint your Eyes so You Can See". Receive the powerful revelation of God through Jesus Christ which will open your blinded eyes and effect true change in your life. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6).

The book of Colossians, as well as this message here, was to the Laodiceans, we see (in Colossians 4:13; 16). They were a very prominent area. It seems that Paul, as well as Jesus (here in the book of Revelation), warned them about their lack of zeal in their church.

When Scripture declares that Jesus is the "Amen," it means that He is the divine "Yes" to the prayers of God's people whenever they are made in accord with God's will.

2 Cor. 1:20 "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us".

Jesus is spoken of as "faithful". He is worthy of our faith in Him.

Jesus is Truth. His witness is true because He Himself experienced it. It does not waver. It is fact. He created everything in the earth as we know it. We can easily see from John that Jesus created everything.

John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The same was in the beginning with God." "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

Jesus is the Creator of all things.

Verses 15-16: The church is likened to "lukewarm" water, or as being virtually worthless. Christ says He will "spew them out", or eject them from His company. The hot waters of nearby Hierapolis were known for their medicinal qualities, whereas Colossae was known for its cold, pure water. But Laodicea was forced to receive water by aqueduct from other areas. By the time it arrived at Laodicea it was lukewarm and provoked nausea. The "works", of the Laodicean church were as worthless as the city's lukewarm water. The description does not refer to a backslidden condition, but rather to their lack of genuine faith.

Revelation 3:15 "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot."

The Laodicean church was self-satisfied. They went through the formality of church. They felt if they attended church one or two hours a week, they had done their duty toward God. Self-satisfied worship is even worse than not being saved at all. If we are not saved, at least we realize it. Someone could possibly lead us to God.

In the church at Laodicea, and in our apostate churches today, they felt no need for more than they had. They were not even aware that salvation was not already theirs.

Jesus had told the scribes and Pharisees that the publicans and harlots were more likely to inherit heaven (Matthew 21:31). Those who believe they do not need a physician may die of some dread

disease before they even discover they have it. Those who know they have a bad disease can begin to try to get rid of it.

When someone has been introduced to Jesus and begins to take Him for granted, it is very sad. This is what I see in this church at Laodicea and in our formal churches of today.

In 2 Peter 2 is a scripture we need to take heed of.

2 Peter 2:21 "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known [it], to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

A little knowledge is not good. We must be on fire for God to please a holy God. Jesus must be Lord of our life. He will accept no less.

Revelation 3:16 "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

"I will spew thee out of my mouth": Just like the dirty, tepid water of Laodicea, these self-deceived hypocrites sickened Christ.

Who wants lukewarm coffee or tea? No one. Jesus is saying, If you do not stop being lackadaisical in your worship, "I will spew thee out". This is a strong warning that Jesus is displeased. Jesus does not want just hearers of the Word, but doers. Don't be a pew warmer, get involved.

Verses 17-19: Laodicea was famous for its wealth, its bankers, its medical school, its popular eyesalve, and its textile industry. Christ says that spiritually the people of the church are "poor, blind", and "naked". True wealth is found only in God's grace. This church had no spiritual value ("gold"), virtue ("white raiment"), or vision ("eyesalve"). He urges the Laodiceans to "repent" of their lack of genuine faith and of spiritual understanding.

Revelation 3:17 "Because 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:"

Wealth can sometimes give us a false sense of security. It is very difficult for a very wealthy person to be humble and realize a need for God. It is not impossible, just difficult. Some large churches can meet a fantastically large budget because of the people of great wealth who attend. I find that it is much harder to tithe on an income of 500,000.00 per year than it is on 5,000.00 per year. The person giving is not realizing that all he has belongs to God. He just looks at the large "gift" and says that is enough.

God blesses a cheerful giver, not a reluctant giver. God promises over and over to meet our needs. This church and its people have no physical need. They think they can pay their way out

of anything. It is for sure that we came into the world naked, and that is the way we will leave. We will leave all the big cars, big houses, and diamond rings behind. God will not be impressed by how much earthly wealth you have acquired. He owns everything. Your little bit in comparison will not impress Him, even if you count it in the billions.

