

Revelation 3:14-22

Laodicea – The Lukewarm Church

Intro

1. Earlier this year (Apr 8) solar eclipse; Lots of wild predictions about the end of the world...didn't happen BUT what did happen, the sun was blocked
 - a. I was at Disney World, surprised by how many people tried to look at the sun without special glasses; See nothing & get damaged retinas!
 - b. During eclipse can't see the moon at all b/c it has no light of itself; Only see the moon when it is in the right position to reflect the sun
2. Matthew 5:14 Jesus "You are the light of the world."; You are the light the way the moon is, not the sun; Jesus is the sun, reflect His light & glory
 - a. When we get our eyes off of Jesus and we become infatuated with the world (looking for approval from, seeking satisfaction from, try to fit in) we turn our back on Jesus and end up standing in the way
 - b. Instead of reflecting Jesus's light & glory to the world, we end up blocking it just like a solar eclipse
 - i. This is the exact issue in Laodicea; Revelation 3:14-22

Our Big Idea:

Complacency toward Jesus damages your ability to both see Him clearly and reflect Him correctly

Read Revelation 3:14-22

3. We are going to break this section down into 3 parts today
 - a. 1) 14 — A Vision Of Jesus
 - b. 2) 15-18 — A Correction From Jesus
 - c. 3) 19-22 — A Promise Through Jesus
2. Revelation 2-3 is 7 individualized letters from Jesus to the "angel" pastor; Not just to the pastor, he represents the particular church (people) in that city
 - a. These 7 letters follow a similar basic pattern
 - i. 4-Part Structure = 1) highlighted attribute of Jesus 2) an encouragement 3) a correction 4) an eternal motivation
 - ii. 4-Part Application = 1) locally, that church 2) broadly, any church 3) personally, anyone 4) prophetically, church history

A Vision Of Jesus (14)

1. 14 Laodicea is mentioned 2x in Colossians (2:1; 4:16) Paul who wrote the letter to the Colossians also wrote one to Laodicea, wanted them to swap
 - a. The city's culture affects the people of the church, and is connected to what Jesus has to say to them; 4 important details about Laodicea:

- b. 1) Very wealthy & self-reliant, 60AD earthquake destroyed the city, refused federal funds to rebuild b/c they had it; Arrogance 2) Produced a unique glossy black wool, high end fabric; 3) Medical ointment eyes & ears made from clay; 4) Bad water supply
- 2. Vision of Jesus reveals 3 things; Critical to how the church must see Him
 - a. 1) Amen; ‘so be it’ an agreement; Isaiah 65:16 “the God of truth” “truth” H- ‘amen’; Jesus is claiming Deity; All is complete in Him
 - b. 2) Faithful and True Witness; Faithful = trustworthy, reliable; True = reality, perfection, certainty; Jesus reliably shows reality, even if hard
 - c. 3) Beginning of the creation; Not 1st in sequential order; The source; Jesus is the creator Colo1:16; Before and above everything that exists
 - d. These 3 things picture Jesus as the source of their power AND the solution to their problem; This is exactly who He is for you

A Vision Of Jesus | A Correction From Jesus (15-18)

- 1. 15-16 “I know” Jesus (Faithful & True) sees this church in reliable reality and He only has a critique of their works and a correction, no approval
 - a. 15 works are “neither cold nor hot” indifferent, passionless, passive, ‘good enough’; Looked right outwardly but actually in the middle

Charles Spurgeon “They are neither hot for the truth, nor hot for conversions, nor hot for holiness, they are not fiery enough to burn the stubble of sin, nor zealous enough to make Satan angry, nor fervent enough to make a living sacrifice of themselves upon the altar of their God. They are ‘neither cold nor hot.’”

- i. Laodicea knew about lukewarm; Water, aqueduct, Hierapolis from a hot spring 6 miles away, got to them lukewarm & sulfur
- b. 15 “I could wish” cold and hot have possible 2 applications, both
 - i. 1) Usefulness – both cold and hot are useful; I love hot coffee and cold Coke, when either sits out, room temp, disgusting
 - ii. 2) Decisiveness – cold decides against, hot decides for; Jesus thinks cold toward Him is better; We think lukewarm is closer

David Guzik “I don’t know if there is any soul harder to reach than the one who has had just enough of Jesus to think they have enough.”

