

# Laodicea: The Church That Made God Sick

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     The argument has been made that of the seven churches Jesus addressed here, the church in Laodicea might very well be the one that's in the worst condition.
- And there's no question that if we were to rank them, this one would be towards the bottom of the list. But to be honest, some type of qualitative ranking like that probably isn't necessary, and it may not even be all that helpful.
- Instead, it's best to view these churches categorically. And then after understanding where they are categorically, see how they relate to one another.
- And through that, we begin to see maybe a more accurate picture of what is happening, at least in Jesus' intention in sending these messages to the churches. What we find is that there's basically two types of churches, two types of categories that we can lump these churches into.
- There are healthy churches, and there are unhealthy churches. And as you read through, you find very quickly that the majority of these churches would fit the category of being unhealthy.
- [ 1 : 0 5 ]     And within the grouping of unhealthy churches, there is a spectrum of severity regarding the nature of their sin and the judgment that they receive from the Lord.
- The church in Laodicea most closely relates to the churches of Ephesus and Sardis. It relates to Sardis in that those are the only two churches that Jesus has absolutely no commendation at all for them.
- Most of even the unhealthy churches, when Jesus comes, in perfect honesty and transparency, he delivers some type of positive commendation that he delivers to them.
- Sardis and Laodicea receive no commendation. And it's not because Jesus is being vengeful and just doesn't want them to feel good about anything in that particular moment.
- He doesn't act like we act. There's no commendation because there's nothing worth commending with these two churches. That's how they relate to one another, at least as we begin to understand it.
- [ 2 : 1 1 ]     They both seem to represent the final stage in the progression of doctrinal and moral impurity. And the messages to these two churches, Sardis and Laodicea, they read like a final call to repent, like a final moment for Jesus to call them to repentance before he comes.
- And that's the phrase he uses very often in these sermons, that I will come. And when he comes, he wants to come as their Lord and Savior, not as their judge.
- Both of these churches, however, seem to receive a message that is a final call, a final call, so to speak, before Jesus unleashes his judgment. And the chiasmic structure of these chapters helps us to understand that what the particular sins were that dominated these churches.
- I think I have this actually on the screen for you to see if you just want to be reminded of it. So those of you visiting with us, a chiasm is a literary device. It's built off of or it's named after the letter in the Greek alphabet named chi, which looks like a big capital X.

And the reason it's called that is because of the narrowing effect. So basically, a chiasm starts broadly. It works itself in to establish its main point. That's where we looked at chapter two just a moment ago.

[ 3 : 32 ] And then it works its way back out. As we're looking at these seven churches, this chiasm not only points to this primary dynamic of Jesus as knowing the truth about them and having authority over them, but there are parallels that we draw between the churches.

So these three churches in the middle, Pergamum, Thyatira, and Sardis, are all dealing with the same sin. It is a sin of spiritual compromise. And the churches, as you read their messages, seem to progress from bad to worst.

So there's a subtle compromise in Pergamum. Then there is a more blatant compromise in Thyatira. Finally, we get to Sardis, and the compromise has run its full course. And Jesus says, you think you're alive, but you're dead.

You're dead. It's the church of unsaved Christians. They think they're alive, but they don't know Christ. They're unsaved. But the sin for those churches, primarily, as we read, is spiritual compromise.

Laodicea parallels the church in Ephesus. Ephesus, the primary sin dealing with these two churches was the sin of spiritual complacency. And you'll remember, Ephesus was faithful.

[ 4 : 46 ] They had lots of commendation from the Lord, but his one complaint was that they had abandoned first love. They had grown cold in their orthodoxy. Jesus calls them to repent of that.

And what we find in the structure is that an Ephesian kind of church that doesn't repent of that issue of abandoning first love will ultimately become a Laodicean church, completely lukewarm, with Jesus on the outside looking in.

And the worst part about it with Laodicea is that they were totally blind to their own reality. They thought they were rich. They thought they were prosperous.