We all face Jesus with nothing but our faith and works done for Him to testify of us. There is no treasure that will count then, but the treasure that we have stored up in heaven.

This church and these wealthy people really should be pitied by us. Their self-satisfied attitude keeps them from growing in the Lord. A Christian never stands still; if we are not growing, then we are falling away. This church is blind to the reality of their condition. They are blind to the needs of others. Unless you have felt need yourself, you cannot relate to it.

Revelation 3:18 "I 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 eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

"Gold tried in the fire", means pure gold. Jesus is speaking of being rich in the sight of God. We need to be rich in good works laying up our treasures in heaven.

Matthew 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:"

The only riches worth having are the ones that we can collect on in heaven.

White raiment garments are only available if we are washed in the blood of the Lamb. Christians who are dressed in white robes standing around the throne of God are wearing garments Jesus has purchased with His own precious blood. We do not have enough money to buy them. They are a free gift to all believers in Jesus. In the sight of God, we are all naked until we are clothed in this white robe.

It is a very serious mistake to trust in uncertain riches. The rich young ruler who came to Jesus to find what he must do to be saved, went away sorrowful when he found he must give away his gold, which was wealth (Matthew 19:16-24).

The young man traded all of eternity with God for momentary wealth here on earth. We are all naked before God, because He can see right through us into our heart. Wash your eyes out where you can see clearly.

Revelation 3:19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten": Both verses 18 and 20 indicate that Christ was speaking here to unbelievers. God certainly loves the unconverted (compare John 3:16). Both "reprove" and "discipline" often refer to God's convicting and punishing the unregenerate (Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 14:24; 2 Tim. 2:25).

Jesus says here that He rebukes this church because He loves them.

Proverbs 19:18 "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."

Jesus tells this church to get excited about serving Jesus and repent of their lukewarmness. When Jesus returns, we must be found working. Work for the night is coming when man's work is done.

Just as a fruit tree produces much more fruit after it is pruned, Jesus here is pruning the church so it will produce much fruit. Tribulation comes to make us strong. Perhaps this church would be stronger if it faced a little tribulation.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

In the closing appeal of these messages to the churches, Jesus issues a final call as we see in the next scripture.

Verses 20-22: In light of the spiritual condition of the Laodiceans described (in verses 17-18), the invitation (of verse 20), seems to be evangelistically addressed to individual members of an apostate church, so they might receive Christ genuinely as Savior and Lord (compare John 1:12; 10:27). To "sup" (dine), means to have fellowship (compare Luke 22:30; John 14:23), and to enjoy Christ's blessings. The promise to "sit" with Christ in His "throne", refers to reigning with Christ in His kingdom (compare Matt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4; 22:1). Verse 22 contains the last reference to the church before (chapter 22), implying that the Rapture will occur before the events of (chapters 4 to 19), and thus that the church will not be present on earth during the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 3:20 "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."

Here we see a terrible scene. Jesus is outside trying to get in. Jesus will knock for a while, but there will come a time, if we do not allow Him to come in, that He will stop knocking. Jesus wants to come and live inside of each of us. We need to allow Jesus to live through us.

Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Our flesh is nothing. It will soon pass. The Spirit which dwells in us is the important thing; it is eternal.

(In verse 20), Jesus says "will sup with him". He is speaking of His fellowshiping with us. He loved us so much that He died for each of us. He wants to be our friend.

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."

“Sit with me in my throne”: A figurative expression meaning that we will share the privilege and authority that Christ enjoys as we reign with Him (1:6; Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:29-30).

Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God the Father in heaven. If we live pleasing to Him, we shall be seated on thrones with Jesus.

Luke 22:29-30 "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;" "That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus' plan for all of us, is that we will be seated with Him in heavenly places. Jesus overcame the world when He submitted His will to the Father's will. He overcame sin and death on the cross. We will be an overcomer when we submit our will to His.

"Not my will but thine O Lord", should be the cry of every believer in Christ.

Revelation 3:22 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

This is the last time that Jesus Himself will speak to the churches. Each church has its own individualism. Did you see yourself or your church in any of them?

