

KING OF THE JUNGLE

SERMON TITLE: HOW HE SEES YA IN LAODICEA
REVELATION 3:14-22

There are frightful moments every man must face. Times when he's eye to eye with his greatest fears...

Think of an Army paratrooper as he jumps from the plane into a raging battle, bullets flying, mortars firing...

Think of a firefighter racing into a burning house to rescue an elderly victim trapped by the flames...

And if those two examples aren't horrifying enough, imagine this... Think of a dad who's wife hands him their newborn, and says she's going out with the girls, and HE'S in charge of taking care of the baby...

A battle and a burning house are scary, but a baby... this is over the top! What's a man to do with a baby?

Natalie was our second child. It was way past time for Kathy to get a day-off. And she was so careful. My wife made it so easy for me. She had me practice...

You take the bottle, and shake out a few drops of milk on your arm. If it's either hot or cold it's no good.

Hot might scald the baby's mouth... Cold and she won't drink it... You shouldn't be able to feel the milk at all when it hits your skin. It needs to be lukewarm...

I followed my wife's instructions precisely... *or so I thought*. It went well.... until I laid Baby Natalie down after her last feeding. I walked into the living room to watch Monday night football, when all of a sudden I heard this awful, gaging sound. It was terrifying...

I raced back to her crib, and discovered she'd thrown up all eight ounces of Similac - *the whole bottle*.

I cleaned her up and changed the sheets, and nestled her back into bed. I wondered what in the world had I done wrong. I thought I'd nailed the daddy thing.

I was envisioning myself as "[Father of the week](#)."

That's when I noticed the empty can laying on top of the trash. I'll never forget reading the words, "[Mix four to one](#)." I had fed my daughter 8 ounces of 100-proof Similac - the equivalent of 32 ounces. *I OD'd my child!*

And that kid never again took a plastic nipple. She rejected bottles from then on. *Who can blame her!*

I didn't know one bad experience could have such a permanent impact on a child, *until the next time Kathy took a night off...* Natalie cried for hours. She was obviously hungry, but I couldn't get her to eat...

I put fruit juice in the bottle and she spit it out.

I put coca-cola in the bottle and she spit it out.

I rolled the nipple in sugar and she spit it out.

Every time I put a plastic nipple to her lips she spit it out. She wanted nothing to do with plastic. All my attempts at sweetness didn't solve the problem. *I was going to have to change what I was offering my child...*

And my little confessional today provides us a great outline of Jesus' letter to the Church at Laodicea...

Here's an outcome you should fear above all others.

Unlike my baby daughter's milk, in your relationship with God, *you don't want to be lukewarm!* You don't want a Christianity that *can't be felt, and won't be noticed*. God despises a faith that's room temperature.

A lukewarm faith causes God to gag... He'll throw you up quicker than my daughter tossed that pound of heavy-duty brake fluid... *Imagine yourself as a grain of upchuck flying from the throat of Almighty God.*

This isn't my picture... It's the image Jesus wants you to see as you consider His letter to this church...

And simple sweetness won't solve the problem.

Today, God is calling us to make some radical changes in how we're relating to the risen Lord Jesus...

The title of our study on the last of Jesus' letters to the seven churches is "[How He sees ya, in Laodicea.](#)"

In Revelation 3:14 Jesus instructs John the penman, "[And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write...](#)" *Immediately, you should notice a difference...*

In the previous six letters Jesus commanded John to write to the angel of “the church in Pergamos,” or “the church in Thyatira,” or “the church in Sardis.” Even though these churches had problems, each church still belonged to Jesus. It was *His Church* in that city.

But here the wording gets altered. It’s subtle, but it’s extremely telling... This last church isn’t Jesus’ church in Laodecia, it’s “*the church of the Laodiceans.*”

The people have taken over this church!

“*Laodecia*” means “rule of the people.” And that’s what happened in Laodecia... People wrestled control of this church from Jesus, and made it their church.

No one sought the Lord and His will... They had the attitude, “*We can run our own church, thank you very much.*” Rather than people seeking the Lord and daring to do His will, the leaders relied on consensus.

Everything in this church was put to a vote. Nothing was done to upset the apple cart, or rub anybody the wrong way. Peace at all costs was the rule in Laodecia.

Commentator Joseph Seis writes of this church, “*Its name designates it as the Church of mob rule, the democratic Church, in which everything is swayed and decided by popular opinion, clamor, and voting.*”

We’ll see later in verse 20 that this was the central problem in Laodecia. This was a church without Jesus.