Jesus says, no, you're actually quite destitute, spiritually speaking, destitute. The condition of the church in Laodicea made Jesus sick.

But the plea for them to respond to his gospel message is as strong here as it is anywhere else in these chapters, which tells us that so long as Jesus is sending out his word, there is hope for mercy and grace and forgiveness.

[ 5 : 58 ] And we see that come through clearly here. So let's look here at the warnings in order that we might rejoice in the promises as well. Let's consider first the church identity and Christ title as we have followed this pattern each week.

Look with me at verse 14. To the angel of the church in Laodicea write, the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

So first, the church identity we find is in Laodicea. The ancient city of Laodicea belonged to a tri-city region. I spent my high school years in the tri-cities in East Tennessee, which if you're familiar at all with that area, includes three cities, Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol.

I lived closely to Johnson City, which is the southernmost part, but not too far up north is Kingsport, and then northeast of there is Bristol, Virginia. We call it the tri-cities.

There's a similar dynamic happening with the location of Laodicea. Laodicea would be the Johnson City, and up just a little bit to the north of them is a city called Hierapolis, which would be your Kingsport.

[ 7 : 08 ] And then just over northeast of them, or perhaps due east of them, is a city called Colossae, which you would recognize from Paul's letter to the Colossian church.

It was a tri-city area. There's a few significant notes even about this particular church and its location that Jesus seems to allude to throughout his sermon.

It was situated on an important crossroad for travel, and that made the city actually quite prosperous and wealthy. Many have even suggested that it was a banking center for Asia Minor for that region.

It boasted of a thriving textile industry and even became known as something of a center for style with its specialty-made black glossy fabrics.

Laodicea was also a major player in the area of medicine, particularly ophthalmology or eye care. It had the world's leading eye care specialist of their day were in Laodicea.

[ 8 : 13 ] All of these things is what the city was known for. And these industries made the city itself very prosperous, and their wealth was a source of great pride for them.

In fact, where the city was situated, it was situated on a fault line, and it was prone to destruction from occasional earthquakes. In AD 60, there was a major earthquake that shook the area, and a lot of Ephesus, not Ephesus, but Laodicea was destroyed.

Rome, as was their habit, offered to finance the rebuilding of Laodicea, but the city was so prideful in their wealth that they refused to accept any money from the government.

They refused to accept any money from Rome because they wanted to do the rebuilding based on their own backs. It was a message they were sending. We can take care of ourselves. Look how prosperous we are.

This is a major part of the identity of those who live in the city. And all of these identifying markers show up in Jesus's words to the church. Now, let's look at the Christ titles.

[ 9 : 18 ] There's two of them. First, he refers to himself as the Amen, which he then explains with that second phrase, the faithful and true witness. Faithful and true witness is an explanation of the Amen.

Now, this use of Amen is unique because it's the only time it's used in the Scriptures as a title. It's a statement of affirmation. It means something like, so be it, or let it be so, or that's true.

Think about the ways we even use it today in English, in the Christian world. We use Amen at the end of our prayers. Why? Because it means let it be so.

In the name of Christ, Lord, all that we have brought before you, let it be so according to your will. And it's a request for God's intervention and that he would actually provide the things that we have asked him for.

Some of you have said it already this morning at various times during the service. You've given an Amen to the things that you thought, yes, that's true. Praise the Lord.

[ 10 : 26 ] So be it. That's true. It was used in the Old Testament times to seal a covenant. There was the double Amen that we read. Amen, Amen. So that two sides coming in covenant together, it was sealed, the contract sealed with this, so be it.

Let everything we have said be true. So when Jesus says that he is the Amen, he means that everything he says is absolutely true.

Everything he says will indeed come to pass, which is further supported by the next phrase. Look at it with me. He is the faithful and true witness.

In other words, everything that Jesus testifies to is divine revelation that is true and faithful.

