

**Introduction:**

- In Revelation 1-3, there are 34 majestic terms used of Jesus to describe Him. You will also find 22 rewards mentioned in chapters 2-3 to those who overcome. All 56 of these things are to encourage the church/bride/us in her relationship with her Groom, Jesus!
- In the letters to the seven churches, Jesus is speaking to the church. Note: he is walking among the churches and in the letters He is speaking to them. It is not seven messages to seven church it is a message to seven churches, preparing the Church for the events that are about to unfold at the end of the age.
- He is calling the church to be faithful and deal relentlessly with their compromise. Resist fear. Resist compromise and embrace the grace for faithfulness.
- Our goal in studying the Seven Churches is to see Jesus in the letters to the seven churches. In the letters we have a revelation of Jesus, the expectation of Jesus, an affirmation and or rebuke, and picture of the rewards of living for Him.
  - The key to understanding the promises in the seven letters, is to understand what overcoming meant in the context of that letter. In this letter it meant watching, early revival. He is not saying, "If you do that, you will be born again." He says, "If you do that, I will give you a reward"
  - The message Jesus gave to these seven churches is specifically meant to prepare the church in the generation in which the Lord return for the unique series of events which are released as portrayed in the book of Revelation.

**I. Jesus Walks In Laodicea**

- A. Laodicea was a wealthy city. Like the other cities we have studied, it too, was a revival city. It experienced great moves of God.
1. It was a center of finance, a manufacturing city (wool) and medicine. It was located at the cross roads of three major highways. These roads were trading routes that helped make the city prosperous.
  2. It was famous for its medical developments. Mud from the hot springs was said to help cure certain eye diseases. The hot springs nearby were noted for their healing properties.
  3. One of the challenges for Laodicea was its water supply which provided Jesus the illustration with which to address the church. With hot springs to the North, and cold fresh water from the Southeast by the time the water was received at Laodicea it was neither hot nor cold. It was lukewarm. Not hot enough to heal, not cool enough to refresh. Therefore, one often just rinsed the mouth and spit out the water.
- B. The primary message of this letter is:
1. Repent of your lukewarmness. If you do, I will give you real riches—gold, garments and revelation. The Laodiceans were spiritually blind, and prideful therefore their

love for God had grown cold.

2. A root problem of Laodicea was their misunderstanding of wealth. God releases to his people wealth because of the covenant he has made with them. But that wealth is to be used to establish His covenant. Dt 28:1-14. *"When our finances grow faster than our heart, then negative dynamics occur."* ~ Mike Bickle.
3. Smyrna was financially poor but spiritually rich. Laodicea was the opposite. They were rich but spiritually poor. Wealth is difficult to handle if one does not maintain a tender, trusting heart towards God.

## II. Jesus Revealed to Laodicea

- A. *"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.'"* (Revelation 3:14, ESV)
- B. **The Amen** - means to "be true or be established". Jesus is the Amen because His promises are certain and sure. He himself is established! He was dead but lives! Twenty-five times John used the word, amen (Greek "amhn"). It is translated as, "Truly, truly, I say to you". The "God of truth" (Isa. 65:16), is literally "the God of Amen". "To cause to be certain or true." TDNT Kittle.
  1. Amen was pronounced when one agreed with the promises and consequences of an oath (Num. 5:22; Deut. 27:15ff.; Neh. 5:13; Jer. 11:5). Being the Amen, Jesus lived in perfect agreement with His Father. As the head of the church, He requires that we agree with Him to release the certainty of His blessings. We have to relate to Jesus on His terms. We must do it His way. Jesus is the one who agrees with God and requires that we agree with Him to release His purposes.
  2. All of the promises of God are yes and amen. All the promises of God are yes because they are true. The "Amen" backs up His Word/Promises! They are "amen" because we must agree with them. God's promises for increased blessing are invitations to partnership not unconditional guarantees.
  3. *For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen...* (2 Cor. 1:20)
  4. The "Amen" is significant to a church that was trusting in its own strength (riches). They had forgotten the surety of the eternal God. It was also to remind them that Jesus is One who keeps His Word and that the things He is about to speak can't be doubted or refused without dire consequences.
- C. **The Faithful and True Witness** - what He speaks is reliable and truthful (Rev. 3:7).
  1. He was about to tell them the truth in both positive and negative ways.
  2. He revealed such great promises in Rev. 3:18-21 along with negative truths about their spiritual problems in Rev. 3:17-18.
  3. He does not ever exaggerate or flatter.
    - a) In verse 17, Jesus is saying that an essential part of lukewarmness is ignorance of our true spiritual condition and satisfaction with the way we are.