The Laodecians locked Jesus out of His own church!

Like the pastor's little girl saying her prayers at the end of a long Sunday, "Dear Lord, we all had a great time at church today. I just wish *You* had been there."

Jesus was on the outside of this church trying to get in. He was rapping at the door. This is a desperate situation... Laodecia was "the hijacked church." People took the reins and forced Jesus out of His own church.

Jesus begins by reminding this church Who it is that they've locked out. 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God...' This is not just the Jesus who slept in the Galilean grass, and sailed the lake with a few fisherman, and walked the halls of Herod's Temple.

Jesus is now the King of the Jungle! He roars from heaven's throne. He rides on clouds in the chariot of God, and does exactly as He pleases! He's the main attraction of the Temple in Heaven - worshipped by angels and saints alike. Jesus is risen and exalted!

Here He calls Himself "*the Amen.*" This is a word of affirmation. It means "so be it," "right on," This is how we punctuate our faith and God's truth. We say "*Amen.*" The word is a spiritual exclamation point.

When a football ref goes under the hood to review the video of a call, and then announces, "the ruling on the field stands." At that point there's no more debate.

That's the meaning of this word, "*Amen*" - no more debate. The ruling stands. *Jesus has the final word!*

While on Earth Jesus was a teacher. He pleaded His case. He wrestled for the souls of men and women.

His job was to persuade. He stood at the crossroads.

At the junction of many different ways, and versions of truth, and philosophies of life - there was Jesus claiming to be “the way, the truth, and the life.” He said He alone could escort men into the Father’s presence.

In a sense, at His first coming Jesus was running for office - not a political office, but *King of hearts*. Jesus was on a mission to win the allegiance of sinful men.

Our job is to carry on that mission. We speak to men on behalf of Jesus. We’re “ambassadors for Christ.”

But in a sense, *Jesus has moved on*. Ambassador is no longer His role. Jesus is now the King of the Jungle!

Today, the still small voice that appealed to reason and swayed hearts, *drowns out all other voices!* Revelation 1 tells us His voice is like the roar of a waterfall. It silences the world’s noise and foolishness.

Jesus is now “*the Amen.*” His word is final. In the Church “*His ruling stands - there’s no more debate.*” Jesus no longer makes appeals, but gives orders. *How ludicrous it is to lock this Jesus out of His own Church!*

Jesus is also “*The faithful and true Witness.*” As we’ll see the Laodecians were living in a fog of pride and self-sufficiency. They were blind to spiritual realities.

Realize none of us have 20/20 spiritual eyesight. As Paul said to the Corinthians, “We see in a mirror, dimly”

Yet Jesus is *“The faithful and true Witness.”*

Jesus will say hard things to these Laodecians, but they should know all He says is *“faithful and true.”*

This past week on Monday Night Football, Houston running back, Arian Foster, ran all over the Jets. After the game he was asked some non-football questions.

Foster said he enjoyed learning from older people. He was humble. He said he could learn from anybody.

“After all, (and I quote) we’re all just out here guessing.” The announcers ooh’ed and ah’ed over his sage wisdom. But as soon as he said it, I started shouting at the TV, *“No, no we’re not! We’re not all just guessing. Jesus is **“the faithful and true Witness!”***

Arian, and every one of us, needs to listen to Jesus!

In addition to *“The Amen”* and *“The reliable Witness,”* Jesus is also *“the beginning of the creation of God...”*

There are cults that deny the deity of Jesus, and use this verse to support their heresy. They claim Jesus can’t be God - for here He’s part of God’s creation.

But that’s not what this verse means. The Greek word translated *“beginning”* is *“arche”* - it means *source* or *origin*. From it we get our word *“architect.”*

The Bible is clear, Jesus was not created, He has always existed. Jesus was the initiator of creation.

John knew this truth. In the first verse of his Gospel, He wrote of Jesus, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Jesus the Word created all things!

Jesus is “*the beginning of the creation of God*” in the sense that He is the origin and the ruler of all *that is* and *is to come*. *Why wouldn't you want Jesus to run your church?* Yet that was the attitude in Laodecia!

In verse 15 Jesus confronts this church with harsh words, “*I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*” Christians are like coffee. Piping hot Joe is good. Iced coffee is a delicacy.

Either *really hot* or *really cold* is what you want.

