

The 7th Church: Laodicea

The city was located 40 miles from Ephesus and was steeped in Greek culture. It was a center of medical supplies, schools, libraries, and banking that brought strong economic and financial resources. The problem with the city itself was its water supply. Water would have to be piped in from other places. Both cold and hot water would have to come six to ten miles from different directions. By the time it reached the city, the cold water wasn't cold and the hot water wasn't hot. Both arrived lukewarm. Those were Christ's words as He described the church in her spiritual condition. Unfortunately, it also describes the age of the church and the state of many believers. This was the only Church that did not receive any commendations from Jesus.

The Designation to the Church:

- 1) Christ calls himself the “_____”. The Hebrew and Greek meaning of the word “Amen” are firm, trustworthy, sure, faithful. In effect, Jesus is declaring himself to them that He is, True, Sure, Faithful. He is someone to build a foundation on, stand firm, and put trust into no matter what may come.
- 2) Christ calls himself the “_____.”
By declaring Himself in this way to them, He is contrasting His character and their behavior, specifically their lack of faith in Him and their lack of boldness to stand for Him.
- 3) Christ calls himself the “_____.”
Jesus is the source of all creation (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16) Christ wants them to remember that everything they have comes through Him.

The Diagnosis of the Church:

- 1) They were _____. In verse 15 Jesus says, “I know your deeds, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were either one or the other!” The Church had stood for anything. IDLENESS had led to INDIFFERENCE. By doing nothing for Jesus, they had become hardened and self satisfied. Jesus used the “lukewarm” waters of the city to illustrate their hearts. To be lukewarm means to have a go along, to get along mentality, a willingness to blend in whatever crowd we are in ripe for compromise.
- 2) They were _____. In verse 17 it reads, “You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’” What they could see and buy had become more valuable than what was unseen and eternal. The rest of verse 17 goes on to say, “But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked.” No matter how much material wealth we have or make, we have nothing if we don’t have a relationship with Jesus!
- 3) They were _____. Verse 20 reads, “Here I am, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me.” Jesus was knocking at the door of their hearts but they had become so busy and distracted that they were missing him. Imagine Jesus knocking on the door to His own Church and us missing Him!

The Prescription for a “Lukewarm” Heart:

- 1) By from Me “_____”: Starting in verse 18, Jesus gives them the prescription for healing their current condition. He says to buy from him gold refined in the fire. He means gaining real unseen treasure in heaven through compassion and service. 1 Timothy 6:17-19
- 2) By from Me “_____”: Laodicea had a rich clothing industry as well as banking. They were proud of it. The “White clothes to wear” Jesus is referring to is the beautiful exchange between our sin and His righteousness. 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 3) By from Me “_____”: Laodicea also prided itself on its healing eye salve, yet Jesus calls them blind. Its reference to John 9:39, where Jesus tells Pharisees though they may see physically, they can't see spiritually due to their stubborn hearts and prideful attitudes. Proverbs 2:1-6 is the “Salve”.

The Key to overcoming: Vs. 19 and 20

“Those whom I love, I _____ and _____. So be _____ and _____.”

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me.”

The Promise: Vs 21

“To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

We will reign with Him in the age to come!