

A Study Of The Book Of Revelation

August 23, 2020

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Revelation 3:14-22

“Letter to the Church at Laodicea” *The Church that was Lukewarm*

- I. Identification of the Author (verse 14)
- II. Condemnation (verses 15-19a)
- III. Plea to Repent (verses 19b-20)
- IV. Promise if Overcome (verses 21-22)

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Letters To Seven Churches of Asia (Revelation 2-3)

- Some were **good** (Smyrna, Philadelphia)
- Some were **good / bad** (Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis)
- One was **bad** (Laodicea)

3

Letters To Seven Churches of Asia (Revelation 2-3)



- Most of us would like to be in GOOD church (no condemnation)
- None of us would have anything to do with a BAD church (no commendation)
- Reality: may be in a church that is GOOD / BAD (Some commendation and some condemnation)

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The Church At Laodicea

(Revelation 3:14-22)

Get a letter – You are sickening!
You disgust me! You make me want to vomit!

Dear
Laodicea,
You are
neither hot or
cold.

A Church
That was
Lukewarm

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Revelation 3:14-22

**L
A
O
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A**

- One of three towns of the Lycus River Valley in the province of Phrygia in Asia Minor. Colossae and Hierapolis are the other two.
- Laodicea is about 10 miles west of Colossae and 6 miles south of Hierapolis. It is 12 miles from Colossae to Hierapolis.
- The city was located about 40 miles southeast of Philadelphia, near the modern city of Denizli, Turkey.
- It was founded by Antiochus II (261 BC - 246 BC) of Syria, who named it for his wife Laodike, and who populated it with Syrians and with Jews who were transplanted from Babylonia.

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Revelation 3:14-22

**L
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- City that was rich.
- Main commercial city of the region
- Easy target for lethargy and self-satisfied complacency
- So rich they needed no help to rebuild after being mostly destroyed by an earthquake in 60 AD

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Revelation 3:14-22

Tacitus, the Roman historian, inferred that it was unusual that any city would be rich enough to rebuild itself.

(*The Annals of Tacitus, 14.27.1*)

Harkrider, *Revelation*, Page 55

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Revelation 3:14-22

Commercial Background

Three Main Businesses

1. Banking center for the region (riches)
2. Black wool market (fine garments)
3. Ointment for eyes (good vision)

“Phrygian powder,” was exported worldwide as a remedy for weak and ailing eyes.

True Wealth

True Raiment

True Vision

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Revelation 3:14-22

Colossians 4:12-16

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13 For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.

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Revelation 3:14-22

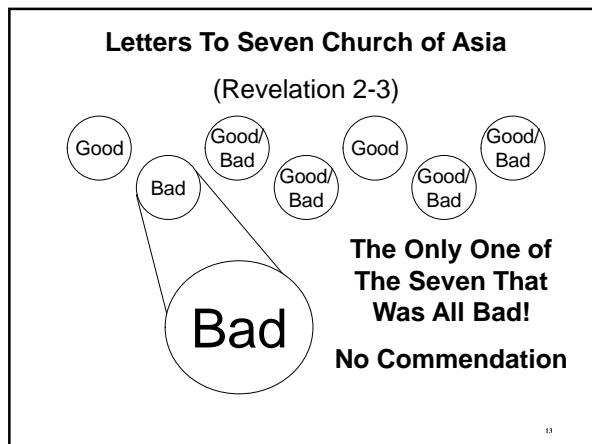
Colossians 4:12-16

14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.

15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house.

16 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.

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Letters To Seven Church of Asia
(Revelation 2-3)

• **Identification of the author. Verse 14**

• *“the Amen”* a word used to affirm and guarantee a statement as absolutely true and trustworthy

- Jesus often used the term to introduce solemn statements. John 3:3, 5 Verily, Verily or truly, truly.
- *“the faithful and true witness.”* (cf. 1:5)

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Letters To Seven Church of Asia
(Revelation 2-3)

• **Identification of the author. Verse 14**

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

• **The word for “beginning” as used in the New Testament means**

- “primacy in regard to time” that is, the commencement of a thing
- “primacy in regard to rank and authority” – it is often translated “principality” as a concordance will show.

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Letters To Seven Church of Asia
(Revelation 2-3)

• **Identification of the author. Verse 14**

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

- Jesus was not the first part of God's creation (Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching on this verse), but was the head and prince of God's creation.
- He created all things and sustains all things (Colossians 1:15-16; John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:2, 10-12).

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Revelation 3:14-22

A Lukewarm Church
Revelation 3:14-22

I. The Problem (verses 15-16)
“I know thy works” – The *“Amen”* Surety, guarantee, the one who is true, cannot be fooled. Romans 2:16; Hebrews 4:13

- Nothing individually or collectively can be hidden from the Lord. Acts 8:22; Ecclesiastes 12:14

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Revelation 3:14-22

I. The Problem (verses 15-16)
Lukewarm

A. Indifferent – Apathy, lacking in diligence

B. Like own water supply

1. One of the weaknesses of the city – lacked adequate water supply.

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Revelation 3:14-22

I. The Problem (verses 15-16)

Lukewarm

A. Indifferent – Apathy, lacking in diligence**B. Like own water supply**

2. "Hemer writes that the mineral deposits in the remains of its aqueduct system lend evidence to the theory that its water came from the hot springs to the south. If this is so, the water would have been lukewarm, even after flowing several miles. In contrast, only a few miles away, Colossae had a good supply of refreshing cold water, and Hierapolis prized its hot spring water which helped administer healing to the ailing" (Harkrider, Pages 56-57)

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Revelation 3:14-22

I. The Problem (verses 15-16)

Lukewarm

C. Knowledge without zeal

1. Opposite of the Jews (Romans 10:2)
2. General conviction of the truth and of the importance of Christianity – but no zeal or enthusiasm
3. Uncommitted and uninvolved – but they still haven't quit!

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Revelation 3:14-22

I. The Problem (verses 15-16)

Lukewarm

D. Neither cold nor hot

1. Hot = diligent, zealous
2. Cold = totally against what is right
 - Knows his abject poverty
 - Honest – no disguise or pretense

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Revelation 3:14-22

I. The Problem (verses 15-16)

Lukewarm

A. Indifferent – Apathy, lacking in diligence**B. Like own water supply****C. Knowledge without zeal****D. Neither cold nor hot****E. Hard to deal with**

1. One who is cold – is more apt to change
2. Lukewarm does not see any need (verse 17)

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Revelation 3:14-22

Picture of a Lukewarm Christian

- ✓ Love God, but not first
- ✓ Believe that religion is a good and important thing to have in life, but think it should not consume them
- ✓ Love others in theory, but in practice do very little for strangers and the outcast
- ✓ Have good intentions to participate in good deeds someday, but don't redeem their time and resources to take action.

Phillip Shumake, *Lifelong Zeal*, Pages 21-22

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Revelation 3:14-22

Picture of a Lukewarm Christian

- ✓ Love hearing stories about those who live zealously for God, but the stories never inspire real change and greater zeal in their own life
- ✓ Are often silent about their faith
- ✓ Settle into a one sided religion (personal or doctrinal)
- ✓ Lean on own strength, rather than full faith in God.

Phillip Shumake, *Lifelong Zeal*, Pages 21-22

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