What you don't like is in between. Lukewarm, tepid, muted, room temperature coffee you'll spit out.

Understand, Laodecia had two sister cities in the Lycus Valley. Ten miles to the east was Colossae, just below the snow-capped peak of Mount Cadmus. As the snow melted it sent cold, fresh streams into Colossae.

Six miles to the north of Laodecia was Heirapolis. This area was known for its hot springs. Even today vacationers come to relax in the thermal waters. They say the water temp is always a soothing 95 degrees.

Laodecia was built at the crossroads of two major trade routes. This made it a very prosperous city. But it had one achilles heel. It lacked its own water supply.

Thus, water had to be piped in from Colossae and Heirapolis. The Roman aqueducts can still be seen.

But here was the problem... By the time the cold water arrived from Colossae the hot Turkish sun had warmed it up. And in the six miles the hot water flowed from Heirapolis it cooled down. Thus Laodecian water was always lukewarm. If you were a visitor and didn't know - and you took a drink from a fountain - you'd spit it out. You'd be repulsed by the lukewarm taste.

This was God's reaction to the spiritual temperature of the church members in Laodecia. They were neither zealous and fired-up about the things of God. Nor were they obstinate, and bitter, and cold toward God.

They were indifferent. They just didn't care. They had a faith that *couldn't be felt, and wouldn't be noticed.*

And if I had a special thermometer that could take your spiritual temperature today what would it read? *Hot?* On fire? Ablaze with passion for Jesus? Or would it read *cold* toward God and the things of God?

Jesus says, *"I could wish you were cold or hot."*

Obviously, Jesus would prefer hot. But even cold is better than lukewarm. If I'm cold I'll shiver. I'll want to get warm. I'll grab a blanket or turn up the heat. But if I'm room temperature I'm comfortable. *Why change?*

This was the problem in Laodecia. The Christians were comfortable. Their lives and faith had become easy. They constructed a low maintenance Christianity.

These folks worshipped the god of convenience.

It reminds me of a poem by Wilbur Reese. It's entitled, "\$3 Worth of God." Let me read it... "I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine.

I don't want enough of God to make me love a person of a different race or pick beets with a migrant.

I want ecstasy, not transformation.

I want the warmth of the womb not a new birth.

I want about a pound of the eternal in a paper sack. I'd like to buy \$3 worth of God, please."

This is indicative of the church today. Our biggest problem isn't some heretic on the inside *distorting the faith*, or an opponent from the outside *attacking the faith*. It's believers, like you and me, *ignoring the faith*.

On Sundays we acknowledge the right doctrines, and confess the right creeds, but when we leave here do we ignore the implications of what it all means?

We believe Jesus is alive, but live as if He's dead.

We believe the Bible is God's Word - yet like Arian Foster we live a life where we're "just guessing..."

We believe in prayer, but we don't actually do it until we've exhausted all our other resources.

We believe in the hell, but we'd rather talk football with our friends than bring up their eternal destination.

A recent USA Today article noted a trend in current culture. It said folks today aren't ardent atheists - out to disprove God. *They just don't care about God, or heaven, or truth.* They've grown “**spiritually apathetic.**”

18% of Americans deny God has a plan for everyone

28% say they no longer look for a deeper purpose.

46% never wonder if they'll go heaven.

Here's my theory, what's happening in the culture is only mirroring what's going on in church. If Christianity doesn't matter to believers, why should it matter to the unbelievers? *Why should they care, if we don't?*

The English word “**indifferent**” literally means “**no difference.**” And a lukewarm Christian has a faith that makes no difference whatsoever in their everyday life.

It's *rarely ever felt* and it's *really never noticed.*

Their faith is inconsequential to how they *handle their money, or treat their friends, or conduct their business, or love their spouse, or raise their kids.*

Their relationship with God is unrelated to real life.

To a lukewarm Christian faith is like fantasy football.

It's all abstract. You got a league, team, and players that only exist in your own little imaginary world.

Your involvement isn't tied to anything real or costly. You play a game, *but you never break a sweat*. It all has no impact on people outside your pretend circle.

This was *“the church of the Laodecians...”* They met together on Sundays to participate in *pretend* worship.

Jesus wasn't even invited, but they still had church.

They sang songs about God. Read verses. Talked about noble ideas. Acted spiritual. Bounced a few prayers off the ceiling, even looked religious in the process. Put on the same show every Sunday, while the Lord they supposedly served, stood on the stoop, beating on the door, hoping somebody might let Him in.