Once again, at the end of this message, Jesus tells them to hear and understand; because this message, as all the others, came from the Spirit.

Because Christ loves us, He rebukes us. Because He cares for us, He warns us of specific dangers in these closing days of time.

- (1) The Danger of Diminishing Love (Represented by the church at Ephesus);
- (2) The Danger of Fearing, Suffering (Represented by the church at Smyrna);
- (3) The Danger of Doctrinal Compromise (Represented by the church at Pergamos);
- (4) The Danger of Moral Compromise (Represented by the church at Thyatira);
- (5) The Danger of Spiritual Death (Represented by the church at Sardis);
- (6) The Danger of Failing to Advance (Represented by the church at Philadelphia);
- (7) The Danger of Luke Warmness (Represented by the church at Laodicea).

In these closing passages, we see a picture of:

- (1) The standing Christ, symbolizing His readiness to enter our individual lives and corporate church fellowships to correct every deficiency.
- (2) The knocking Christ, who seeks us unceasingly, He keeps on knocking.

- (3) The pleading Christ, continually speaking to us, wooing us to a more intimate relationship with Him.
- (4) The penetrating Christ, who as we open the door of our lives to Him, enters in.
- (5) The companion Christ, enjoying sweet fellowship and communion with us, preparing and equipping us for His soon return.

Here are Nine Promises to Overcomers. Jesus is not returning for a weak, anemic, defeated Church. He is returning for a mighty powerful Church composed of men and women who have learned to overcome. In each of His messages to the seven churches, Jesus gave a specific promise to those who overcome.

- (1) Overcomers Will Eat of the Tree of Life. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). Those who Overcome will inherit eternal life. They will live forever!
- (2) Overcomers Will Not be Hurt by the Second Death. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." (Rev. 2:11). Those who Overcome have their names written in the Book of Life and are part of the first resurrection. The "second death", is identified (in Rev. 20:14), as the lake of fire. The second death has no power over the righteous who are part of the first resurrection: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6).
- (3) Overcomers Will Eat of the Hidden Manna. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." (Rev. 2:17). The "hidden manna" refers to Christ because He is the Bread of Life (John 6:33-35). Jesus, in all His fullness, will be manifested to those who Overcome and they will partake of all that He is and has!
- (4) Those Who Overcome Will be Given a New Name. "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Rev. 3:12). To "write the name upon something" is a common Hebrew expression used to indicate taking absolute possession of something. Christ will write His Name upon the foreheads of those who overcome, forever identifying them as His own possession.
- (5) Overcomers Will Be Given Power Over the Nations. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (Rev. 2:26). Overcomers will reign with Christ and sit in judgment over the nations (Rev. 20:4).
- (6) Overcomers Will Be Clothed in White Garments. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3:5). The white garments that Overcomers will wear represents the righteousness of the saints: "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:8). John saw the redeemed standing before the throne of God, clothed in white robes with palms in their hands (Rev. 7:9).

- (7) Overcomers Will Be a Pillar in the Temple in the New Jerusalem. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." (Rev. 3:12). A pillar is permanent, so Christ's promise to those who Overcome means He will give them a permanent place in the New Jerusalem. Absolutely nothing will be able to remove them from their place in heavenly Jerusalem!
- (8) Overcomers Will Sit With Christ on His Throne. "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." (Rev. 3:21). Those who Overcome will sit with Christ on His throne and reign with Him forever!
- (9) Overcomers Will Inherit All Things. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son". (Rev. 21:7). This promise is the summation of all the blessings God can bestow. Like a son taking possession of his inheritance, those who Overcome will take possession of all their Heavenly Father has prepared for them.

You Are Called to Overcome. Beloved, these promises do not belong to halfhearted, uncommitted, compromising, fearful, unfaithful believers, but to those who overcome! The word "overcome", in these verses is translated from the Greek work, "nikao," which means "to conquer." When Christ calls us to overcome, He is calling us to conquer by locating our enemy, engaging him in combat, and defeating him! We are called to Overcome and CONQUER the flesh!

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God? (1 Peter 4:1-2).

