

Revelation: Church of Laodicea

Text: Rev 3:14-22

Introduction

1. Salutation

“To the angel....”

- 60km SE of Philadelphia
- Junction of roads passing from Ephesus and Smyrna
- Established ~ 2000 BC.
- 900 BC - captured by the Phrygians and later the Lydians
- 250 BC - taken by Antiochus II Theos (Seleucid Empire); named city Laodicea in honour of his wife, Laodice.
- City of merchant bankers and refiners.
- Earthquake 62 A.D; citizens rebuilt city at their own cost
- Very wealthy city, driven by pride and self-sufficiency
- Large industry - textiles — soft, black wool
- Famous for medical school - produced an ophthalmic salve that healed various eye disorders.
- Formed part of a three-city triangle — Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis
- Hierapolis was known for its hot springs
- Aqueduct built that pumped water to Laodicea.
- Possibly founded by Epaphras
- Paul wrote 1 Timothy from Laodicea.

2. Title

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation.

[“Beginning of the creation of God” (NKJV)]

- “Amen” - affirms the truthfulness of a statement — seals its authenticity. Jesus is the fixed, certain, faithful, unchangeable Amen

“For all the promises of God in Him (in Christ) are yes and Amen”. (2 Cor. 1:20)

- He is the faithful and true Witness — completely trustworthy, reliable - He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

- o He is the Beginning of the creation of God.

“The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” (Col 1:15-20)

“After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.” (Col 4:16)

3. Commendation

None

4. Condemnation

“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither [Ⓚ]cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

3 parts to His complaint — ‘you are’, ‘you say’ and ‘you are’.

“But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.”

5. Counsel

I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.

I am *about* to spit you out...

- o They are to buy His gold that they might become rich — this refers to all the spiritual blessings;
- o They are to buy white garments from Him to clothe themselves — the righteousness that we receive from Christ;
- o They are to buy His eye salve to heal their blindness.

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.” (Isaiah 55:1)
“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.” (Vs. 19)

And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.” Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:5-11)

6. Promise

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.”

“The Light of the World” - William Holman Hunt (1827–1910)

What is the door?

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Vs. 21)

7. Exhortation

“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

You call me master and obey me not
you call me light and see me not
you call me way and walk me not
you call me life and choose me not
you call me wise and follow me not
you call me fair and love me not
you call me rich and ask me not
you call me eternal and seek me not
you call me noble and serve me not
you call me gracious and trust me not
you call me might and honour me not
you call me just and fear me not

So, if I condemn you, blame me not.