

# To the Saints of God at Topeka, Kansas May 29, 2016

## The Church at Laodicea – Part I

Rev. 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.



21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The city of Laodicea was founded by king Antiochus II which he named for his wife Laodice about 260 B.C. During Roman times Laodicea was a prosperous and wealthy city on the trade route from the East, famous for its manufacturing including wool and cotton cloths.



*Aqueduct Found at Laodicea I*

Laodicea was a primary hub for the Roman aqueduct system. The Romans were famous for their aqueducts where they would supply cities with fresh water for public baths and fountains. The water that was piped to Laodicea was rich with calcium which over time would cause the pipes to clog. The engineers designed the aqueduct with vents covered with stones that could be removed periodically for cleaning. Laodicea was a few miles from a hot spring.

When the hot water finally reached Laodicea from the hot spring, the water would arrive lukewarm, and would then need to be reheated. One of the more annoying things of life is that you come home from a long day of work, and you are tired and sore and you draw a nice hot, relaxing bath and it is lukewarm! Or, you make yourself a nice plate of food and when you sit down to eat it – it is lukewarm. It is believed this is why the Holy Spirit through John used the “lukewarm” analogy – he wanted to bring it home to them.

There was a thriving Church at Laodicea as Paul references it several times in Colossians (2:1, 4:13-16, 1 Tim. 6:21). Laodicea was just a few miles from Colosse. Laodicea also appears to have been a center of banking and financial institutions, being a place where money-changing was common practice. It minted its own coins a number of centuries before the first century AD due to its wealth. Christ also mentions the wealth of the church in worldly terms, so this may be a reference to that as well.

**And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the Faithful and True witness, the Beginning of the Creation of God;**

*Amen - Strongs: 281 ἀμήν amen am-ane’ 1) firm; Faithful; 2) verily, 2a) at the beginning of a discourse-surely, truly, of a truth*

*2b) at the end-so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled. It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discoursed, had offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded Amen, and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own. Strong’s Note: The word "amen" is a most remarkable word. It was transliterated directly from the Hebrew into the Greek of the New Testament, then into Latin and into English and*

*many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. It has been called the best known word in human speech. The word is directly related — in fact, almost identical — to the Hebrew word for "believe" (amam), or faithful. Thus, it came to mean "sure" or "truly," an expression of absolute trust and confidence.*

Christ is the only thing in this earth that can be relied upon. He is not a liar or a deceiver like Satan (Rev. 20:10 - *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone... John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil...He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*). Christ is also not deceived like man is. There is much deceit in the earth and the New Testament is full of verses that speak to this fact. *Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, **deceit**, malignity; whisperers* (Rom. 1:29). But, not so with Christ. Christ is the Faithful and True witness. His Word can be relied upon. He is the Rock (Deut. 32:4 - *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*).

*For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself* (Heb. 6:13). *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil* (Heb 6:18-19). Truthfulness, faithfulness, and honesty are an inherent part of the Godhead.

*Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the Faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them* (Deut. 7:9-11). This is the promise of the Faithful Witness. I like verses that have a bow on top – that summarize complex things into absolute simplicity.

This is THE God that is the Beginning of all things that is speaking. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Ge 1:1. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to*

*come, the Almighty (Rev. 1:8). This is no counterfeit god. This is none other than the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy (Isaiah 57:15).*

*See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy (Deut. 32:39-42). You better listen to His words. He is tying the forthcoming words to His sovereignty.*

**I Know Thy Works, That Thou Art Neither Cold Nor Hot: I Would Thou Wert Cold Or Hot. So Then Because Thou Art Lukewarm, And Neither Cold Nor Hot, I Will Spue Thee Out Of My Mouth.**

The Lord Jesus Christ knows the works of the Churches in all respects – He is the True Witness and he is delivering His righteous judgment on this church and there are no appeal rights. Beloved, notice that there are **no** words of commendation here for this church - no good things for the Lord to encourage them with. This is a sad state of affairs for this church. They are failing as a church of the Lord Jesus Christ! There are no faithful few here - no talk of people in the church that were holding fast. It's all bad all of the time. He speaks to their everlasting shame. "Lukewarm" is figurative language to indicate that the Church at Laodicea had a profession of religion but there was no real zeal for God. This is a church of lame "professors." *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools (Romans 1:22).* Things are running smoothly for this church... right into the ground! They have plenty of earthly money on hand and at the same time are literally, spiritually bankrupt. Beloved, this church had become a social club! That sounds like every church I have ever attended or know about, except for WBC! The church goers of this generation treat church membership like a book club, or an alumni association. In fact, most of the church-going-public of this generation are more enthusiastic about their sports teams, politics or TV shows than their religion.