- c. 16 They think complacency is a virtue, makes Jesus vomit; Graphic
 - i. My uncle season tickets to Suns; I saw legends play Charles Barkley, Kevin Johnson, Steve Nash, Shaquille O’Neal, Dennis Rodman, Scottie Pippen, and the GOAT Michael Jordan
 - 1. Arena was packed electric with excitement; Nuggets a few years ago, ½ full & nobody cared; Boring, pointless
 - ii. Jesus’s issue is not so much that they had become lukewarm but that they were O.K. with it, satisfied to remain that way

1. Relationships only work with a healthy dissatisfaction; If I become satisfied in my pursuit of Myca as my bride I commit treason on our relationship, kill it w/ indifference
2. 17 When you cannot correctly see Jesus you cannot correctly see yourself; End up self-diluted thinking you are better off than you actually are
 - a. Jesus's issue is that they lost or never had a sense of desperation; The church was just like the culture; Wealthy, self-reliant, and arrogant

1 Timothy 6:17 (NLT) Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.

 - i. Faith placed in money is misplaced faith; Only in Jesus

Warren Wiersbe *Be Victorious* pg.57 "They had become proud of their ministry and had begun to measure things by human standards instead of by spiritual values. They were, in the eyes of the Lord, 'wretched, and miserable, and poor.'"

 - ii. They misinterpreted wealth as a sign that God was good with everything they did; Money is not necessarily God's blessing
3. 18 From their perspective everything is going great, but Jesus sees disaster; AND YET He looks at their terribly desperate state and offers hope
 - a. Gold; They believed gold was wealth, but Jesus has hidden wealth in relationship with Him that money could never buy or compete with
 - b. White garment; not color preference of white over black; Jesus alone can cover the shame of our sinfulness, gives us His righteousness
 - c. Eye salve; modern science, their clay has no healing properties; False hope that produced blindness; Jesus heals and brings true sight
4. Apart from Jesus we are "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked"; If we reject this truth, will be complacent/lukewarm, see no need for Jesus

A Vision Of Jesus | A Correction From Jesus | A Promise Through Jesus (19-22)

1. 19 This harsh assessment by Jesus is crushing; He attacks their complacent arrogance with force and precision, not b/c He is angry but b/c He is loving
- Hebrews 12:7-8 (NLT) As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all.
- a. When you know you are wrong, and you sense God's displeasure it is a gift from Him b/c by this He leads you from sin and to Him
 - b. Jesus offers 3 things in v18, but how do you buy them? 2 things
 - i. 1) Be zealous; literally 'be hot'; Allow the truth to stir you up
 - ii. 2) Repent; don't just feel bad, abandon it & pursue Jesus

2 Corinthians 7:10 (NLT) For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

2. 20 This verse is simultaneously extremely shocking and surprising

- a. Shocking; Jesus is outside His church; It is possible for a place to be called a church, and yet have nothing to do with Jesus, not saved
- b. Surprising; Jesus is humbly seeking relationship; Meal = intimacy; He is all powerful God, yet does not use authority; Wants to be invited in

J. Vernon McGee *Revelation Chapters 1-5 pg.120* "The Lord Jesus has moved heaven and hell to get to the door of your heart, but when He gets there, He will stop and knock. You will have to open the door to let Him in."

- c. Notice "anyone" this is addressed to the individual, not organization
 - i. We might all be gathered here together, but Jesus is interested in you; Individual, intimate, personal relationship with you

3. 21 The overcomer is not the one who achieves something, tries really hard; To be the one who overcomes is to receive Jesus's victory on your behalf

- a. Overcoming a lukewarm heart: 1) See Jesus as God 2) Believe Jesus's assessment 3) Hear Jesus's call to repentance 4) Go deeper with Jesus
- b. Jesus promises a mysterious reward, sitting on His throne with Him, like a kid enjoying privilege their father earned, that they never could
 - i. Your reward is honor and intimacy beyond your imagination

Conclusion

1. 22 The truth is that we are much more like the Laodicean church than we would like to admit; A "good enough" lukewarm mentality grips our hearts
 - a. Jesus is calling out to you today, inviting you to overcome your complacent attitude, to be filled with passion and fire, know Him
 - b. Jesus is at the door, will you open it for Him or leave Him outside?