And this is critical in this particular sermon because Jesus is about to accuse this church of something that they were totally blind to. So before he ever tells them what his complaint is against them, he reminds them who he is, that I am the true one.

[ 11 : 36 ] I am the faithful witness. What I say is true and what I say will come to pass will inevitably come to pass. He is truth. The second title is that he is the beginning of God's creation.

The beginning of God's creation. Now don't be confused by this. This doesn't mean to say that Jesus is a created being or that he was the first thing that God created.

That's not the sense of what he's saying. The scripture is very clear in other places that that isn't the case. Jesus himself has identified himself as one with the Father, eternally existing as the second person of the triune God.

So it doesn't mean that he was a created being. The word for beginning here, it means ruler or originator. It's similar to the way that Revelation uses that phrase alpha and omega.

You're probably familiar with that. Alpha is the A of the Greek alphabet. Omega is the Z of the Greek alphabet. In other words, everything that Jesus is, he is the beginning and the end.

[ 12 : 44 ] He is the first and the last. Nothing precedes him. Nothing will come after him. In other words, everything that you see, all of creation proceeds from Jesus Christ as creator.

And if everything that proceeds from Christ as creator, it proceeds from him as creator, that means he is the ruler of all that he has created. Another significant issue, not only to these two chapters, but especially to this church.

I know what's true of you, Laodicea. And I am the one that has authority over you in Laodicea. So hear me, he says.

Together, they emphasize his truth and authority. He knows what's true of us. And he is the one before whom each of us will stand in judgment.

So whether you belong to the church in Laodicea, or you belong to the church in Lake Norman, or you belong to the church in Ash County or Wilkesboro, wherever it is that you're from, Atlanta, Georgia, no matter where you're from, whatever church it is that you belong to, Jesus demands that you hear his message because of who he is.

[ 13 : 53 ] He is truth. He is creator and ruler. Let's consider the complaint and the consequence, which we find in verses 15 to 17.

Let me just remind you quickly that at the heart of the sin in Ephesus and Laodicea is spiritual complacency. That's the kind of bottom line, the foundation of what we're building off of in this sermon.

Ephesus represents the early stages of that sin. Laodicea represents the final stages of that sin. But what does it actually look like to be a Laodicean church, or a lukewarm church, or complacent church?

That's what we want to see here. First, we find that their works were useless. Their works were useless. Look at verse 15. I know your works, Jesus says.

You are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot. So because you're lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.

[ 15 : 04 ] Now, to correctly understand and interpret this requires that we understand something about the water supply in Laodicea. This city did not have its own natural springs, at least not the natural springs that were capable of providing water necessary for the entire population.

So they had to import water from the neighboring cities of Hierapolis and Colossae. In fact, you can even still, today, you could pull it up on Google if you'd like. There's a city of ancient aqueducts, especially coming from the city of Hierapolis, where they would usher water from that city that was full of rich, mineral-rich content.

It had hot springs that, even at the spring itself, was measuring 95, 96 degrees Fahrenheit. And then this would push itself down. In Hierapolis, at least, this had healing properties to it.

The hot water, it was useful for cleansing and purifying and all of the things that we use hot water for here, even still today. Colossae, on the other hand, boasted of cool springs.

It was completely pure water. It was mineral-free, the best that they understood. And it was cold. It was immediately available and useful for drinking, refreshment.

[ 16 : 24 ] But by the time water from Hierapolis or Colossae made it to Laodicea, it had lost the benefit of either the purifying qualities of hot water or the refreshing qualities of cold water.

It was lukewarm. It was basically useless at that point, at least in the terms of how we would understand hot and cold water. The key idea that Jesus is getting across here in this metaphor is that just as this lukewarm water was useless to them in contrast to cold and hot, so also the works of the Laodiceans are useless to him.

The lukewarm complacency of the church in Laodicea had rendered them useless to Christ and his gospel. Nothing about the way that they lived was of any benefit to glorifying God or declaring his truth.

They were useless, says Grant Osborne. The church should not have matched its water supply. The Laodiceans should have been known for their spiritual healing like Hierapolis or their refreshing, life-giving ministry like Colossae.

Instead, they were lukewarm. They were devoid of works, useless to the Lord. Well, if that's true and if lukewarm Christianity, if we're going to call it that this morning, causes Jesus to vomit, what does it actually mean to be a lukewarm Christian then?

[ 18 : 01 ] What does it mean to be a Laodicean church? I have a few ideas for you. Think about this. What does it look like to be a Laodicean Christian? Well, first, let's think about the dynamic of prayer.

The prayers of a lukewarm Christian are generally inauthentic, selfishly motivated prayers. They do not view prayer as a means of communing with God and as a means of communing with their Savior.

They view prayer as a means of getting something that they want. In fact, that's probably generally the only time that they do pray. They face some type of existential crisis and it's not that they are daily communing with the Lord.

It's just whenever something really goes wrong in their life, they finally go to prayer hoping that God will intervene and do something. This God with which they have basically no relationship in real communion.

Perhaps it's just something that they really want. Their wife has said no, but they go to God. Lord, change her heart because I really want it. Treat God like a genie in a bottle, like a spiritual bellhop.

[ 19 : 12 ] It's not real communion. It's just based on my subscription to Christianity. This is what you're supposed to do when things are bad and what you're supposed to do when you really want things to be good.

So that's what prayer is useful for. Same is true for lukewarm Christians and when they approach the Bible. Lukewarm Christians, they don't come to the word to know God.

They don't come to the word to be transformed by his spirit and his truth. If they care about the scriptures, it's superficial, sentimental maybe.

They come to the scriptures because they've just had a really bad day and they're just hoping there's a good word there. They can open up to the psalms and surely in the psalms there's going to be something that just makes me feel good today. And then you make the mistake of turning to a psalm like Psalm 32 that says, the hand of the Lord is hard against me.

And it's about, you know what I mean? It's not really about knowing God. It's not really about understanding his truth. It's just like, I kind of need a shot of something today. Maybe there's something positive I can find there.

[ 20 : 24 ] Mostly though, they probably don't really bother with the Bible at all. Probably not really that concerned about reading or understanding or studying or anything. That's what a lukewarm Christian is like.

Let's think about it in terms of worship. Lukewarm Christians view regular worship gatherings as a matter of convenience rather than having a genuine desire to express their worship to God in the company of God's people.

I'm going to ask you, why are you here? Why are you here? And I don't just mean here in this particular church today. I just mean, like if you're going to go to a church gathering, why?

What's the motivation behind that? Is it that, well, this is just kind of like our family tradition. This is what we're supposed to do. After all, we're Christian and Christians go to church whenever the other things aren't happening and aren't more important.

And so we go and we do the thing. That's really why you're here. Or are you here because you want to worship God? You see the value in gathering with God's people in order that you may express praise to him, hear from his word, fellowship and discipleship with his people.

[ 21 : 37 ] That's the difference between genuine Christianity and lukewarm Christianity. Lukewarm Christians are generally happy to recognize Jesus as a savior, but not very interested in thinking of Jesus as a Lord to which they must submit and obey.

If you were to speak with the people who are closest to them, maybe their family or their friends or their colleagues at work, there would be a general unawareness that they have any Christian commitment at all.

They certainly aren't going to be the ones to bring it up in a conversation unless they're forced to. Lukewarm Christians. And what do we find at the end in thinking about what is it like to be a Laodicean Christian?

The bottom line is lukewarm Christianity isn't Christianity at all. That's the thing. There's no such thing as a lukewarm Christian.

There's no such thing as a nominal Christian. The two don't fit together. Even if you subscribe to the things and you do all the stuff and you go to all the places and you do all the stuff that you're supposed to do without any genuine communion and reconciliation with God through the person of Christ, there is nothing Christian about you.

[ 23 : 13 ] You're a Laodicean Christian. Jesus is on the outside looking in, hoping somebody will open the door. is further supported by the fact of what Jesus says he will do with them if they don't repent.

I will spit you out of my mouth. I will spew you out. I will vomit you out. It's graphic. It's dramatic. And it's a kind of action that the scripture never, never directs between Jesus and his people.

Jesus never threatens this type of behavior to those who really belong to him. Essentially, what Jesus is saying, if you show no signs of repentance in your life, you do not belong to me and you prove it and I will spit you out.

You will face my judgment, not receive my mercy. And remember, I'm the true one. I'm the one before whom you will stand.

Their works were useless. Second, we find here that they had an attitude of self-sufficiency. An attitude of self-sufficiency. Look at verse 17. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.

[ 24 : 40 ] Not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. Do you remember what I said was the Laodicean response to Rome regarding funding for rebuilding the city?

Why would they reject that? Even a crooked businessman would accept that today. Because you don't want to use your own money for it. And here comes the government and they're saying, hey, we'll fund this.

You say, sign me up. Send me all the Trump checks. Whatever it is that's happening, right? Most businessmen, this is what we would do, right? Laodicea doesn't do that. There's only one real reason why you wouldn't do that.

It's to make a statement, isn't it? It's to make a statement. It's pride. We're self-sufficient and we want Rome to know it. We don't need them.

Now, I don't know if this is Jesus' intention for us to primarily have this in view here, but it certainly is a helpful illustration of this church, isn't it?

[ 25 : 48 ] They considered themselves to be prosperous. Jesus saw them as destitute. They had the world's leading ophthalmologists. Jesus says they're blind to their own spiritual condition.

Given the city's prosperity, it's likely that a significant number of people in the church were probably wealthy members, wealthy people. There's nothing inherently wrong with wealth or comfort, but we don't always in our pursuit of wealth and comfort in life, we don't always realize how dangerous, spiritually dangerous those things can actually be.

There is a reason that Jesus said it's harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. There's a reason Jesus said that.

Because wealth and comfort, they have a way of doling out our sense of need for God and the gospel. They can easily provide a false sense of spiritual security even.

Maybe we would not say this, but we would have some type of functional reality in our life that says, look at how God has blessed me. How could he possibly be against me? How could I be God's enemy?

[ 27 : 01 ] Look at all that I have. Look at all that he has done. We become blind. It's also easy for the pursuit of wealth and comfort to dwarf a pursuit for God.

The Laodicean church shows us once again as the New Testament does again and again. It shows us once again that you can have absolutely everything and not realize that ultimately you don't have anything at all.

Which is exactly what Jesus was getting at in Mark chapter 8 when he says, what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? They say, we're rich.

We're prosperous. We're good. Jesus says, you're blind. You don't even know it. There's also a kind of self-sufficiency that relies on religious observance to secure God's favor.

It doesn't look to trust wholly in what Christ has done for salvation, but it relies actually on the self-sufficiency of our religious doings. It says, I do the thing.

[ 28 : 15 ] I go to the church. I give the money. I serve in the nursery. I don't know why I breathe out. We don't even have a nursery. I serve in the stuff. I do the stuff. And I'm not like Josh.

I don't mix my secular music with my Christian music. They're completely different playlists. Only patch the pirate for me. Whatever it is. We say we do all the things and basically what we're saying to God in one sense and the way that we're functionally living out this Christianity is I have need of nothing.

Even Jesus. Look at all that I do. Look at what I've done. How could he possibly judge me? And perhaps this is what Jesus primarily had in view here.

They had all the outward signs of Christianity but inwardly in their hearts they were wretched, pitiable, blind, poor, naked.

They thought they had need of nothing. Functionally they lived as if they didn't even need Jesus. They were good. Let's look at the correction.

[ 29 : 27 ] We're going to see this in verses 18 through 20 but I want to start with verse 19. Look at it with me. Those whom I love Jesus says I reprove and discipline so be zealous and repent. repent. The solution for Laodicea is the same solution Jesus has given to every church. It's the same solution that belongs to us.

The only way for them to avoid being metaphorically vomited out of Jesus' mouth is to repent. To turn from their useless complacency, their prideful self-sufficiency.

That's the only answer. Turn from this thing to the person of Christ and Jesus says it again here. Be zealous and repent.

Turn and indeed the only way any of us can escape God's judgment is to hear his word and turn to him in repentance and faith.

[ 30 : 29 ] But notice in this verse before Jesus calls them to repent he affirms that this call is an act of love. Look at it. Those whom I love I reprove and discipline.

Perhaps you've tried to communicate this to your kids before. This is hard to do isn't it? You sit them down for whatever form of discipline you're about to achieve you say I'm doing this Ashlyn because I love you.

And she says if you loved me you wouldn't do this to me. the fact is that no parent is perfect and all parents ultimately do sometimes fail in discipline with a loving motivation don't we?

Sometimes our discipline is a reaction it's an angry reaction sometimes it's it's more about correcting what our kids are doing in order that we might not be embarrassed and that we might maintain some kind of honor really more than it is about helping them to honor the Lord and we do that we fail in that way that's a sin we fail in that way many times but here's the thing we can always count on Jesus's reproof and discipline being motivated by his perfect love and his desire for what is best for us always always in fact the only reason that a holy God would ever give sinful people time to repent of anything is love it's love and I want you to see now how Jesus's love is put on display in this correction verse 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich buy from me garments white garments that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen buy from me salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see remember all of those were significant allusions to the culture in Laodicea

I think it was Johnny Lee that was looking for love in all the wrong places Laodicean Christians were looking for fulfillment in all the wrong places we heard it in Kara's testimony just a moment ago I was trying to find fulfillment in my friendships I'm trying to find fulfillment in my career trying to find fulfillment in wealth or whatever it is I'm just constantly looking for fulfillment we saw it in Psalm 32 constantly looking for what can actually help me what can actually bring me peace and joy and happiness happiness the Laodiceans were no different than anyone else and they're thinking that they can find those things in whatever they mean by being rich whether it's their physical richness or whether it's just a religious program that they're following they might have had material wealth stylish clothes and a premier eye doctors but what Jesus offers is better than anything we can receive in this world it's better he says come and get true riches from me get true purity that's the white garments from me true cleansing from me he says come to me



[ 33 : 58 ] I'll open your eyes the blind spiritual eyes of your heart I'll open them come to me for that this is love friends it's love this is not vengeance or jealousy he's not trying to rob the world in order to build something for himself he's saying if you really want these things you can only get it from me and I want to give it to you just come and receive it he says it's love true riches pure adornment spiritual sight can only come from Christ and he offers his limitless blessing to everyone who will abandon worldly pursuits to come to faith in him says Jim Hamilton Jesus is inexhaustible in offering gold he's promising to meet every need in offering white garments he's promising to make those who trust him and live by what he says presentable acceptable even beautiful where will you find a better offer than this look at verse 20 gets better behold

I stand at the door and knock if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into him and eat with him and he with me Robert Mount said in their blind self-sufficiency they had as it were excommunicated the risen Lord from their congregation it's the picture here the church made up of individuals okay this is an individual application here has functionally excommunicated Jesus they felt they had no need for him but then Mount goes on to say it is an act of unbelievable condescension that Jesus requests permission to enter and reestablish fellowship you know what we do when people walk out of our lives we shut the door behind them you know what our tendency to do is when people say they don't want us in their life we grant their request here the church excommunicates

Jesus from their congregation metaphorically speaking and what does Jesus do he stands at the door and he knocks he says if anyone will just open the door I will come in I will eat with him and he will eat with me spiritual complacent complacency ultimately rejects communion with God that's the point that we discovered earlier prayer is not about talking to God prayer is about receiving something from God Bible study is not about knowing God and having his work communicated in our hearts by the work of the Holy Spirit Bible study if we do it at all is selfishly motivated we just want to try to get something to justify a decision or whatever it is worship is not worship it's tradition it is whatever it is that you've made it out to be spiritual complacency rejects communion but personal intimate communion is precisely what

Jesus offers the church and what he offers you through the gospel through the gospel he says I'm standing at the door I'm knocking if you will just open the door through his death and resurrection Jesus did not merely make a way for you to go to heaven he provides a way for you to be reconciled to God heaven is secondary hell is secondary primary to our relationship to God is the fact that our sin separates us from him it makes us his enemy and what he does in Christ as Christ absorbs the wrath of God against our sin on the cross and as he raises from the dead proving victory over death the one enemy that we will never be able to defeat the enemy will never what

Jesus is doing there what God is doing he pursuing sinners and he says if you will just come the great shalom that Paul talked about so often in the new testament true peace true reconciliation with God Christianity it's not about systems it's not about doing stuff Christianity is about genuine communion with God through the work of Jesus Christ and out of his infinite love Jesus offers you salvation in order that he might commune with you it's not that we come to him saying God if you'll just make a way for us we want to commune with you nobody does that no he does that he stands at the door he brings the offer he says open it up

[ 39 : 34 ] I want to commune with you we respond to him we love him because he first loved us he wants you he loves you he stands knocking open the door open the door let's finish with the call and conquer formulas here in verses 21 and 22 the one who conquers I will grant him to sit with me on my throne as I also conquered and sat down with my father on his throne he who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches as with all the sermons Jesus concludes with a promise to the one who conquers and to conquer in this case means to reject the counterfeit

Christianity that produces lukewarmness and wholly embrace Jesus the one who conquered for us conquers our sin conquers our death the promise then is that those who conquer by faith in Christ will sit with him on his throne let's be honest that's weird what does that actually mean does this mean that we will literally share a throne with Jesus that what we say will go in eternity or in the kingdom or how it is that you may view this particular context the picture here is of a delegated authority it's qualified when Jesus says I will share my throne with you just as the father shared his throne with me and as we study the new testament we find that there is this secession in the trinity itself and God the father after Jesus his resurrection grants all authority to him he says all authority belongs to me now he is exalted!

with in that sense that picture that Jesus offers for those who conquer a delegated authority and I think really what this means is that just as God has delegated all authority to the son so does the son delegate kingdom authority to his people so that in eternity the amen who is the beginning of God's creation the supreme ruler will make us instruments of his perfectly righteous rule we will share in eternity with him and we will be used by him in total righteousness so that not only are we looking ahead to heaven in eternity as a perfect place with perfect righteousness but

Christ work in us is what makes it perfectly righteous and perfectly peaceful he transforms us he takes away sin and sorrow and death and we live in eternal communion with him well let's finish the sermon to the church of Laodicea is a warning to every congregation that is essentially functioning without Jesus okay we've got all of our marketing strategies and we've got all the stuff that we're doing we don't really need Jesus because we've got all this other stuff we're doing this stuff why would we need him so warning to those kinds of congregations and it should be a wake up call to every professing Christian who is subscribing to elements of the Christian religion without actually walking in fellowship and communion with Christ should be a wake up call bottom line is that Jesus calls each of us to hear this message because it may be that while thinking you're spiritually rich you're really destitute and blind without

Christ and if for you Christianity is really just your family tradition or a system of rituals something that you hope will just be effective for giving you whatever blessing may come after death I hope you'll look closely at what Jesus has to say here he's offering you himself he's offering you himself communion with him by his grace through faith and only those who will receive him will understand what it really means to be rich and prosperous in need of nothing he who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches let's pray