

# The Revelation of Jesus Christ

## Chapter 3

### LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA

**A little history** — Laodicea was established in 250 BC by Antiochus II and named after his wife Laodicē. Several ancient cities named Laodicea in the ancient world, so this one was often known as Laodicea by the Lycus River.

Situated on the crossroads of three major merchant routes, Laodicea was an important commercial hub. It hosted a thriving banking sector, a luxury clothing manufacturing industry (rich purple/black wool of local sheep), and medical centers known for eye and ear remedies. It was, in comparison to most cities of the time, rich. In fact, in the early first century, when a devastating earthquake destroyed the city (and many others in the area) and the Roman government offered to help finance them to rebuild, Laodicea respectfully refused and rebuilt the city on their own.

Nearby, uphill to the north, was Heiropolis, famous for its hot mineral spring spas; the cliffs to the south are white with mineral deposits. The hot springs, of course ran downhill toward Laodicea, and by the time it water reached Laodicea, it was tepid and mineral laden and unpleasant for drinking.

Laodicea is also mentioned in Col. 4:16,17 regarding circular letters to be read by all, and an exhortation to Archippus to pay attention to his ministry.

### HOW IS JESUS DESCRIBING HIMSELF NOW?

- What does “Amen” mean?
- What does Paul say about this in 2 Cor 1:19,20?
- So, in what sense is Jesus the Amen?
- In what way is the “faithful and true Witness”?
- How is Jesus the “Beginning of the creation of God”?

## Revelation 3:14-22



<sup>14</sup> “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

- What do John 1:8 and Col. 1:16 tell us of Christ?
- How does Jesus want the Laodiceans to see Him?

<sup>15</sup> ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup> ‘So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

**I KNOW YOUR DEEDS**

- What would “hot” deeds look like?
- What would “cold” deeds look like?
- We can understand why Jesus would want them hot, but why would He prefer them to be cold rather than at least lukewarm?
- What is Jesus’ evaluation of lukewarm?
- What is the danger of being a “lukewarm” Christian?
- What would Laodicean Christians be thinking about, when Jesus says that He would “spit you out of My mouth”?

<sup>17</sup> ‘Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,”

**BECAUSE YOU SAY...**

- Were the Laodiceans rich?
- In what way?
- In what way did this deceive them?
- Were they in need of anything?
- By Jesus’ assessment what were their needs?
- What does it mean to be...

and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

	Physically	Spiritually
...wretched		
...miserable		
...poor		
...blind		
...naked		

<sup>18</sup> I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

- How do you get...?
  - ...gold refined by fire from Jesus?
    - What is this?
    - What does Matt. 6:19-21 say?
    - ...1 Tim. 6:17-19
  - ...white garments?
    - What would these be?
    - What would they hide?
    - What is nakedness being compared to?
  - ...eye salve?
    - What were they not seeing that they needed to see? (see v. 17)
    - What is this eye salve?

<sup>19</sup> 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

<sup>20</sup> 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. <sup>21</sup> 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My

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#### **A CALL TO REPENTANCE**

- How does a child perceive reproof and discipline?
  - How does a good parent perceive reproof and discipline?
  - Does God hate the wayward?
- The picture of Jesus standing outside of the door knocking implies what kind of problem?
  - What does Jesus' knocking at the door imply?
  - Whose choice is it for Jesus to come in?
  - What is the reward for letting Jesus in?
- In this context, what does it mean to overcome?
  - Overcomers will sit where?

throne, as I also overcame and sat  
down with My Father on His throne. <sup>22</sup>  
'He who has an ear, let him hear what  
the Spirit says to the churches.'

- Who sits on thrones?
- When this letter and all the others end with "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." to whom do we know this letter — and all the others — applies?

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### GIVING THOUGHT TO ALL THE LETTERS...

- **Ephesus**

- What had they done right?
- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **Smyrna**

- What had they done right?
- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **Pergamum**

- What had they done right?
- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **Thyatira**

- What had they done right?
- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **Sardis**

- What had they done right?

- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **Philadelphia**

- What had they done right?
- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **Laodicea**

- What had they done right?
- What had they done wrong?
- What were the dangers?
- What do we learn?

- **For us...**

- What does Jesus know?
- What are good things to keep "on top of"?
- What are the dangers for us?
- What can we be comforted by?
- What should we be warned of?