

THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA

Rev. 3: 14 – 22

INTRODUCTION:

1. The town of Laodicea lay 43 miles southeast of Philadelphia.
2. Laodicea was one of a group of three towns which lay in easy sight of one another in the Valley of the River Lycus.
3. The two companion towns were Hierapolis and Colosse. Col. 4: 13 , 16
4. In 133 B. C., Laodicea became part of the Roman Empire.
5. It became one of those towns where the Roman governor periodically went to administer Roman justice.
6. Laodicea contained a very large number of Jews.
7. Jews were useful citizens and brought money and trade to every city in which they settled.
8. Laodicea was a notably wealthy city.

(1) It was the center of the banking arrangements of Asia Minor.

9. It was so wealthy, when it was laid waste in A.D. 60 by an earthquake, it refused all help; it preferred to rebuild out of its own resources.

(1) This self-sufficient attitude was in the church. Rev. 3:17

10. A very considerable part of the wealth of Laodicea came from the clothing industry.

11. Above all, Laodicea was famous for an eye power. Rev. 3:18

I. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER v. 14

1. *“The Amen”...*

(1) The true one whose words are final.

2. *“Faithful and true witness”...*

(1) He would not misrepresent them.

(2) His testimony would not be biased.

(3) What he speaks is a matter of knowledge.

3. *“The beginning of the creation of God”...*

(1) The Greek word here for beginning would be better “source” or “origin”.

(2) Heb. 1: 10 – 12; John 1: 1 – 3; Col. 1: 16 – 17

II. THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH v. 15 – 16

1. Of the seven churches, this one was in the saddest plight.

2. *“Thou are lukewarm”...* Lev. 18:28; 20:22

(1) The Lord prefers either extremity to a state being lukewarm. V. 15

(2) The lukewarm are listless, and indifferent, inactive and unconcerned.

(3) The most difficult person to reach is the indifferent and unconcerned person.

(4) The greatest hindrance to the cause is the man, who knowing the truth and his duty, will not do anything about it.

(5) Self-satisfied.

(6) No zeal.

III. A CHURCH WITH A HIGH ESTIMATE OF THEMSELVES v. 17

1. *“Thou sayest”...* This was their estimate of themselves.

2. They regarded material prosperity as a token of divine pleasure, and as evidence of their spirituality. I Tim. 6:5

3. How one feels may not be the way Jesus feels.

IV. A CHURCH BLIND TO THEIR REAL CONDITION:

1. *“Thou art”...*

2. *“Wretched” and “Miserable”.*

(1) An object of pity, because of their self-complacency.

(2) Who is more to be pitied than an individual who imagines that he is a fine Christian, whereas in reality, Christ is utterly disgusted with him.

3. *“Poor”* – paupers; they had no treasures in heaven. Matt. 6 : 19 – 20

4. *“Blind”* – blind to their obligation to Christ, and to their responsibility to self and others.

(1) Without the Christian graces we are blind. II Pet. 1: 5 – 9

5. *“Naked”* – this is all the worse, because it is a spiritual nakedness.

(1) They had failed to put on the spiritual garments. Col. 3: 12 – 14

V. ADMONITION v. 18 – 20

1. He admonished them to receive his blessings that they be enriched, clothed, and that their vision may be restored.

2. *“Be zealous”*...

(1) There can be no real religion without enthusiasm.

(2) The church at Ephesus had lost its enthusiasm. Rev. 2:4

(3) The word for “hot” in verses 15 – 16 means “at boiling point”.

(4) Zeal provokes zeal in others. II Cor. 9:2

(5) It is good to be zealously affected in good works. Gal. 4:18; Col. 3: 23

3. *“Repent”*—This stands between an erring Christian and forgiveness.

4. *“I stand at the door and knock”*... makes a touching plea.

VI. THREAT v. 16

1. Christians can be lost. Heb. 3: 12; Gal. 5:4; John 15:6

VII. PROMISED REWARD v. 21

1. A place of honor.