

Difficult Days, Part 10: The State of the Church
The Church that Fell Away
Revelation 3:14-22

I. Jesus presents Himself as truth (vs. 14).

- A. He is the Amen.
- B. He is the faithful and true witness.
- C. He is the beginning of the creation of God.

(Isaiah 65:16; John 14:6; Revelation 22:13)

II. Jesus stated that the Laodiceans were lukewarm (vs. 15-17).

- A. They were neither hot nor cold.
- B. They did not need God.
- C. They were guilty of hypocrisy.

(Deuteronomy 8:6-7; 11-14; 18-20; Matthew 7:21-23; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 1:15-16)

III. Jesus exhorts the Laodiceans to come to Him for true salvation (vs. 18-20).

- A. Christ offered them true wealth.
- B. Christ offered to open their eyes to their spiritual state.
- C. Christ offered to give them His righteousness.

(Isaiah 55:1; John 9:39-41; Philippians 3:7-11; 2 Timothy 2:24-26)

IV. Jesus makes a great promise to those who will overcome (vs. 21-22).

- A. Jesus offers him a chance to sit with Him on His throne.

B. Jesus offers this only to those who will obey the Spirit.

Scripture References and Notes

Isaiah 65:16 (NKJV)

So that he who blesses himself in the earth Shall bless himself in the God of truth; And he who swears in the earth Shall swear by the God of truth; Because the former troubles are forgotten, And because they are hidden from My eyes.

John 14:6 (KJV)

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Revelation 22:13 (NKJV)

I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.”

Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NASB)

¹ But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to a form of godliness although they have denied its power; avoid *such people as these*.

“These smug, self-righteous hypocrites are far more difficult to reach with the gospel than cold-hearted rejecters. The latter may at least be shown that they are lost. But those who self-righteously think that they are saved are often protective of their religious feelings and unwilling to recognize their real condition. They are not cold enough to feel the bitter sting of their sin. Consequently, there is no one further from the truth than the one who makes an idle profession but never experiences genuine saving faith. No one is harder to teach for Christ than a false Christian.”

– John MacArthur, *Revelation 1-11*, 137.

Titus 1:15-16 (KJV)

¹⁵ Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. ¹⁶ They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Deuteronomy 8:6-7; 11-14; 18-20 (NKJV)

⁶ “Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. ⁷ For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills;

¹¹ “Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹² lest—*when* you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell *in them*; ¹³ and *when* your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; ¹⁴ when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

¹⁸ “And you shall remember the LORD your God, for *it is* He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day. ¹⁹ Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. ²⁰ As the nations which the LORD destroys before you, so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God.

wretched [ταλαίπωρος (talaipóros)]

- an adjective, derived from *talaō*, "to bear, undergo" and *pōros*, "a callous," J. Thayer)
- properly, *wretched* (beaten-down) from continued strain, leaving a person literally full of *callouses* (deep misery)
- describing a person with severe side-effects from great, ongoing strain (significant hardships).

miserable [ἐλεεινός (eleeinos)]

- pitiable, wretched; in great need of mercy (because *desperate*).

poor [πτωχός (ptóchos)]

- poor, destitute, spiritually poor, either in a good sense (humble devout persons) or bad.
- (from *ptōssō*, "to crouch or cower like a beggar")
- properly, bent over; (figuratively) *deeply destitute*, completely lacking resources (earthly wealth)
- (*ptōxós*) relates to "the pauper rather than the mere peasant, the extreme opposite of the rich".

blind

- [τυφλός (tuphlos)]
- blind, physically or mentally

naked

- [γυμνός (gumnos)]
- rarely: stark-naked; generally: wearing only the under-garment; bare, open, manifest; mere.

Isaiah 55:1 (NKJV)

“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

John 9:39-41 (NKJV)

³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.” ⁴⁰ Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

Philippians 3:7-11 (NASB)

⁷ But whatever things were gain to me, these things I have counted as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them *mere* rubbish, so that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹ if somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

“Though this verse has been used in countless tracts and evangelistic messages to depict Christ’s knocking on the door of the sinner’s heart, it is broader than that. The door on which Christ is knocking is not

the door to a single human heart, but to the Laodicean church. Christ was outside this apostate church and wanted to come in – something that could only happen if the people repented.

The invitation is, first of all, a personal one, since salvation is individual. But He is knocking on the door of the church, calling the many to saving faith, so that He may enter the church. If one person (**anyone**) opened the door by repentance and faith, Christ would enter that church through that individual. The picture of Christ outside the Laodicean church seeking entrance strongly implies that, unlike Sardis, there were no believers there at all.”

– John MacArthur, *Revelation 1-11*, 140.