

**“YOU DON’T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE A LAODICEAN”
(JUST BECAUSE YOU LIVE IN THE LAODICEAN AGE)**

TEXT: Rev.3:10:14 *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

INTRO.: A. The 7 churches of Rev.2, 3 to which John wrote are historically & prophetically, as well doctrinally significant. *Historically* they are 7 local churches in Asia Minor who are commended & condemned as needed by John. *Doctrinally* they address many of the faults, failures & successes of any church. *Prophetically* they speak of the history of the church age, with the last church - Laodicea - being representative of the days just before the Savior returns. The time is now! *We live in the Laodicean age.*

B. The message is simple: **“YOU DON’T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE A LAODICEAN” (JUST BECAUSE YOU LIVE IN THE LAODICEAN AGE)!** We should not either repeat the faults & failures of others in the past nor should we ignore the faults & failures predicted of the church today!

I. YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE LUKEWARM! v.14-16

A. Sickening Compromise:

1. Laodiceans are lukewarm:

- a. Not hot - on fire for God.
- b. Not cold - apostate modernists.
- c. But lukewarm - dead though orthodox.

QUOTE: Henry Morris: “The Laodicean church was not one of complete apostasy; its candlestick had not been removed & the Lord was still in the midst of the candlesticks. Neither was it barren & cold, as many doctrinally sound churches had become, such as Sardis. It was apparently receiving many new members. It had a large & prosperous congregation, impressive facilities, and an active program. But it sought to be *neutral on controversial matters*, to maintain open dialogue with both left & right, to have recognition from the mighty & the wealthy & the intelligentsia...The number of such churches today is legion, & they are a greater hindrance to the cause of Christ than if they were cold & dead. The latter reach no one, so they harm no one. The neutral churches, the mediating churches, the compromising churches - reach many whose temperaments favor accommodationism anyhow and, w/eloquent dissimulation, persuade them that, while a little religion is good, they must avoid fanaticism.”

d. Lukewarmness is deadening & sickening to our Savior:

ILLUS.: Imagine a doctor being lukewarm about disease. After an exam the Dr. looks up from his papers on his desk & says “There’s nothing to worry about. You’ve got a bad case of COVID 19.” You begin to sputter: “Aren’t you going to hospitalize me? Isn’t it catching? What about my family? The people in the waiting room...ME?!” The Dr. looks up & says mildly: “That’s all right, friend. You have to die sometime. It might just as well be of the COVID as cancer or a coronary. Diseases don’t interest me too much. Now, if you needed surgery, well, that’s more my line.” Imagine a Dr. lukewarm about disease. *Imagine a church lukewarm about Christ!* It makes as much sense. Jesus says “*Give me all your hate or all your love, but don’t offer Me lukewarm love. I will spue you out of My mouth!*”

B. Sickening Complacency:

1. Laodiceans believe but don’t do!
2. Laodiceans understand but don’t act!

ILLUS.: We all *believe* in hell but don’t warn others! We all *understand* that God’s grace is able to save “all who come by faith” to Him, but we don’t tell others! We all *believe* in prayer, we just don’t take the time to pray! **We’re just lukewarm!** It’s easier to just slide along...*backslide* that is!

II. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE INDEPENDENT: v.17

A. Riches Replace Faith: "...*need of nothing*"

1. We don't need to trust the Lord for food when we have a good job.
2. We don't need to trust the Lord for a nice home when we have one.
3. We don't need to trust the Lord for a dynamic church when we are a member of one.

ILLUS.: Warning: the Lord can remove all our props overnight! We can lose that job, allow that home to burn down, take the power off the church (snuff out the candlestick)!

We are about to remodel the church. It worries me. It will be beautiful. Will it make us even more proud & complacent? Will we be initially thankful & soon forget that He was responsible for the blessings? Will we think that we no longer have to go after souls - after all we have such a beautiful building?!

Maybe that's why we *need* the summer drive-in services...the tent meeting...missionary speakers...THE DEAF MINISTRY, THEM INISTRY TO THE HANDICAPPED to remind us to be thankful & trustful. When we trust God, that pleases Him...when we don't - it makes Him sick!

B. Comfort Reduces Trust: "*need of nothing*"

1. Individually we *need* a sickness, a crisis, a calamity.
2. Corporately we *need* a trial, a test & tragedy or a tribulation.

ILLUS.: Maybe it's good for us to occasionally have to practice church discipline - to purge the tares, get rid of the sin in the camp. Perhaps it's good for us to constantly be below budget, to keep us trusting in Him! Maybe we need to lose that paycheck, to sell off that new car, so we can have wider vision & see the need of others who have to struggle.

There is nothing wrong w/riches, prosperity, etc. unless it keeps us from focusing on Him, trusting in Him, walking w/Him & makes us selfish!

III. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE UNSPIRITUAL: v.18-20

A. We Need Real Gold: v.18a

1. True spirituality must be tested by trials (as courage in a soldier must be tested in battle).

1 Pet.1:7 *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

2. We need to learn to rejoice in time of testing, knowing what the end result will be.

B. We Need Clean Clothes: v.18b

1. We need to quit trying to impress God & others w/our own righteousness & accept His.
2. This is an inward clothing - but others will see the difference.

C. We Need Discernment: v.18c

1. The Laodicean Period follows hard on the heels of the greatest of all periods in church history: the Philadelphian Period.
2. Darkness always follows light; apostasy always sets in after revival.

ILLUS.: From about 1700 to 1900 we have the greatest "open door" (v.8) period in church history. This is the period of greatest (& cleanest) church growth, worldwide. It is the great missionary period. It is the period of the Spurgeons, Wesleys, Whitefields, Sundays, Muellers, Judsons, Taylors, Booths, Chapmans, Trotters, & Bob Jones, Sr.! The King James Bible was King!

Around 1900 comes a new Bible (!) [the ASV & friends] & a new breed; Westcott & Hort, Darwin, Dewey, Billy Graham, Jack VanImpe, the Pentecostals & Charismatics, the fake healers. The schools go bad, the mission boards go bad, then the churches go bad. Fundamentalism becomes Conservatism or Evangelicalism. Now the Evangelicals want to hold hands w/the Catholics & march back to Rome under the Pope! It is the day of "super churches" who are more involved w/Christian **aerobics** than soul

winning, with politics than **preaching**, with counselling than **invitations**, with psychology than **sound-doctrine!** If there ever was a time when the average believer needed clear vision & spiritual discernment - it is NOW!

D. We Need Chastening: v.19

1. The Lord is not done w/His church just yet - He confirms His love.
2. But He must chasten those whom He loves!
3. And He calls them to repentance!

ILLUS.: Repentance is supposed to be the result of chastening! God help us to be spiritual enough, discerning enough & love Christ enough to accept chastening as His vehicle for repentance!

E. We Need to Open the Door: v.20

1. Amazingly He has not given up on us - yet.
2. He is still calling for us to repent & to let Him back in!

ILLUS.: Imagine the tragic scene. Christ can't get into His own church! Lord, don't let it happen here! But it will if we chose to live like Laodiceans.

CONCL.: **"YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE A LAODICEAN" (JUST BECAUSE YOU LIVE IN THE LAODICEAN AGE!)**

The Savior is standing at the door of our church waiting to be invited in...let's be sure He is allowed in to fellowship w/us. Let's stop being **lukewarm, lazy, lackadaisical, lackluster Christians & get on fire for God!**