

November 8, 2020

La Jolla Christian Fellowship

REVELATION -- Letter to The Seven Churches
Episode 8: To the Church in Laodicea (Rev 3:14-21)
“The City of Ease and Compromise”
Elliott Stearns

Revelation 3:14-22

To the Church in Laodicea

¹⁴ “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. ¹⁵ I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

¹⁹ Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. ²⁰ 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 that person, and they with me.

²¹ To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

LAODICEA – THE CITY

*Great trade, finance and banking city on a major road from Ephesus to Syria and the east
Through special breeding produced sheep with a special soft and glossy black wool
“Adaptable” to whomever and whatever passed through its gates
Strong fortress but its water source six miles distant
School of Medicine with famous eye treatment
Large Jewish population*

THE LETTER – INTRODUCTION

*Philadelphia and Smyrna: Smyrna promised a crown; Philadelphia possesses a crown
Philadelphia and Smyrna fully commended; Laodicea fully condemned
The Laodicean church not unlike the church of...the PRESENT!
Rebuked with a promise of restoration
The meaning: “The Just People”*

THE LETTER – VERSE BY VERSE

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ' The words of the **AMEN! the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.** (Rev. 3:14 ESV)

Starts with the End: **“the Amen,”** and ends with **“the Beginning...”**
Because the Lord **“Announces the End FROM the Beginning...”** – Isa 46:10
Why? the Beginning of a thing determines its End.
...and when the Beginning is God; what or who can thwart His purpose?
In between, the Son oversees all things as a faithful and true Witness.

I know your works: you are neither  nor 


Would that you were either cold or hot! (Rev. 3:15 ESV)


“I know our works” (or deeds) starts each letter, sometimes with praise, but not here!

“Faith without [good] works is dead” (Jms 2:26)

Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay

all people according to their deeds. (Rev. 22:12 NLT)

“” is deadness, torpor, cynicism, **callousness** (see Matt 24:12)

“” is zeal, passion, excitement, dynamism

So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold,

I am going to vomit you out of my mouth! (Rev. 3:16 NET)

What makes one want to vomit or gag (Greek: *emeo*)? Answer: food poisoning!

The priests of old ate from the meat offerings brought to the altar (1 Cor 9:13)

“Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God...” (Rom 12:1)

“Cursed is the cheat who promises to give a fine ram from his flock...

...but then sacrifices a defective one to the Lord” (Mal. 1:14 NLT).

For you say, I am rich , I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are , pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. (Rev. 3:17 ESV)

“Wretched” speaks of being ravaged and beaten down

“Poor” is wretchedly poor; i.e. nothing but the ragged clothes on your back

“Naked” means completely defenseless against what's coming

I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen,

and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. (Rev. 3:18 ESV)

These things are **PURCHASED**, not gifted; they must be striven for!

Purchased with what? Answer: all that one has (Matt 13:44)

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (Rev. 3:19 KJV)

God first rebukes with the Word, then chastens with circumstances

“Zealous” – *zestos* in the Greek – literally means *“boiling”*

“The FIRE causeth the waters to boil” (Isa 64:2)

“ZEAL for your house consumes me” (Ps. 69:9, John 2:17)

**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. (Rev. 3:20 KJV)**

Jesus is on the outside of the Laodicean Church seeking fellowship with them

“Hearken to me, ye senseless ones, that are far from righteousness” (Isa. 46:12)

“WITH DESIRE I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Lk. 22:15)

What kind of meal does the Lord desire to have with us? See Isa 25:6-8

**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)**

Jesus implants within us the record and dynamic of His own overcoming (John 16:33)

Jesus, **“offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears”** (Heb. 5:7)

“Sure I am of this, that you have only to endure to conquer” – Winston Churchill

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (Rev. 3:22 KJV)

**Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you,
the Lord from his holy temple. (Mic. 1:2 KJV)**