

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Chapters 2-3 – Church History – Seven Letters to Seven Churches

THE LAODICEAN LETTER – PART TWO – REVELATION 3:14-22

In part one of our last message five weeks ago, we learned that Laodicea means *civil rights, rights of the people, my rights*; in other words it is all about _____! This is the most self-centered, lukewarm time in all human history and our past textual study revealed as much. Today, we will conclude our church history series with part two addressing the Laodiceans and seeing them from the perspective of history, doctrine, and overall devotional truths.

Three basic applications of the Laodicean letter:

1. Historically – 90 AD – 96 AD

- a. Laodicea was the _____ of the Roman Empire. Its location was breath-taking as the city center area sat in a spectacular and vividly beautiful valley.
 - It was located within visual sight of the biblical cities of Colosse and Hierapolis on the main commercial road from the Oriental East. Great camel caravans came down through the “Gate of Phrygia” and passed through Laodicea.
 - Laodicea was the _____ in the Phrygia region. In 60 A.D. as a major commercial banking center, it prospered in the business of minting its own coins. It was almost destroyed by an earthquake, but rather than receive rebuilding funds from Rome it refused and reconstructed the entire city at its own expense.
 - The city was the home of a thriving medical school where many physicians were trained, worked and lived. Only the richest of people could afford medical care. Because Laodicea was wealthy, it was a hotspot for medical professionals and the development for pharmaceuticals.
 - It was an industrial and commercial trading center that specialized in many exported goods. The production of textiles was its specialty; coal black wool from its renowned “black sheep” made it famous. Another unique export was “poultice.” It was a special powder that was produced for mixing an ointment widely used for the treatment and care of the _____ – Laodicea provided high quality *eye-salve* to the world. It also manufactured special ointment for the ear.
- b. Laodicea had a conglomeration of religions: There was a large Jewish population with a thriving Synagogue, yet the city also contained the temples of many ancient pagan deities such as Apollo, Zeus, Hades, Hera and Athena.

- Here many professional Jews and pagan Gentiles were converted to Christianity. Because they were wealthy and influential employing vast numbers of the populace, they were free to practice their religious beliefs without fear of persecution. The desire to remain influential no doubt diluted their faith to make it palatable to the pagan world around them. In later times, the city was referred to by Christians as, the “city of _____.”
- There were no known disciple-making churches in Laodicea. There were no known missionaries trained and sent out. It is commonly understood that the Laodiceans were not evangelistic in gospel preaching and started no other known churches.

Interesting Note: Laodicea lacked a natural water supply. Hot water was piped from hot springs located approximately six miles from town; cold water was brought via pipe and channel from near mountain tops (It is speculated that by the time the water ended up in various outer parts of the city it would have been tepid *aka lukewarm*).

- The ruins of the city can still be seen today in 2025.

Walk Thru the Bible Series – J. Vernon McGee; IVP Bible Background Commentary – Craig S. Keener; Unger’s Bible Handbook; Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible – Zondervan

2. Doctrinally – 1900 AD – Present time (ending with the rapture of church age saints)

- a. The Laodicean Church Period begins around the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. It will end when the church is raptured, marking the entrance of the world into the time period known as the “_____.” It is the _____ church period prior to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Laodicean Church is marred by materialism and intellectualism like no other time in human history. Interestingly, with this abundance of money, education, and technological advancements, most of the world’s population still lives in squalor. Right and wrong is so convoluted; only those that _____ the Bible, or who have accepted basic scriptural morals, are able to discern the difference.

b. Laodiceans have three major identifying marks:

- 1) No final authority (except their personal opinions of right and wrong) – Judges 17:6; 21:25
- 2) Inability to preach, teach and receive _____ biblical truths with no desire to *contend* for the faith once delivered unto the saints – Gal. 4:16; 1 Ti. 4:1-3; 2 Ti. 4:1-4; Jude 3

“The faith means the whole body of revealed truth, and to contend for all of God’s truth necessitates some *negative* teaching... Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His word, and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died.”

H.A. Ironside, long time pastor of the Moody Memorial Church in Chicago, concerning Jude 3.

- 3) Delusions and misconceptions about major issues of life and eternity – Pr. 14:12; Rev. 3:17

c. The characteristics of Laodiceans are found in 2 Timothy 3:1-13

- Laodiceans are full of _____

They are totally deceived about their sins and unfaithfulness:

They think they can love God and _____ at the same time

They think they are worshiping God while in the process of robbing him of tithes and offerings

They think they walk with God, yet are not willing to do the work of the Lord

They are not burdened for the lost state of family, friends, co-workers, or neighbors

They are convinced that they are living a godly life even though there is _____ persecution

They have no real need to trust God because they themselves have provided everything

They are confident and _____ with their spirituality

They think their lukewarm state is acceptable to God

They do not call it lukewarm, they say “_____”

They do not have genuine faith in God; they have faith in _____...

- God in disgust spits them out of his mouth (although he still loves them); they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Modern history reveals that Laodiceans have given the world much misery...

3. Devotionally – Present day 2025

- a. Through it all God still had _____ Bible preachers, teachers, and missionaries who have not sold out to their present age, nor traded in their sharp two-edged sword – *the Key of David*.

- Although it is a time of apostasy, God is still at work saving people and raising up godly people and churches...

b. Can we be a Philadelphian church living in a Laodicean time?