

Recap: Background of the Seven Churches of Revelation

- * The cities were along one of the ancient postal Roman roads and would have been visited in the order in which they are named, beginning at Ephesus.
- * These early Christian churches were located in Asia Minor during the era of the Roman Empire and were major cultural hubs.
- * In ancient times, names (of people/places/cities) were given to convey a message. In the same way, the names of the 7 cities convey the state/nature of the Church from the time of John to the end of time.
- * The sequence of the churches and their names can accurately reflect the stages of the 'Church' worldwide, locally and in our personally in our life with Christ. We must note what Jesus approves and disapproves of and live accordingly. **The sequence is as follows:**

1. **Ephesus**- first, desirable. 2. **Smyrna**- bitter affliction (sweet smelling (myrrh) 3. **Pergamum**- earthly height (elevation or exalted) 4. **Thyatira**-sacrifice of labor (sacrifice or sweet savour of labour) 5. **Sardis**-Prince of joy (renewal) 6. **Philadelphia**-love of a brother (brotherly love) 7. ***Laodicea**-notion of judgment (judging the people)

*Laodicea: Revelation 3:14-22

- 14 *"And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, ('so be it' firmly) the Faithful (trustworthy) and True Witness (not concealing' martyr'), the Beginning of the creation of God (John 1:1-3)*
- 15 *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot (boiling). I could wish you were cold or hot.*
- 16 *"So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*

Laodicea, SE of Philadelphia, was a famous health resort popular for its hot baths and the collyrium (kol loo rium) eye salve produced there. The hot water for the baths was piped to the resorts in insulated pipes, but because of the distances involved, the water was often only lukewarm by the time it arrived at its destination.

- 17 *"Because you say,*

'I am rich, have become:

1. *wealthy (have more than enough), and have need of nothing'— Deut 8:7-20 (7 For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land...9 A land in which you shall eat food without shortage and lack nothing in it; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10 When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for all the good land which He has given you. 11 Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments, His precepts, and His statutes which I command you today. 12 Lest when you have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses and live in them, 13 and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all you have is multiplied, 14 Then your minds and hearts be lifted up and you forget the Lord you God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, 15 Who led you through...16 Who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. 17 Beware lest you say in your mind and heart, my power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth. 18 But you shall earnestly remember the Lord your God, for it is He Who give you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers... 19 And if you forget the Lord your God and walk after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. 20 Like the nations which the Lord makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.)*

and do not know that you are:

2. *wretched*(enduring a trial-this is a test!!!),
3. *miserable*(pitiable),
4. *poor*(destitute, starving)
5. *blind*(smoky or inflated with self deceit), and
6. *naked*(nude—no robe of righteousness...NO ARMOR!)

- 18 "I counsel(reproof and advice) you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.
- 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten(train up a child, educate, discipline by punishment). Therefore be zealous(hot, fired up) and repent(think differently afterward).
- 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. (Lukewarmness evicts the Lord from the throne our life and He then stands outside —where we have put Him – and knocks....calling....but we alone can hear and open the door, repent for what we have done and invite Him in again to that close, intimate relationship...or... 'depart from Me, I never KNEW you...)
- 21 "To him who overcomes(the continual temptation to cool off, not be so passionate, strong, adamant about adherence to His Word...) I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.
- 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." " (NKJ)
- Laodicea was known as a *primary* hub for the Roman aqueduct system.
- Mineral-rich waters, when lukewarm, taste terrible to any who drinks them (urge to vomit)... This makes the words of Jesus, the Faithful and True Witness, regarding those who refuse to accept His counsel(reproof and advice) so appropriate.
- Laodicea is the "nation of judgment." **It is the last Church, the last light bearer on Earth before the coming of Christ.**
- **It is the letter to God's people in our time.**
- In all the letters, **except the letter to Laodicea**, there is a commendation. It is vital for God's people at the end of time to take heed of the counsel Jesus gave to us for the day and time in which we now live...because we have nothing to commend us. Seriously!
- The reproofs were designed to touch our hearts, so that these wrongs might be corrected.
- To deny the message with arguments or excuses is to deny the omnipotence of God.
- This is a message from our Lord, born out of His intense love for us! Many times doctors run tests to find out exactly what is 'killing' us. Jesus knows already and is pleading with us as the 'Great Physician' to sign the permission slip (eternal yes) so that He can 'dine with us' intimately and He will Himself, cause us to love Him more, and serve Him whole heartedly.
- **Isa 61:10-11** 10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations. (NKJ)
- Rev. 14:12 Here comes in a call for the steadfastness of the saints, the patience, the endurance of the people of God, those who habitually keep God's commandments and their faith in Jesus. 13 Then I heard further – perceiving the distinct words of – a voice from heaven, saying, "Write this; Blessed, happy, to be envied, are the dead from now on who die in the Lord! Yes, blessed, happy, to be envied indeed, says the Spirit, in that they may rest from their labors, for their works, deeds, do follow, attend, accompany them!"