

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The Church of Laodicea

Revelation 3:14-22

1. _____
As is so often the case, Jesus introduces Himself to Laodicea in ways that are precisely intended to set a tone for his audience. As “the Amen”, Jesus is very clear that He is the God of truth (cf. Isa. 65:16) in Him all of God’s promises are founded and fulfilled (cf. 2 Cor. 1:20). As the faithful and true Witness (cf. Job 16:19; Phil 1:8), His testimony is vital to accurately adjudicate anything in a court of law. When the Lord speaks, He always speaks the truth (cf. Jer. 10:10; John 1:9; 14:6). Jesus ends His self-introduction with a reminder of His absolute superiority over all things by virtue of His creative power (cf. Col. 1:15-17).
2. _____
Jesus describes the deeds and the underlying spiritual reality of the church of Laodicea to be sickening enough to cause Him to vomit (cf. Isa. 19:14). Cold water is refreshing (Prov. 25:25; Matt 10:42). “Hot” is nowhere else used of water, but it shares a root with words for zeal (cf. Rev. 3:19) and likely has meaning of bubbling or boiling water (cf. Acts 18:25; Rom. 12:11). The church in Laodicea has the benefit of neither hot water or cold water, and they are useless as they currently are. To make matters worse, they had the exact opposite and wrong evaluation of their present condition (v.17).
3. _____
They were so intoxicated with their wealth and comforts that they foolishly thought that worldly comforts and worldly wealth somehow equalled spiritual health and wealth. The Lord is calling them to come to them in their poverty and buy all that they need from Him (Isa. 55:1). In Him can they find their necessary food (cf. John 6:55), needed comfort and rest (cf. Matt 11:28), and true treasure (cf. Matt 6:20-21). The Lord does not desire the death of the wicked, but that men turn to Him and live (Ezek. 18:20-23, 32). In His goodness and His patience, God is calling them to repentance (cf. Rom. 2:4). He does this by first pointing out their sin (cf. John 3:20; Titus 1:13-14) and calling them to repent (v.19).
4. _____
The Lord is always ready and willing to forgive all who turn to Him (cf. Isa. 31:6). Christ is standing outside of the church of Laodicea because there is no one, or almost no one (cf. Gen. 18:23-33), in the congregation who is a believer. But if anyone does repent and turn to Him, He will receive them and they will receive all of the good blessings that He has promised (vs.20b-21).