

The Church of Christ In

LAODICEA

SEVEN

CHURCHES IN REVELATION

*14 "And to the angel of the church of the
Laodiceans write, ' . . . 15 I know your works,
that you are neither cold nor hot. . . . "*

Revelation 3:14-22



Revelation 1:11 (NKJV)

11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

7 CHURCHES OF REVELATION




- ~ These churches needed hope, courage, comfort & most needed rebuke- (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 3:12)
- ~ Instruction needed for all Christians of all ages
- ~ Was / is being a Christian “worth it?” - Mat 10:28; 16:24-27; Rev 14:12,13

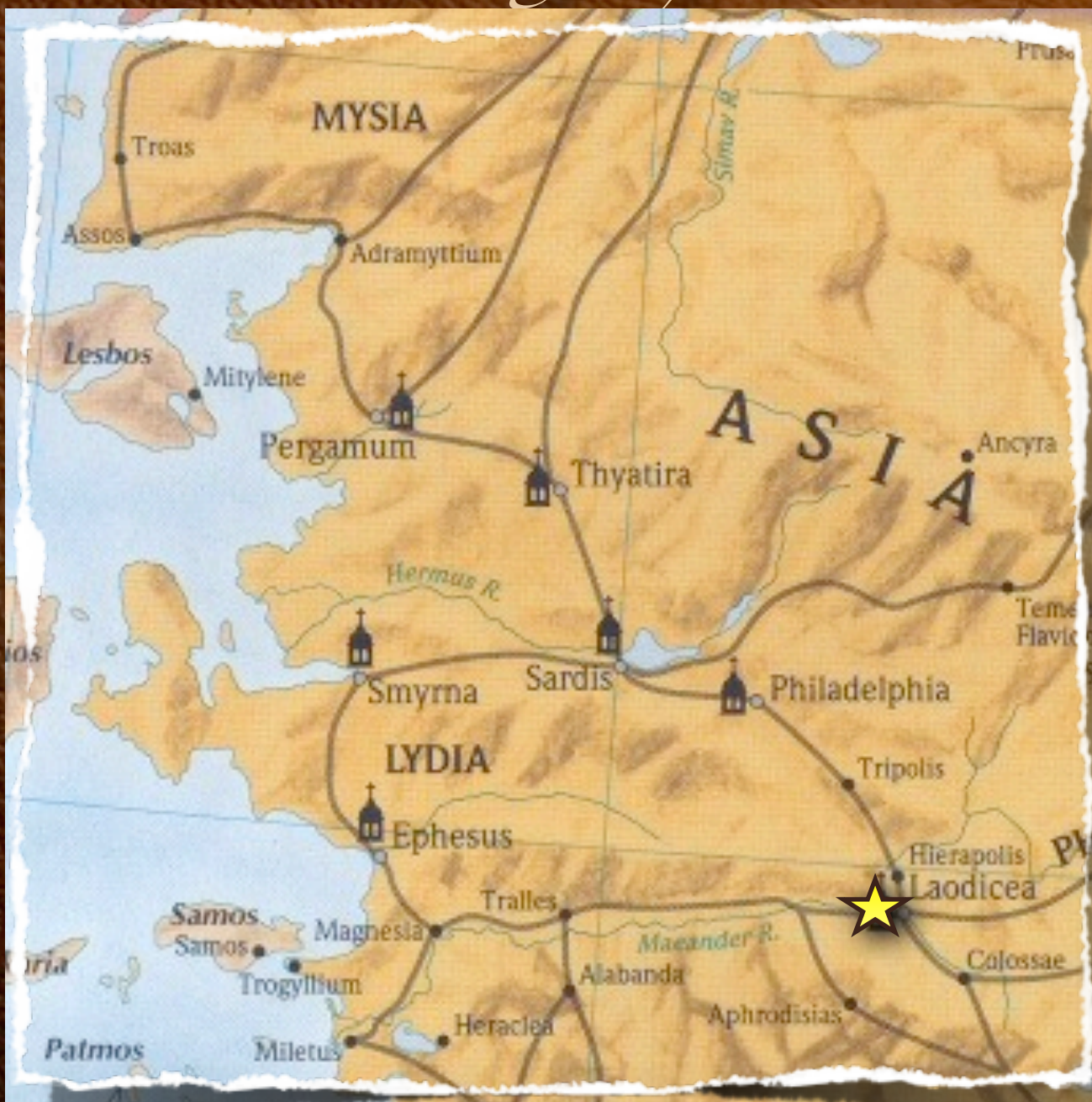


- ~ Jesus is said to be “in the midst” of the seven golden lamp-stands, which are the seven churches (1:13,20).
- ~ The Lord is intimately aware of what transpires within every congregation.
- ~ He “knows” their situation, works, faithfulness & sins (2:2,9,13,19; 3:1,8,15; Heb 4:13).
- ~ The Lord sees us as we really are (2 Corinthians 5:10).