The members of the church at Laodicea did not put themselves in harm's way or put themselves out in any regard for Christ or His commandments. They were

indifferent to God and His commandments, indifferent to His truths and ways, and indifferent to sin. They were without true spiritual affection for Christ. They thought they were playing it safe! *How many professors of gospel doctrine are neither hot nor cold; except as they are indifferent in necessary matters, and hot and fiery in disputes about things of lesser moment! (Matthew Henry).* The expectations of the Lord Jesus Christ is that you will serve Him with vigor, fidelity and with boldness, all out – 6<sup>th</sup> gear the whole way. If not, do not bother serving Him, your efforts are in vain. Christ requires that service to Him is zealous (Rev. 3:19). After all, the spiritual prize at stake is the single most coveted thing in the universe. Is that not worth your best effort? For God to be satisfied with anything less would be to devalue the amazing prize/gift He offers.



Most of the churches in this nation are completely indifferent to sin and are “saving their life.” They are the picture of wimpy, soft, milquetoast cowards who straddle the fence and please men and are afraid of man and not God. The people of God do not get to sit on the fence. This country and so-called mainline “Christianity” throughout the earth suffers from the terminal illness of “lukewarmedness.” It is a fatal disease to a church 100% of the time.

*Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it (Mat. 10:32-39).*

*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word (1 Kings 18:21).*

*A lukewarm professor is one that serves God and mammon (money); that halts between two opinions, and knows not what religion is best, ... he is unconcerned about the life and power of godliness, and takes up with the external form of it; and has no thought about the glory of God, the interest of Christ and truth; and this was too much the case of this church, at least of a great number of its members; wherefore it was very loathsome to Christ (John Gill).* This is too an important of a topic to hedge! No hedging. Render an opinion. God has defined the issue so you must choose a side – either you are for Christ or for Satan. Isn't God, Christ and heaven worthy of such a clear decision? Is the eternal favor of the Lord Jesus Christ so unworthy and held in so low regard and low esteem that a tepid love for Him is enough?

The Lord Jesus Christ says that it would actually be better if the church was either cold or hot as if to say “anything is better than being weak and lukewarm.” This shows the Lord Jesus' utter contempt and detestation for this condition. Hot refers to where love for Him is real and with zeal and cold is where the church was actually against Him. Coldness is preferred over lukewarm because at least it would be honest and there would be no concealment, deceit, insincerity and hypocrisy.

*Professors of religion will sink into a formality, and into a lukewarm frame of spirit, and into great spiritual sloth and security (Gill).* That is exactly what happened in the Old Testament. The Jews continued on with the rote forms of the religion, the burnt sacrifices and the feast days and the ceremonies but gutted the important parts of serving God. They refused to follow the commandments with fidelity and then took up with false gods and idols and that will not do the job for Jealous. Lukewarm is not going to get the job done for a jealous God.

*For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God (De 4:24).*

*Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me (De 5:9).*

*Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth (De 6:13-15).*

The attributes of this disease is that you slowly depart from the True and Living God, and become lukewarm, and stop fearing God and stop zealously being obedient to His requirements and you start believing in your own pride and worth and then you go after strange gods which are consistent with the ways of man and you serve them. And the next thing you know you have become infected with the zombie-nonspiritual-lukewarm-earthly devilish virus and you have infected yourself and those around you with it, and alienated the God you set out to serve. Spiritual luke-warmness is an epidemic in this society. This is a clear and present danger to us and to every true church of the Lord Jesus Christ!

*The majority of the professors of religion in this period of time will be boasting of, and trusting in; being self-sufficient, and self-dependent, when at the same time they will be naked, as well as poor and blind (Gill).*

Beloved, my soul is exhausted to the bone seeing the luke-warmness of the spiritual messages of the so-called Christian churches of this generation.

**If you turn to the last page of the sermon you will see a number of church signs and see what they are preaching.**

I thought the purpose of religion was to draw closer to God and to make our bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable unto Him. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Ro 12:1).* They have instead changed the purpose of religion to make it about them feeling good about themselves and about God serving them. Romans 1:23 *And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image make like to corruptible man...*

Jer. 23:30 *Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. 31 Behold, I am against the*

*prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. 32 Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.*

These false prophets preach lightness and lies! There is no weight or substance to their words! Beloved, do not be deceived in this matter, being a lukewarm Christian is a great sin. The Lord Jesus Christ plainly says *I do not accept half-hearted followers – not good enough – I deserve and require better.* If you are not all in, then you are out. *Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee* (Mark 10:28). In a poker hand, you are “all-in” when every chip you have is in the middle of the table in the pot – you have no reserves – and no contingencies. You must render an opinion and be prepared to be accountable for it. Luke-warmness is just another way to say that you have made compromises with Satan and with earthly things. You can accuse the Westboro Baptist Church of a lot of things, but up to this point, by the mercies of God, this is NOT one of them (God be blessed). The Lord Jesus Christ will not allow you reprobate lukewarm churches to put your stinky toe in the water and condone that as acceptable. The water must be to your neck or not at all. Mt 10:37 *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.* Mt 10:38 *And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.*

By and large the Jews were lukewarm on sin.

