

When Jesus Comes To Church

8) Lukewarm Laodiceans

Laodicea was the only church of the seven that received no word of praise

'And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, "These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 'I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth'"

(Rev.3:14-16)

What is lukewarm?

A common interpretation of this passage is that we should be hot (Gk. *dzestos* = boiling, fervent, earnest or zealous) or 'on fire' for God

And this will show in our works

So if we're not on fire for God He will spew us out of His mouth, i.e. reject us and we will lose our salvation

Example: 'How To Be A Red Hot Christian'

- 1) Stop wasting time**
- 2) Pray without ceasing**
- 3) Make sure you read the Bible every single day. Know it, stow it, show it, sow it**
- 4) Quit hanging out with lukewarm Christians**
- 5) Release the tithe of your increase to God**
- 6) Attend Church regularly**
- 7) Get rid of all sin and unnecessary weights**
- 8) Keep your eyes on Jesus**
- 9) Trust Jesus for guidance**
- 10) Witness to everyone you possibly can**

- **This would mean that God does not accept us on the basis of the finished work of Christ but according to the level of our zeal**
- **Zeal is relative. Define 'hot'. Hot becomes the level we are at. This is self-righteousness**
- **But Jesus said that He preferred we were cold, to lukewarm. Either hot or cold is good. So if Jesus was referring to enthusiasm, why would he say it's better to have none than some? Isn't it better to do something than nothing?**

Colosse and Laodicea were close neighbours

'For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis. Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house. Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea'

(Col.4:13,15-16)

What was the message to Colosse?

'For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge'

(Col.2:1-3)

In Christ you are rich. Outside of Him you are poor. Paul gave a strong warning against flesh-based Christianity

Authentic Christianity is based on union and communion with Christ and teaches us to hold fast to the Head

'...not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God'

(Col.2:19)

The Colossians and the Laodiceans were being drawn away from their life of abiding in Christ

- **Hot is being Spirit-led (10/10) and Spirit-empowered (10/10).** *'...who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous (zelotes) for good works'* (Titus 2:14). **We can't do anything we want to do; but we can do all that He wants us to do. So, think soberly**
- **Cold = is not doing anything until He leads. If we did something without His leading it would be in the flesh. E.g. Abraham & Hagar**

- ✓ **Lukewarmness** is a mixture of hot and cold. Cold = there is no leading from God. Hot = but I'll be zealous for good works anyway. The result = a form of godliness without the power of God. E.g.

Jews: *'I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge'* (**Rom.10:2**)

Paul: *'...concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless'* (**Phil.3:6**). *'I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers'* (**Gal.1:14**)

False teachers at Galatia: *'They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you'* (**Gal.4:17-18**)

'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...'

(Rev.3:17)

This self-confident church was popular, pragmatic, prosperous and proud – but it was powerless

You say: *'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing.'*

They were wealthy Christians living in a boom town. Their estimation of their wealth was not based upon their riches in Christ, but their own resources

I say:

'You are wretched'. This word is only used one other place, see Rom.7:24

'You are miserable'. This word, too, was only used in one other place, 1 Cor.15:19

'You are poor'. Smyrna was poor, yet rich; Laodicea was rich, yet poor

'You are blind'. You can't even see it

'You are naked'. They thought they were dressed for success but they were naked

'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' (Rev.3:18-19)

Jesus counsels them to buy 'from Me':

***Gold tried in the fire. See 1 Cor.3**

***White garments.** *'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'*
(Rev.19:8)

***Eye salve.** *'Because you just don't see'*

'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 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'
(Rev.3:20-21)

Why is Jesus outside this Church? Because it's not His church – it's theirs

'To the angel of the church of the Laodiceans ...'

'Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea'
(Col.4:16)

The letter starts with a focus on works, but Jesus brings it back to relationship

The word 'sup' refers to an evening meal, the main meal of the day, which was eaten in a leisurely manner; unlike breakfast or lunch

True fellowship is not a hurried thing