We are called to Overcome and Conquer the world! Jesus said:

John 16:33 "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have Overcome the world."

We are called to Overcome and Conquer sin! "For sin shall not have dominion over you" (Romans 6:14).

We are called to Overcome and Conquer Satan!

1 John 4:4 "Ye are of God, little children, and have Overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world".

Christ has overcome, and by His Spirit living within us, we are able to do the same: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5).

You do not Overcome because of who you are. It is not because of any merit of your own, your good works, your strength, or anything else you possess. You are able to Overcome the flesh, the world, sin, Satan and his evil principalities because of Jesus Christ who lives within you! In the Spirit, John glimpsed the great victory that belongs to God's people and declared:

Rev. 12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Romans 8:37 "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Your victory is sealed with the assurance of the blood of Jesus Christ!

Our Yea and Amen. The last great anointing that will fall on this earth prior to the return of Jesus Christ is the prayer anointing. (In Rev. 3:14), there is an often neglected, yet beautiful picture of Jesus' role as your prayer partner.

Jesus declares, "These things saith the Amen", meaning He is the "Amen". The Hebrew rendering of (Isaiah 65:16), also calls God "the God of Amen." What does this mean? The original meaning of the verb "to amen" is used to affirm that someone is reliable, trustworthy, and truthful. It is used in the Old Testament in two ways:

- (1) It echoes a leader's prayer or praise. It means "Yes, indeed" or "may it be so in very truth." (For examples, see Psalms 41:13; 72:19; 106:48; 1 Chronicles 16:36; and Nehemiah 8:6).
- (2) It is used as the assent of a listener to a royal decree or purpose. (For examples, see 1 Kings 1:36; Jeremiah 11:5).

Picture this: Jesus is seated at the Father's side. As you enter the throne room in prayer to intercede, according to the will of God aided by the Spirit indwelling you, Jesus joins His almighty intercession with yours, then He turns to the Father and seals it with His "Yes and Amen!" The "Amen" (so be it), is uttered to the Father through Christ as we claim God's promises in prayer!

To close this chapter, I want to you to read (Rev. 1:3) again.

Rev. 1:3 "Blessed [is] he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time [is] at hand."

Chapters 2 and 3 are two of the most important chapters in the Book of Revelation in my mind. I recommend you re-read these and study them, then compare them to your church. Not all churches are alike and much false teaching or teaching about worldly interests instead of the gospel message is being taught today in many assemblies.

Revelation Chapter 3 Second Continued Questions

1. What is the church at Laodicea symbolic of?
2. They are so sophisticated they have become what?
3. What unusual name does Jesus call Himself here?
4. What did Jesus and Paul warn them of?
5. What do you think Jesus' name "Amen" meant here?
6. What scripture in John leaves no doubt that Jesus was Creator God?
7. When Jesus says "He knows their works" in verse 15, what else does He say of them?
8. What kind of a church does this show us?
9. Who did Jesus tell the scribes and Pharisees would enter heaven before them?
10. Since they are lukewarm, what will Jesus do to them?
11. Jesus does not just want hearers, but what?
12. Why did these people feel they had no need of anything?
13. What five things did they not know about themselves?
14. Wealth can sometimes give us a false sense of what?
15. What are these people trusting in?
16. What will we take to heaven with us?
17. A self-satisfied attitude keeps us from _____.
18. What did Jesus counsel them to buy?
19. Why can they not buy this white raiment?
20. Why were they to anoint their eyes with eyesalve?
21. What are the only worthwhile riches?
22. What makes these robes white?
23. It is a very serious mistake to trust in -----.
24. Why did the rich young ruler go away sorrowful?
25. Jesus says "as many as I love, I _____ and _____".

26. What two things did Jesus tell them to do?
27. Should we sit idly and wait for Jesus?
28. A tree that is pruned does what?
29. What is Jesus doing in verse 20?
30. What terrible thing does this indicate?
31. What do we see in Gal. 2:20?
32. What does it mean that Jesus will sup with us?
33. What is promised to the overcomers?
34. What must we do to Jesus, that He did to His Father?
35. After reading this lesson, what are you encouraged to do with your life?