*Jeremiah 7:8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. 9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; 10 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? 11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD... 13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not... 15 And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim. 16 Therefore pray not thou for this*



*people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee. 17 Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? 18 The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. 19 Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces? 20 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched... 28 But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.*

But you say, if I preach against adultery, fornication, homosexuality, idol and image worship, love for and commitments to other gods (like your worship of sporting events and entertainment to the exclusion of God), your murder in the form of abortion and military murder (when the charge to the soldier is *do violence to no man, and thou shalt not kill, and love thy neighbor*), same-sex marriage, gender confusion, women preachers and spiritual idolatry like Christmas, then I will not have a single member left in my church and probably not even my own family. So instead, you preach on something else. You are lukewarm brother to the core. You are a soldier for Satan. God does not need apathetic soldiers that do not know what side they fight on! Luke-warmness is spiritual fraud and spiritual cowardice. Who wants a soldier in a fight, which will, at any moment, turn and fight for the enemy?

Mr. Pope sir, you declared this year to be a *year of mercy* and the church needs to be more understanding of sin. You did it not for the good of Christ but because you wanted to increase your market share – you wanted to increase your worldwide membership numbers, you did it for your own pride and legacy (you want to be canonized as a saint someday), you did it for publicity and marketing purposes to make the evening news, you did it to build your cash reserves at the Vatican bank (why in God's name does a church need their own bank? Where did you read that in the bible?) because the billions in settlements, largely over the homosexual child abuse scandals, have left you cash poor. You did not get that from God. In the wake of great sin, God drops the hammer (like those versus in Jeremiah) – He sends His prophets to chew their backsides, not

give them the “Go” and the “Peace” sign to commit more sin. God forbid! The evening news may love you, but we see you for what you are. Your thin veneer of lukewarm Christianity covers your Satanic true nature. Beloved, Satan loves lukewarm! He can work with that! It is his whole strategy for this generation. All his eggs are in that basket! Do not fall for the lie and think you can partake of that poison and not stand before God to account for it. Matthew Henry says that this is THE worst of the seven churches. This issue of lukewarm is not trivial or something that should be overlooked.

The Lord Jesus Christ says that he is going to spew out this lukewarm church. Christ rejects lukewarm churches with righteous indignation and loathing, as the Lord God spued out the Canaanite nations from the Promised Land (Lev. 18:28). The analogy that Christ uses here is to vomiting. Vomiting is a violent and abrupt process. There is nothing subtle, gentle or attractive about it. It is a clearing of the stomach contents for the good of the body. Christ is going to do the same, to clear the body of Christ of a satanic influence.

*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you (2 Cor. 6:14-17).* The cancer has to be excised from the body.

I love you all, Amen.



Lowman Methodist, Topeka

Overland Park



Grace Cathedral, Topeka

Trinity Lutheran, Topeka



Gage Park Baptist, Topeka



Most Pure Heart of Mary, Topeka



SW Baptist Church, Topeka





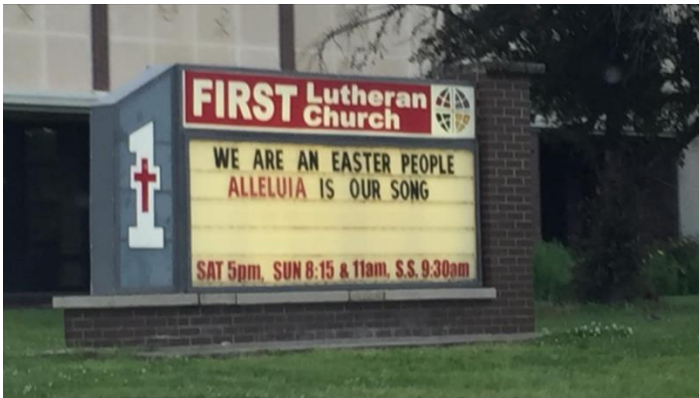
1<sup>st</sup> United Meth., Outer Banks, NC



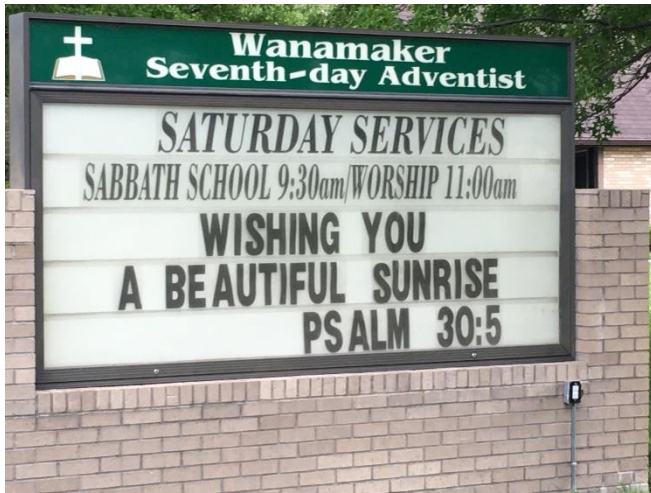
New Hope UMC, Topeka



First Lutheran, Topeka



Seventh-Day Adventist, Topeka



Willow Creek, KC

