# Revelation 3:14-20 | The Lukewarm Church

## Laodicea (Jesus had no commendation for them)

- MAP (keep up until I move on from the list below)
  - Ephesus = love for Jesus (not just busywork)
  - Smyrna = willingness to suffer for Jesus (no compromise)
  - Pergamum = discerning doctrine (truth in face of error)
  - Thyatira = holiness in the church (righteousness in midst of evil)
  - Sardis = inward reality (not outward show)
  - Philadelphia = evangelistic opportunities
  - Laodicea = need for wholehearted commitment
- = A holistic picture of the church

**Laodicea = Big banks, beautiful black clothes, medical advances—bad water**

### Verses 15-16

- Neither hot or cold
  - This is an often misunderstood passage
  - The mineral rich hot-springs in Heirapolis
  - The cold spring-waters in Colossae
    - By the time they got to Laodicea they were lukewarm
      - Not useful. Not healing (hot) or refreshing (cold)
      - **I will spit you out…** (No one enjoys lukewarm drinks—e.g. milk and coffee)
      - What does that mean? (Imagery)
- What does it mean to be hot or cold?
    - = Not lukewarm! (Complacent, passive, idle, shallow, self-satisfied, superficially settled)

They were:

- Wealthy and self-sufficient; well dressed and successful fashinistas and physicians
  - They took pride in all these things

### Verses 17-18

- Jesus is using common points of reference to teach them spiritual truths
  - = wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked (v. 17)

- They were unaware of their true condition before God (bec. of self-sufficiency and affluence)
  - The wealth of their culture did not (could not) meet their **deepest needs**
  - Their needs were **deeper** than their resources could handle
  - They were not physical or economic but **spiritual**
  - Their abundant physical and economic resources had **dulled** their need for Jesus

  - = wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked (v. 17)
    - You can have everything and yet have nothing (be rich, but actually poor)
    - Wealthiest nation = most depressed (most psychologists and psychotherapists in world)
    - If money makes you happy—why are Americans so unhappy?
    - More is not what we need—**Jesus is what we need**

Jesus is calling them to **recognize the deep need** they have and so cease to be lukewarm

- I advise you to buy **from me** (Emphasis not on 'buy' but on 'from Me'; not **commerce** but **communion**)
  - Gold refined by fire (Jesus alone can **enrich** us with abundant life in Him)
  - White garments (Jesus alone can **cover** our sin and shame)
  - Eyesalve (Jesus alone can **open** our eyes to see things as they really are)

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**This is the advice/counsel <u>of Jesus</u>**

- There is other counsel you are receiving, that is contrary (world; flesh; devil)
  - **Verse 14** = But Jesus is the 'amen' (truth + certainty; firm + fixed + unflinching) and the 'faithful and true witness' (tells the truth) and the 'source of all things' (knows ultimate truth)
  - AND… He is the One who **loves** you!

## Verse 19

- **Because He loves us** (He tells us the truth and calls us out)
  - **If we miss His motive of love we miss everything**
  - **And we will never respond rightly**

## We must continually remind ourselves of the GOSPEL and its truths (horrifically bad; wonderfully loved)

- Our ongoing need for Christ

- If we are **not** reminded of our <u>constant ongoing need for the gospel</u>—if we do not **feel** that <u>JESUS IS OUR GREATEST NEED…</u>
  - … other "needs" will begin to seem more **urgent** and **immediate**, more **significant** and **relevant**

- If we do not **carefully** and **consciously oppose** the growing significance of these "felt needs"—WHICH ARE REALLY FASLE NEEDS—we will find that the world and its agenda is what is most relevant to us

- God and the gospel and the kingdom become irrelevant (lukewarm—spewed out)

## Questions from commentary[1]

- Read directly from book (pg. 124)
- These questions are trying to get at four significant key questions:
  - 1. What shapes your thinking (the world or the Bible)?
  - 2. What communication do you view as most important (horizontal with other people or vertical with God)?
  - 3. What do you trust (money or Jesus)?
  - 4. With what do you ultimately identify (a political party or the Kingdom of God)?

- **2 Steps to overcoming complacency** (verse 19)
  - Repent = aorist tense (once and irrevocably)
  - **<u>Be</u>** zealous = present tense (to continue always)

**Fires** have to be <u>stoked</u> and **Cool waters** have to be <u>kept</u> -- intentionality

- Proverbs 4:23
  Watch over your **heart** with all diligence, for from it **flow** the springs of life. **(BLACKBOARD?)**

How do we stay in a place of being zealous for the Lord?

- Keep the door continually open **to Him who loves us**! **<u>INTIMACY</u>**

## Verse 20

- *Deipnon* = this was the evening meal; the main meal of the day; people lingered over it
  - **What keeps you from lingering with Jesus?**
  - **What keeps Him locked outside your heart?**
  - **What forces its way in? (Roman soldiers in Laodicea)**
  - **Where and how do you allow Jesus to linger with you?**
    - Daily devotions; Intentional times and prayer; Second Set; Communion offers this

If we allow Christ to sit at our **table** He will allow us to sit with Him on His **throne** (verse 21)

[1] James M. Hamilton Jr., *Revelation—The Spirit Speaks to the Churches* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2012), 124.

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