

## **Neither Cold nor Hot (Part 1)**

### **Revelation 3:14-16**

**Thought for the Day:** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” (John 1:1, 14, 18)

The letter to the church in Laodicea challenges us to ask, “What is the true spiritual condition of our heart? Are we Christians in reality, or Christians in name only? Is Jesus Christ the Savior and Lord of our lives, or is He on the outside, knocking at the door of our life, asking to come in?”

#### **I. The Greeting (3:14)**

##### **A. The Addressees**

##### **14 And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write:**

- Laodicea was a very wealthy city, well-known for the manufacture of wool cloth. (Cp. vs. 18)
- Laodicea was a banking center and therefore, very self-sufficient. (Cp. vs. 18)
- Laodicea was a medical center known for an ointment for treating the ears and a powder for the eyes. (Cp. vs. 18)
- Unfortunately, the church, like the city, had put its trust in material wealth rather than the spiritual wealth that comes only from God. (Matthew 6:19-21) Their treasure and their heart were in the wrong place.

##### **B. The Author**

- The Lord identified Himself in a manner specially adapted to the specific situation within the church in Laodicea.
- There are over 30 distinct names and titles given to Jesus in the book of Revelation. In verse 14, we find three of those titles. What do these titles reveal concerning Jesus Christ?

#### **The words of the Amen...**

- An Old Testament title for God. (Isaiah 65:16)
  - The word translated “truth” in this verse, is the Hebrew term, “Amen.”
  - *The Amplified Bible* – “May the God of truth and fidelity [the Amen] bless me; and he who takes an oath in the land shall swear by the God of truth and faithfulness to His promises, [the Amen]. . .”
  - By using this title, Jesus was claiming to be God.
- The word Amen means, “It is so, or it is true—and therefore, trustworthy!”
- As applied to Jesus, it means that, as God, He says what He means, and He means what He says. His words are completely reliable, trustworthy and true.
- If He says something will happen, it will happen—we can count on it!

### **...the faithful and true witness...**

- In contrast to all the false prophets and false teachers of the first century and today, Jesus Christ is faithful and true. (Cp. 1:5; 3:7)
- A faithful witness is one who accurately proclaims the revelation of God. (John 3:9-15, 31-36; 8:25-30)
- What Jesus has revealed to us in His Word is absolute truth.
- Jesus is the Living Word of God, the Bible is the Written Word of God, and together, they faithfully reveal the truth to us.
- "Since Laodicea was not characterized by faithfulness to God, this characterization of Jesus Christ carried a powerful message [and a powerful warning] to this church." (*Hocking, World Leader, pp. 96-97*)

### **...the beginning of God's creation.**

- There are those today who twist and distort this title to claim that Jesus was the first being created by God. If this is true, then Jesus Christ is not God!
  - In this verse, the word "beginning" means "origin" or "first cause." Jesus is the origin, the first cause, the Creator of creation.
  - He is not the first *of* creation; He is the first *before* creation. Jesus is the uncreated Creator of creation—He is God!
  - Cp. John 1:1-3, 10; Colossians 1:15-18.
- "In this letter, Jesus is addressing the wealthy, self-sufficient, complacent church at Laodicea. This self-identification had a profoundly practical impact for those steeped in self-reliance. 'In their wealth and complacency, they thought of themselves as in control; Jesus is telling them that he alone controls creation; he is the very source of their wealth and power.' Those who are rich in the things of this world need to remember that all they possess comes from the Creator. He owns it all. This is a relevant reminder in our day as well: Jesus is the Originator [and therefore the Owner] of God's creation. (*Hitchcock, 101 Answers, pp. 94-95*)
- Jesus Christ "is the unalterable standard by which all [else] must be measured." (*Ryrie, Revelation, p. 46*)

#### John 20:30-31

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.