Rather than *Fantasy Football* this was *Fantasy Faith*. *And I'm sure there's a league forming near you...*

The real Jesus was too disruptive, too uncomfortable for *“the church of the Laodecians.”* That's why they locked Him out. *Jesus would've spoiled their church!*

Jesus would've challenge them to stop robbing God and tithe their income... or be more passionate in their worship... or feed a homeless person... or take a stand at work... or share their faith with a neighbor...

With Jesus in charge they would've had to grow, and branch out, and move outside their comfort zone.

Rather than always talk about how much they loved Jesus, He would've expected them to show it! Make no mistake about it, the charade the Laodecians carried on from week to week was disgusting to Jesus.

Understand, Jesus desires fellowship with you and me. So much so, He died to win the opportunity. Today, He hungers to spend time with people who love Him.

His hunger is so strong it sent Him to the cross!

Now imagine, what kind of a repulsion does it take to trigger a gag reflex strong enough to override that hunger that nailed Jesus to the tree! How nauseous must He get, to throw up that for which He's so hungry.

Please, I'm not going to debate whether or not the Laodecians walked away from their salvation... or were *once saved always saved*... or if they were ever truly saved in the first place... *I'm just saying*, nobody should get comfortable if you're being compared to a grain of upchuck hurling out of the back of Jesus' throat!

If that's you, you need to repent as quickly as you can! That's not a secure theological position to be in.

Rather than \$3 worth of God, we need to realize that God only comes super-sized. A big God does whatever He pleases, and folks who truly worship Him will obey.

There's a song entitled, "*Indifference.*" It tells us what happened the day Jesus Christ came to Lilburn, GA...

When Jesus came to Golgotha, they hanged Him on a tree. They drove great nails through hands and feet, and made a Calvary. They crowned Him with a crown of

thorns. Red were His wounds and deep. For those were crude and cruel days. Human flesh was cheap.

But when Jesus came to Lilburn they simply passed Him by. They never hurt a hair of Him, they only let Him die. For men have grown more tender, and they would not give Him pain. They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.

Still Jesus cried, 'Forgive them. For they know not what they do!' And still it rained the winter rain that drenched Him through and through. The crowd went home and left the streets without a soul to see. And Jesus crouched against a wall, and cried for Calvary."

The implication is that Jesus prefers *the piercing nails* to *the indifferent glance*. Though the folks who cried out, "Crucify Him" rejected Jesus, at least they heard... His words still had a chance to convict them of their rebellion, and reach deep into their hearts.

The indifferent person is immune to His words.

Again, Jesus prefers that you be hot... *but even cold is better than lukewarm*. A lukewarm believer has been inoculated with truth. It's like a flu shot. He gets just enough of the virus to make him immune to its effect.

Likewise, a lukewarm believer has just enough truth to think he's okay – *he thinks he's cool with God*. He doesn't realize his half-heartedness makes Jesus sick!

There's an old saying, "He's got just enough of the world not to be happy with Jesus, and just enough of Jesus not to be happy in the world." That's lukewarm.

The Laodecians were an example of a group of folks who built up an immunity to the truth. They'd conned themselves into assuming they were okay with God.

How they saw themselves wasn't even remotely similar to how Jesus saw them. Jesus says, verse 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 church at Smyrna saw herself as poor, but Jesus said she was "rich" spiritually. Here's the exact opposite. The Laodecians saw themselves as rich, but Jesus sees them as *wretched* and *miserable* and *poor*.

Realize, "*the church of the Laodecians*" mimicked the attitude of the city in which they were located.

Sitting by the trade routes caused the city to prosper. It became a banking center - the Wall Street of its day. When the area was rocked by an earthquake in 60 AD, Philadelphia appealed to Rome for help to rebuild.

But not Laodecia. Roman historian Tacitus writes, "Laodicea arose from the ruins by the strength of her own resources, and with no help from us." The city was proud, self-sufficient. They trusted in themselves. And "*the church of the Laodecians*" had the same attitude.

It reminds me of the 13th century philosopher, Thomas Aquinas. On a visit to the papal palace, the pope at the time, showed him Rome's vast treasures.

Recalling what Peter said to the crippled man at the Temple gate, he said, "*Well Thomas, the church in our day can no longer say, 'silver and gold have I none.'*"

Thomas replied, “Yes, and neither can we say, ‘In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!’”

