

The Book of Revelation

Week Seven: In depth on the letter to Laodicea

- About the City:
 - It was famous for several high-end, luxury items:
 - Long black wool used for making high-end garments
 - An ancient eye-powder that was either a medicine, a makeup, or both
 - It also had one of the very first underground aqueducts. This was because the water source was miles away from the city. They buried the aqueduct for protection (so an invading army could not smash it and cut off their water supply).
 - And yet this is before copper pipes, pvc, and galvanization so the water was... pretty awful.
 - Heating it up made it useful for a bath
 - Cooling it down made it more palatable for drinking.
- Letter to Laodicea:
 - Identification: The faithful and true, the ruler of God's creation.
 - This church's self-image is off. What they think that they are in the presence of God is actually quite different from what they actually are.
 - The words are stinging:
 - They make clothing but Christ calls them naked
 - They make eye medicine but Christ calls them blind
 - He says that they are like their water when it's Luke-warm, unpalatable and largely useless – *ouch!*
 - Yet among the judgement there is a promise/reminder given. "I rebuke and discipline the ones I love." I am still standing at your door, just let me in.
 - The love of God has not abandoned this very lost congregation.
 - It is interesting that this is another "I know your deeds" letter, but that this time the deeds are poor in quality even though the church is rich. The reverse of both situations was true in the previous letter.
 - PROMISE: Whoever conquers will have victory and authority with Christ.
- The discussion this week focused on the Laodicean situation. They were experiencing economic success, and had materialistic markers that looked like the blessing of God. We talked about the dangerous place that being *comfortable* can be. We can begin to feel like we do not actually need God. We discussed how that may have been the beginning of the Laodicean downfall.

Scripture worth reading:

- The rich young ruler approaching Jesus in Mark chapter 10 has parallels to the Laodicean story.
- The walk to Emmaus story with the resurrected Christ at the end of the gospel of Luke (chapter 24) has parallels to inviting Jesus in and sharing a meal.