THE SEVENTH CHURCH: LAODICEA

"And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write" Rev 3:14



- ◆ 43 miles southeast of Philadelphia in the Lycos valley, between Hierapolis [6 miles to the north] and Colosse [10 miles to the southeast] on the great Roman road to Syrian Antioch.
- ◆ Named by its founder, Antiochus II (261-246 B.C.), after his wife Laodice.
- ◆ The city was added to the Roman Empire in 133 B.C.



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- ◆ Received from Rome the title of "free city."
- ◆ Had a large Jewish population.
- ✦ Antiochus the Great transported 2,000 Jewish families to Phrygia from Babylonia.
- ✦ Cicero records that Flaccus confiscated a large sum of gold which was being sent annually to Jerusalem for the Temple (Flacco 28-68).



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- ◆ Its wealthy citizens embellished Laodicea with beautiful monuments including three marble theaters.
- ◆ Its many buildings include stadium, baths, temples, gymnasium, a bouleuterion, etc..



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"Ephesian Gate"

This triple-arched gateway was dedicated to Domitian (81-96).

- ◆ **Had a wall of vast compass, [On the east the line of the ancient wall may be distinctly traced],**



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The remains of an aqueduct
starting several kilometres away at
the Baspinar spring in Denizli



- ◆ **Had a wall of vast compass, [On the east the line of the ancient wall may be distinctly traced],**
- ◆ **But still vulnerable because its water was piped in from south of the city.**



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- ✦ The city minted its own coins. Inscriptions show evidence of the worship of Zeus, Æsculapius, Apollo, & the emperors.
- ✦ Destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 60, but it had the wealth and ability to rebuild without the help of the state [TACITUS, Annals, 14.27].



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◆ Three Main Businesses

- ✦ Banking center for the region (riches)
- ✦ Black wool market (provided fine garments)
- ✦ Ointment for eyes (supposed to help vision)

3:17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked--

◆ All used to emphasize the contrast between things and spiritual things



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◆ **Familiar to Paul - (Col 4:12-16)**

Colossians 4:12-16 (NKJV)

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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◆ **Familiar to Paul - (Col 4:12-16)**

Colossians 4:12-16 (NKJV)

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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The last of the seven Asian churches, along with Sardis, the strongest of our Lord's denunciations, there being no compliment of any kind extended to them.



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~ Christ's Self Designation

Revelation 3:14 (NKJV)

14 "... 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

- ✳ **These things says the Amen,**
- ✦ The term "amen" means "in truth, most certainly, so be it" (Mounce. 1079; cf. 2 Cor 1:20;
- ✦ As an appellation, refers to His sovereignty as "Deity" - (Is 65:16).
- ✦ Jesus is steady, in control and unchangeable in all His purposes and promises. (Jn 7:28,29; Heb 13:8)



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- ✦ "The Faithful & True Witness" – He is competent to testify the truth - (Jn 8:14-16; Heb 1:1,2)
- ✦ "The Beginning of the creation of God:" - Not the first of creatures as the Arians held and J.W.'s do now, but the originating source & cause of ALL creation - (Jn 1:1-3; Col 1:16,17; Heb 1:2)



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~ The Rebuke (vs 15-17)

Revelation 3:15 (NKJV)

15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

- ✳ The church was indifferent, apathetic & thought of themselves as self-sufficient -
- ✳ General conviction of the truth – but no zeal or enthusiasm. Uncommitted & uninvolved.
- ✳ What virtue is there in being a moderate in religion? - (1 Kings 18:21; Mat 6:24; James 1:8)



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Revelation 3:15 (NKJV)

15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

- ✳ "I could wish you were cold or hot."
- ✳ Not saying that coldness in spirituality is a desired trait, but rather a better trait than the half-hearted apathetic state.



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**"I could
wish you
were cold
or hot"**

- ~ No pretense or hypocrisy
- ~ Ones actual state is readily known - *(Paul was cold, then hot)*
- ~ Demonstrates a more respectable character - *(honesty & sincerity)*
- ~ Perhaps a better opportunity of conversion



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**"I could
wish you
were cold
or hot"**

~ A lukewarm, apathetic, indifferent, lackadaisical, don't care attitude, inoculates one from receiving genuine saving faith.

~ In such a state - one sees no need to change!



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Revelation 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ So then,
because you are
lukewarm, and
neither cold nor
hot, I will vomit
you out of My
mouth.

~ The Rebuke (vs 15-17)

- ✳ They may have called their lukewarmness - charity, meekness, moderation, and a largeness of soul; but it was nauseous to Christ.
- ✳ To reject with abhorrence. God abhors indifference in religion no less than open infidelity or open immorality.