Aquinas knew that material wealth means very little in God’s estimation. The Laodecians saw themselves as self-sufficient - *in need of nada*. Whereas God sized them up spiritually, and viewed them differently. He called them “wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked...”

It brings to mind, Proverbs 14:12, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” We’re all vulnerable to spiritual blind spots.

Even the most objective among us are blind at times to our own weaknesses, and sins, and hypocrisies.

It reminds me of the elderly lady who scheduled an appointment with her doctor. She was so embarrassed.

She whispered, “I’ve got a terrible problem. I pass gas constantly – you just can’t hear me or smell me. As a matter of fact, doctor, I’ve already done it a couple of dozen times since I’ve been talking with you.”

The doctor prescribed the lady some meds and told her to come back once the prescription was used up.

Weeks later she reported back, “Doctor, the problem is worse. They’re still silent, but now they smell.” The doctor said, “That’s good, now that we’ve got your sinuses cleared up we can start working on your ears!”

It's a strange truth about human anatomy that we can't smell our own *body odor* or *bad breath*?

You can reek and you'll be the last person to notice.

And this was the problem in Laodecia. This church stunk like a skunk, but they couldn't smell their own stench. They were oblivious to their own condition.

In verse 18 Jesus prescribes a remedy for what ails this church. **"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..."** The shepherds around the fields of Laodecia bred a glossy black wool.

The area became renown for the fabric, and grew into a clothing capitol. The city of Laodecia ended up both the **Wall Street** and **Rodeo Drive** of ancient Asia.

But again, it wasn't their shiny black wool that impressed Jesus - nor was it their minted gold coins.

It was the gold refined in the fire of correction, and the white garments from God's closet. ***Jesus' gold and garments*** spoke of humility, and purity, and honesty.

It's interesting, Jesus had just revealed this church's spiritual bankruptcy. They're broke and impoverished.

But now He counsels the Laodecians to ***"buy from Me gold refined in the fire..."*** What kind of currency does it take to purchase purity and a genuine faith?

I'll tell you what it costs... it costs you, your pride!

One author writes, **"The coin of God's realm is need and desperation... The price He requires is the humble concession that I have nothing with which to bargain,**

nothing to trade, nothing with which to make so much as a meager down payment.” You purchase the gold of God’s purity by abandoning your self-reliance, and throwing yourself on His mercy, and His ability to bless.

You purchase God’s blessing with repentance and faith, but there’s more to Jesus’ counsel, “and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.” The Laodecians needed a cure for their spiritual blindness.

In Laodecia there was a white chalk - called Phrygian powder. It claimed to be healing for the eyes. Mixed it with water, and it created a paste. Smear it on the eyes, and it sucked out harmful infections.

Jesus is encouraging the church at Laodecia to seek Him for a spiritual salve that will open their inner eyes.

Pray for heaven’s objectivity. Until I see myself from Jesus perspective, I’m oblivious to my real need.

Verse 19 gives hope, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.” As repulsed and disgusted as Jesus was with this church He still loved them. He wanted to restore them to fellowship. As we’ll see in the next verse, He’s locked out of this church, yet He’s still at their door knocking and knocking - calling and calling...

One Bible commentator put it, “It is God’s final punishment to leave a man alone.” If Jesus had walked away from Laodecia there would’ve been no hope. But He was still there... *loving*, and *knocking*, and *calling*...

Remember Hebrews 12:6, “For whom the LORD loves He chastens...” If the Lord doesn’t bother to rebuke us, and spank us when it’s needed, it means He doesn’t

care much about us. Like a father with his child, it's God's discipline that reveals His love for us.

He continues, **“Therefore be zealous and repent.”** The night I realized Natalie no longer took a plastic bottle, she was hungry and crying. I was in a panic.

I tried filling her bottle with juice... then coca-cola... then I tried to roll the nipple in sugar... *I was desperate.*

But what I needed wasn't some sweet, sugary remedy. I had to change my approach. I got Kathy's counsel, and learned a new technique, called *cereal...*

And this is Jesus' counsel for lukewarmness. *Not cereal, but to change course* - **“be zealous and repent.”**

Jesus is saying, **stop living the same way, expecting different results.** This is the definition of insanity!

“Be zealous and repent” Don't be indifferent. Care again. Go a new direction... *Cultivate desire... Admit your true condition... Humble yourself... Be objective...*

It's interesting what ultimately happened to Laodecia.

