

# Laodicea

## Series – God’s Score Card

- 7 Letters to Churches in Revelation
- Imagery – Jesus High & Lifted, Among Churches
- Church – Bride of Christ
- qualities of the bride condemned & commended
- promise of blessing for those who listen & respond
- need to know how God is grading us – not what culture or church growth gurus say!

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## Setting

- junction of three major routes
- famous for its wealth & commerce
  - center for banking – gold coins minted there
  - black wool – great grazing & processing here
  - medical treatments – center for healing – known for their eye and ear treatments
  - 60 AD after a devastating earthquake – rebuilt without help from outside
- stadiums, shopping, lavish public baths – great place

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***"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:***

***These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. 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. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*** Rev. 3:14-22

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## 1. Harsh Assessment

### a) Authority to Say So

- words of the Amen, faithful & true witness, ruler of God's creation!

### b) Knows The Deeds:

- neither hot nor cold but lukewarm
- water issues & the audience
- hot – soothing, cleansing – place to be refreshed
- cold – fix thirst, restoring – place to be refreshed
- lukewarm – stagnant, diseased – bitter & rejected

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- claim to be rich – wealth on our terms
- profess to be self sufficient – in need of nothing

## b) Make Me Sick

- literally – to vomit
- on dangerous ground – cannot stomach this

## 2. Course of Action For You

### a) Realize the True Condition of the Church

- apathy, self reliance, stagnant, deluded
- wretched – “deeply afflicted, dejected, or distressed in body or mind, extremely or deplorably bad or distressing “ - Websters

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- pitiful – people proud of accomplishments this is hard
  - poor – self reliant and wealthy called poor
  - blind – pride themselves with doctors & ointments
  - naked – known for the wool and garments
- Jesus clarifies where they are actually at!

## b) Recognize What You Really Need

- treasure found in Jesus – spiritual resources
- gold refined in fire, white clothes for nakedness, eye salve to be able to see clearly

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## c) Return To The Source

- Those I Love – I rebuke & discipline

- Proverbs 3:11-12 ***“My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.”***

- Be Earnest – intentional, willing, dedicated

- Repent:

  - confess

  - accept

  - turn

  - be obedient

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## 3. Keep Connected To Jesus

### a) Pictured Outside Church Knocking – Wanting In

- remember the image in Rev. 1
- open the door – individually & corporately
- note the promise – relationship, eating together

\* cannot be passionate – renew 1<sup>st</sup> Love without being in close relationship. Need to keep the door open.

### b) Promise of Reward

- overcomes – accepts rebuke, repents, transformed, perseveres and remains faithful – rule with Christ



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## c) Tuned In And Listening

- ear let him hear – indwelling Holy Spirit
- gifting, revealing, guiding, empowering
- learn to listen & respond

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## So What

### 1. Need to Make A Sober Assessment

- we are the bride of Christ – vigilant & awaiting return
- Jesus is clear about what matters
- What would He say about our ‘deeds’
  - are we lukewarm?
  - are we self reliant?
  - have we become bitter, stagnant, vomit inducing?

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## 2. Are We Prepared to Respond God's Way

- truthfully examining our spiritual condition
- seeing what is temporal vs. eternal – changing priorities
- do we understand where to find true resources
  - gold refined by fire, clothed in white (purity), having our eyes opened to see what God see's?
- are you open to God's discipline? Do you see his desire to have you return to right relationship – experience blessing

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## 3. Are We Willing to Open the Door to Jesus?

- individually
- as a body of believers
- remember the promise
  - beyond this place and time
  - guidance for the challenges ahead