b) The essence of lukewarmness is that I need nothing. A great test of how you are doing spiritually is to look at your prayer life.

**D. *The beginning of the creation of God***

1. Greek is *Arche*
  - a) In time it denotes the point of a new beginning. Jesus was there before the beginning began.
  - b) Secondly it denotes rank as in dominion. I.e. Arch-angel. Jesus is proclaiming his dominion over all creation.
2. He is the beginning or "first" in cause (source) and authority. The power and authority of creation "begins" with Him (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 1:8; 21:6). He is the uncreated God like the Father and the Spirit. There was never a time they did not exist. This was meant to arouse the Laodiceans into zealous repentance instead of being so impressed with their finance.
3. Jehovahs Witnesses want to make that say that Jesus was created but the phrase can easily mean "that from which creation begins." This interpretation is accurate within Biblical context.

E. Jesus has no affirmation for Laodicea. He has a very concerning word of vomiting them out.

1. They were lukewarm, unable to discern any need on their part. They had no needs which expressed their complacency. They had no hunger for God. (One can say they are hungry for God) but all you have to do is examine the time spent 'going after Him' to find out how hungry you really are.
2. It has to be very disturbing to be a believer and hear Jesus say to you—"You are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked."

**III. Jesus Heart Revealed to Laodicea**

A. Jesus gives Laodicea three exhortations with promises. Buy: these have to do with reward of loving and being obedient. To buy means you invest in something. You do not earn it. Jesus is saying, "Invest!" in this relationship. You really can't buy anything from God.

1. Buy gold refined in the fire. The gold of Godly character makes us rich in this age.
  - a) 1 Peter 1:7 *that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, NKJV*
  - b) Purified gold (faith) must pass through the fire.
  - c) Is 55:1-3. Come and buy...
2. Buy white Garments—righteous acts.
  - a) Revelation 19:8 *And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.* NKJV

- b) Revelation 16:15 "*Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.*" NKJV
  - c) 1 John 2:28 *And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.* NKJV
3. Anoint your eyes that you may see—Revelation. Get the Presence that you may see.
- B. Those whom He loves he disciplines. This is the greek word that means to invest in and totally educate a child (body, soul and spirit).
- C. Two Promises
1. Open the door and I will come in a sit with you vs. 20
    - a) Jesus is inviting us to come. But we have to invite Him in.
    - b) He calls with his voice!
    - c) He woos us to come, to let Him in. This is to be intimate with his bride.
  2. Overcome and you can come in and sit with me on my throne. Vs 21 (Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 20:4). This speaks of the opportunity to rule with Him.
    - a) This distinguishes between two thrones, Jesus' and the Father's; the Father's Throne is in heaven and Jesus' Throne will be on earth as the son of David (Ps. 122:5; Ezek. 43:7; Lk. 1:32).
    - b) Jesus' earthly Throne is turned over to the Father at the end of the Millennium (1 Cor. 15:24-28). We will sit on Jesus' earthly Throne after He comes back to earth (Dan. 7:13-14; Mt. 25:31; Heb. 2:5-8). Jesus overcame at the cross (Rev. 5:5, 9; Jn. 16:33). Jesus sat down at the Father right hand after His resurrection and ascension to heaven (Ps. 110:1; Mt. 22:44; Acts 2:34; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2).
    - c) Both promises imply that now is not the time to sit. Now is the time to be active in the authority that you have as a believer.

### Conclusion:

- Jesus calls us to steer clear of self reliance and complacency.
- He is constantly inviting us to draw nearer.
- The advantage is that we receive the Kingdom authority to rule with Him when we do.