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Revelation 3:17 (NKTIV)

¹⁷ Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked--

~ The Rebuke (vs 15-17)

- ✳ **Implies self-praise and self reliance in self-acquired riches -** *(The rich fool - Luke 12:17-19; The praying Pharisee - Luke 18:11)*
- ✳ **They allowed their wealth and comfort to become their downfall without even recognizing it.**
- ✳ **They saw themselves as "in need of nothing," spiritually -** *Like Ephraim of old - (Hosea 12:7).*



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~ The Rebuke (vs 15-17)

**"And do not
know that you
are wretched,
miserable, poor,
blind, and
naked"**

- ✳ **Wretched** – condemned – a state of helplessness – Rom 7:24
- ✳ **Miserable** – condition of despair – 1 Cor 15:19
- ✳ **Poor** – Spiritual poverty is the greatest poverty – Mt 16:26; Lk 12:21
- ✳ **Blind** – Ignorance / He is blindest who will not see – 2 Peter 1:9
- ✳ **Naked** – a condition of shame / without Christ – 2 Cor 5:2-4



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Revelation 3:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

~ Exhortation - (vss 18-19)

- ✳ "Buy" - Is 55:1; Prov 23:23
- ✳ They needed to lay up REAL treasure - Mat 6:19-21; 13:44-46
- ✳ They needed to be clothed with purity and righteousness - Rev 3:4,5; 7:13,14; 16:15; 19:8
- ✳ They needed spiritual sight - The truth - 2 Thes 2:10-12; Col 1:9,10; Ps 19:8; Jam 1:18-25



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~ **Exhortation - (vss 18-19)**

Revelation 3:19 (NKJV)

19 As many as I
love, I rebuke and
chasten.
Therefore be
zealous and
repent.

✳ **Products of love:**

- 📌 **Rebuke** – Col 1:28; 2 Tim 4:2; Tit 1:13
- 📌 **Chastening** – Prov 3:11,12; Heb 12:6
- 📌 **Demanding repentance** – Luke 13:3,5; 17:4



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~ Invitation - (vs 20)

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

- ✳ The Lord wanted to save them
- 📌 But they had to hear him – James 1:21-25
- 📌 They had to open the door – James 4:7-10; 5:19;
- 📌 The Lord desired to have fellowship with them – 1 Joh 1:3
- 📌 The same is true for us – Rev 22:17; Mark 16:16; Gal 3:26,27



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Revelation 3:22 (NKJV)
He who has an ear, let him
hear what the Spirit says to
the churches."

~ The Lord requires fervency -

- * In spirit. Rom 12:11.
- * In well-doing. Gal 4:18; Tit 2:14.
- * In desiring the salvation of others. Acts 26:29; Rom 10:1.
- * Contending for the faith. Jud 1:3
- * Evangelism. Rom 15:19,23.
- * Fighting against sin - Num 25:11,13.
- * For the welfare of saints. Col 4:13.



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~ The lukewarm put forth little effort for the cause of Christ - **THEREFORE:**

- * Things go undone
- * Work is not completed
- * The tendency to cut back is advanced
- * Lax in preserving the purity of the church
- * Other members in the church Are Discouraged



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2 Peter 1:5-11 (NKJV)

⁵ But also for this very reason,
giving all diligence, add to your
faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶
to knowledge self-control, to self-
control perseverance, to
perseverance godliness, ⁷ to
godliness brotherly kindness, and
to brotherly kindness love.



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2 Peter 1:5-11 (NKJV)

⁸ For if these things are yours and
abound, you will be neither barren
nor unfruitful in the knowledge of
our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who
lacks these things is shortsighted,
even to blindness, and has
forgotten that he was cleansed
from his old sins.



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2 Peter 1:5-11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be even
more diligent to make your call and
election sure, for if you do these
things you will never stumble;

¹¹ for so an entrance will be
supplied to you abundantly into the
everlasting kingdom of our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ.



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The Lord
knew their
true
spiritual
condition -

- * They lived in physical comfort – but spiritually they were wretched.
- * Others envied their luxuries, thinking they were happy – but spiritually they were miserable.
- * They were respected by the world because of their wealth – but spiritually they were poor.
- * They boasted of their wisdom – but yet spiritually they were blind.
- * Their wealth was gained primarily by making clothing – but spiritually they were naked.



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- * How different Christ's estimate of them, from their own estimate,
- * Doubtless there will be many in hell that thought themselves to be on their way to heaven.
- * Let us daily beg of God that we may not flatter and deceive ourselves in the concerns of our souls. - 2 Cor 13:5



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- ✦ How do we see ourselves?
- ✦ What is our true condition?
- ✦ What is our need?



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2 PETER 1:2-11 (NKJV)

² Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 PETER 1:2-11 (NKJV)

⁵ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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⁹ For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.