Due to its lukewarm water, the city was abandoned, and the population moved closer to their water source.

And this is good advice for us. Pick up and move to the source of spiritual, living water. Return to Jesus!

For Jesus says in verse 20, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” Laodecia was the church without Jesus. They locked the Lord out of His own church!

In 1851 Holman Hunt authored a famous painting called, “The Light of the World.” Jesus stands outside a door that’s covered with ivy and leaves. The door has been closed, and He’s been outside, for a long time.

If you notice carefully, there’s no handle on Hunt’s door. This is odd. *Every door should have a handle...*

When asked about his omission, Hunt offered a brilliant explanation. He said, “This door is a picture of the human heart, and the handle is on the inside.”

And indeed it is, the handle to your heart is on the inside, not the outside. Certainly, Jesus could barge His way in. We learned with the Church of Philadelphia Jesus is the One who opens and no man shuts...

If He wanted, He could tear the door off its hinges.

But Jesus created your heart with the handle on the inside. He created you with the ability and authority to choose. You have a free will that you exercise as you please. Jesus won’t violate that gift. He’d never kicked in a door. Jesus is a gentleman. He stands and knocks.

And He promises us, “If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” This is an amazing promise...

When Jesus expresses His desire to “dine” with us, He chooses a Greek word, rich in meaning, “deipnao.”

Leon Morris writes, “The deipnon was the main meal of the day and was a leisurely affair, not a hurried snack.” Think... *Thanksgiving Dinner* every single day!

The **deipnon** was the main venue in Roman society for interpersonal relations... *the making of friends - and the deepening of family ties* - occurred here. You made a living in the market, but life was lived out at the table.

And if Jesus wants to develop this same deep community with a church full of hijackers - *who stood Him up for longer than they let Him in* - then certainly He wants to cultivate this kind of friendship with us.

It’s interesting, Laodecia was the most delinquent of the seven churches. To Philadelphia Jesus had no *criticism* - but to Laodecia He had no *commendation*.

Yet it’s to the *upchucked church* that He makes this most glorious promise. It’s as Paul writes in Romans 5, “**where sin abounded, grace abounded much more...**”

In verse 21, He declares, “**To him who overcomes...**”

To him who refuses to drop to room temperature...

To him who still cares... And to him who bothers to open his eyes to the truth of his own condition...

To him who buys purity with faith and desperation...

To him who repents and stokes the fires of passion... To him who opens the door when Jesus knocks...

To this man Jesus promises, “I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” To the overcomer Jesus offers *throne-space*. God’s throne-chariot has a sidecar and He’s saving it for the person who takes heed...

Imagine, you and I will one day rule with Christ!

As we’ve pointed out with all seven churches, not only were these churches actual churches in the days of John, they also speak of 7 eras of church history.

Ephesus was the church of the apostles... **Smyrna**, the persecuted church under Rome... **Pergamos** was the compromised church begun by Constantine.

Thyatira was the corrupt papal church of the Middle Ages. **Sardis** was the church of the Protestant Reformers. **Philadelphia** was the missionary church from around the mid-18th century up until the present.

So where does the Church of Laodecia fit on the timeline? Sadly it’s *the modern church - today’s church*.

John Stott writes of the church of the Laodecians, “Perhaps none of the seven letters is more appropriate to the last-days church than this one. It describes vividly the respectable, sentimental, nominal, skin-deep religiosity which is so wide spread among us today.”

Laodecia was a shallow church. You could sum it up with the old adage, “It’s a mile wide and an inch deep.”

Arthur Burns was an economist. He served as chairman of the Federal Reserve under Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter. Burns was also *Jewish*.

Once Arthur Burns was asked to pray at a gathering of Christian politicians. His prayer stunned everyone...

"Lord, I pray that Jews would come to know Jesus Christ. And I pray that Buddhists would come to know Jesus Christ. And I pray that Muslims would come to know Jesus Christ." Then he prayed, "And Lord, I pray that Christians would come to know Jesus Christ."

And this prayer may be the best way to end Jesus' letter to "*the church of the Laodecians*." Not all self-proclaimed "*Christians*" know Jesus! How about you?

Do you really know Him? Or have you been practicing a *Christ-less Christianity - a fantasy faith?*

Jesus still loves you. He's knocking on your heart's door. It's time to repent and take a different course.

See yourself as Jesus sees you... Grab the handle of your heart, and open your life to Him!.. "*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*"