

SERIES ON JOHN'S LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES, #7
"Laodicea, The Lukewarm Church," 3:14-22
Dr. Greg Tyree, BBC, Wednesday Bible Study, September 1, 2004

INTRODUCTION:

In the ancient world there were at least six cities called Laodicea, and the Laodicea of the Revelation was called Laodicea on the Lycus to distinguish it from the others. It was founded about 250 BC. by Antiochus of Syria, and it was named after his wife Laodice. Laodicea's importance was due entirely to its position.

As Sir W. M. Ramsay says-, It only needed peace to make Laodicea a great commercial, and financial center." That peace came with the dominion of Rome. In the previous days of unsettlement Laodicea had been a comparatively small town, but when the Roman peace came it its opportunity it became, as Pliny called it, "a most distinguished city."

Laodicea had certain characteristics which have left their mark on the letter written to it.

- It was a great banking and financial center.
- It was a great center of clothing manufacture.
- It was a very considerable medical center
- The words of the Risen Christ arise directly from the prosperity and the skill in which Laodicea took so much pride, and which had in the minds of its citizens, and even of its Church,, eliminated the need for God.
- We may add one final fact about Laodicea. It was in an area where there was a very large Jewish population. There can have been few areas where the Jews were wealthier and more influential.

Such, then, was Laodicea, the city which was too prosperously wealthy to have any real need of God.

PROPOSITION: In this last letter we shall consider five truths to help us to avoid becoming the "lukewarm" church.

I. CONSIDER THE INTERVENTION. Vss. 14, 15.

- A. Note the Destination of the Message. Vs. 14a.
- B. Note the Description of the Messiah. Vs. 14b.
- C. Note the Discernment of the Messiah. Vs. 15a.

D. Note the *Desire* of the Messiah. Vs. 15b.

II. CONSIDER THE *INFECTIO*. Vss. 16, 17.

A. Note the *Disposition* of the Church. Vs. 16a.

B. Note the *Deterioration* of the Church. Vs. 16b.

C. Note the *Delusion* of the Church. Vs. 17.

III. CONSIDER THE *INSTRUCTION*. Vss. 18, 19.

A. Note the *Council* of the Church. Vs. 18.

1. See the *Riches*.

2. See the *Raiment*.

3. See the *Remedy*.

B. Note the *Chastening* of the Church. Vs. 19a.

C. Note the *Command* to the Church. Vs. 19b.

IV. CONSIDER THE *INVITATION*. Vs. 20.

A. Note the *Place* of Christ. Vs. 20a.

B. Note the *Promise* of Christ. Vs. 20b.

1. See the *Requirement*.

2. See the *Result*.

V. CONSIDER THE *INSPIRATION*. Vss. 21, 22.

A. Note the *Exaltation* of the Overcomer. Vs. 21a.

B. Note the *Example* of the Overcomer. Vs. 21b.

APPLICATION: