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## OPENING COMMENT

Laodicea is a church that does not suffer in the same way the other churches have. They have material wealth and their businesses are doing well. Yet, in this comfort, they have forgotten what is truly significant. Their wealth has blinded them to the spiritual realities of the Gospel and hardened their hearts to what they really need. They have swapped earthly gold for true eternal treasure and Jesus confronts them for this is grievous error.

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## READ THE TEXT: Revelation 3:14-22

<sup>14</sup> "And 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.

<sup>15</sup> "'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! <sup>16</sup> So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. <sup>18</sup> I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. <sup>19</sup> Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"



## UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. What is missing in this letter that has been present in all the letters to the other churches?
2. How should we understand Jesus identifying himself as the “beginning of God’s creation”?
3. What is the primary problem in the church of Laodicea?
4. What is Jesus counsel to the church?
5. What does Christ’s reproof and discipline mean of the church?
6. What does Jesus command the church to do?
7. What is the reward for those who conquer? What is surprising about that reward and its implications?

## APPLYING THE TEXT

1. The temperature of the water is simply a way of talking about usefulness. Hot water and cold water are both useful, whereas tepid water is avoided. Consider the “temperature” of your spiritual conviction. How are you being useful to the building of God’s kingdom in this church and this city?
2. The reason this church was labeled as tepid was because they were comfortable in their own riches and self-sufficiency. Where is your comfort and wealth causing you to be tepid?
3. Part of the problem in this church is their ignorance about their personal state of righteousness. Why is it important to remember our nakedness, our wretchedness, and our blindness?
4. Jesus counsels the church to buy real riches from him. In what ways can we begin to “buy” these real riches?
5. Jesus love results in his disciplining the church. In fact, Jesus says that those he loves he will discipline. In what ways are you feeling the discipline of the Lord in your life? If not, why not?
6. In what ways do you need to be challenged to be more zealous in your faith? How can the group help you fan into flame the gifts God has given you?

## BIBLICAL THREAD

1. Isaiah 55 – an invitation to real treasure.
2. Matthew 13:1-23 – the parable of the sower and its explanation.
3. Mathew 13:44-45 – Kingdom of God worth selling all for.
4. John 1:1-5 – Jesus at the beginning
5. Ephesians 2:1-3 – the reality of our sin.
6. Colossians 1:15-20 – Jesus as the beginning
7. Hebrews 12:3-17 – The discipline of the Lord should not be scorned.



## CONCLUSION

The call of Christ is to buy what is truly valuable, even if it costs us our worldly riches and comfort. We can only begin to be of use to Him when we see our desperate need for his grace and mercy and commit everything, I mean everything, to Him. Laodicea got caught in the weeds of world and their growth was hampered by their comfort and self-sufficiency. Let us use this as a moment to reflect on our own wealth and comfort and seek to live faithfully as Christ calls. Where he needs to discipline us, let us remember that it is because he loves us, and gratefully accept his reproof. Let's turn in repentance back to Him and seek his leading and stoke the flames of radical faith. In so doing, we will one day rule with him and have everything we could ever possibly desire.

## SHARE & PRAY

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### LIFE GROUP VISION:

The goal to meeting together around the word of God is three-fold. First, we want to more clearly understand what God is saying to us through his Word and apply it to our own hearts and minds. Secondly, we want to build a loving community with each other to disciple one another toward maturity in Christ. Thirdly, we desire each of us, as ambassadors of Christ, to look outwards to our community and ask how we can bring the truth of the gospel to bear on those whom God has placed in our lives.

