

Remnant Life Church  
April 26, 2026  
**The Seven Churches of Revelation:**  
**Laodicea**  
Revelation 3:14-22

Seven churches located in Asia-Minor, modern-day western Turkey

- Five are struggling with the pressures and temptations of the world
- Two are maintaining their faithfulness to God and to the truth of a resurrected savior, Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins

We come now to the final church – located in Laodicea

**READ – Revelation 3:14-22**

Laodicea

- The most important city in the Roman province of Frigidiana in central Asia-Minor
  - It was located about 40 miles east of Ephesus and 66 miles southeast of Philadelphia
    - The city had great wealth primarily because it became a banking or financial center
      - Isn't it interesting that so often riches and sinful living go hand in hand?
      - It seems that there are very few wealthy people who serve God just as there are few wealthy churches that hold to the unapologetic truth of God's word
      - In the parable of the Sower, Jesus says in **Luke 8:14**...
        - *The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.*
    - They were the makers of fine wool
    - And there was an advanced medical center there that had developed an eye salve that had become known throughout the region as a balm that helped heal eye infections
  - The city was named for Laodice, the wife of Antiochus II the king of Syria who founded the city around 258 BC
- One other thing of note about Laodicea which will make Jesus' words all the more meaningful
  - The city did not have a fresh drinkable water source nearby
  - Most of their water came from hot springs that were filled with impurities
  - Their usable water had to come primarily through a series of aqueducts from underground cold springs
  - And in addition to the aqueducts, an intricate series of terracotta pipes were also utilized for the water to travel the nearly 5 miles to the city
    - The problem with the pipes was they contained limestone deposits

- And so the water from both sources, by the time it got to the people, was foul tasting and tepid
- We will come back and revisit all of those facts when we consider Jesus' words to them

Having read this passage, there are three things that Jesus speaks to them that I would like for us to observe this morning.

- The first is found in vv **15-17**
  - *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.*
  - I believe there are few passages of Scripture that more clearly lay out those attributes churches must guard against
    - Churches, as a whole, are struggling today in many ways
      - Not just in attendance numbers or financially
      - But more importantly, with how they fit within and minister to a culture that is “anti” virtually every fundamental biblical truth we hold to be so important and precious
      - It is getting very close to the time when the world and the church may no longer be distinguishable one from the other
    - And so, Jesus begins by laying out to the church of Laodicea what they must be aware they have become
      - It appears without their knowledge
  - I have told you many times that Jesus was the greatest teacher who ever lived
    - And He demonstrates that again here
      - One of the great challenges when you are trying to bring correction to a situation or a person or people, as Jesus is doing here, is getting them to fully comprehend what you are saying to them
      - Not only the correction but helping them to see the problem itself
    - In order to accomplish that, Jesus utilized many different styles of teaching when He spoke to the people during His 3 years of ministry
      - Jesus' message was for everyone both the learned and common person of that day
      - One of the most effective ways He did that was through a parable
        - A story with a moral lesson or teaching attached
        - The Prodigal Son found in **Luke 15** is a parable that teaches the depth of God's love in spite of our sin

and those frequent time when we turn our backs on Him

- The Good Samaritan in **Luke 10** shows how people should love and care for one another in spite of their differences
- And the parable of the mustard seed found in **Matthew, Mark and Luke** teaches about the power of faith
- But another method He often used, which He does here in this letter, is a metaphor
  - A metaphor is taking one thing and using it in place of another to suggest a likeness so that the meaning is made clearer
  - Examples: swimming in paperwork or hungry enough to eat a horse
- He begins in verse **15**
  - *I know your deeds that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth*
  - The people of Laodicea understood very well the issue of water that you spit out of your mouth
    - The hot springs near the city were brackish and not drinkable
    - The cold spring water had mineral deposits in it making it bitter
    - And by the time that water made the 5 mile trip to the city it would no longer be cold...it would become lukewarm
    - Is there anything worse than picking up what you think is a cold drink only to discover that its warm?
    - Or an expected hot cup of coffee that has cooled to a displeasing temperature?
    - Both of these are very unappealing and Jesus uses that metaphor to describe the spiritual condition of the church in Laodicea
  - I find it interesting that God says He would rather they be cold than lukewarm
    - This church did not deny Christ, which mean their hearts could have been changed, they did worse than that
    - They made an empty profession of faith – IOW they would speak of their faith but they did not live it
    - According to verse **16**, this is reprehensible to God.
      - Another way to interpret what Jesus says is, you make me sick!
    - Laodicea has the unenviable distinction of being the only church of the seven that Jesus had nothing good to say.

- He then goes on with His metaphors to expose exactly how they are being lukewarm
  - Because everything they believed about themselves was untrue
  - Vs 17 – *You say I am rich, I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing*
    - These people are suffering from a dangerous false impression that leads to complacency which is what makes a church and a person lukewarm
  - Jesus continues...*but you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked*
    - Jesus is taking apart each and every worldly offering that they had propped themselves up on
    - Again, as with the water - Jesus knows how to bring his points home.
      - To a rich city the local center of commerce and banking, He says - You are poor
      - To people famous for their fine clothes and skillful craftsmanship He says – You are naked
      - To a place renowned for its eye medicine that brought great relief He says - You are blind!
  
- And if we left here this morning having said only these things we might as well throw up our hands and ask, then what hope do we have?
  - But Jesus’ love is once again evident in our second observation
  - Even though they were not worthy to have one positive thing spoken about them Jesus still offers hope
    - Vs 19 – *Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.*
    - The word ‘earnest’ in this verse is a pivotal word to understand what Jesus is emphasizing
      - IOL – the word earnest means to pursue with zeal
      - It means to intensely desire something
        - Visualize you are swimming underwater and the intense feeling that you must get to the surface
      - This is what Jesus is telling the church they need to do – desperately pursue repentance for their unwillingness to fully embrace Him
      - Repent for their compromise that makes them sickening to Jesus so that He spits them out of His mouth
      - Because the discipline He brings to them is the evidence of His love
        - Love and hate are not the opposite of each other
        - The opposite of love is indifference
      - Jesus is far from indifferent regarding the condition of your life this morning



- Jesus, who had been on the outside knocking, was now inside

The letters to the seven churches are both corrective and encouraging

- They point out the sin and compromise
- But they offer the hope of one who is the lover of our soul

The church of today continues to wrestle with the same temptations and call to compromise that those churches did just 60 years after Jesus returned to the Father

- And we must realize that Jesus is more interested in the quality and development of our character than the number of our activities or what people think of us
- But it is up to us
  - Up to us to hold the line in the face of a culture that wants us to look and act more like them
  - Up to us to not deviate from the truth of God's word
  - And up to each of us to answer the door because Jesus is still knocking
    - Knocking on the door of your heart to surrender yourself fully to Him
    - That is the only way you and we will be able to stand firm and accomplish all that He for us to do as a church family and as individuals in a world that desperately needs to see and know the love of Jesus.