

### Revelation 3 Part 3

Hi, this is Richard Oliver, we are looking at Revelation chapter three, and we are going to the last church age, the Laodicean church age. This starts from around 1906AD, and we'll pick it up at verse fourteen.

*'And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning,' or the author, 'of the creation of God;*

*'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.'*

A lot is made of the position of Laodicea. It was a long way from water as a city in Turkey, in modern Turkey. So there was an aqueduct that brought water to the city, this was quite a common Roman creation. The distance was such that the water was exposed and by the time it got to the city it was lukewarm, not particularly pleasant to drink at all. Hence the picture here of lukewarm.

But, of course, this applies to the church age, in the 1906AD time through to today. The church is lukewarm. It is neither on fire, changing the world, nor is it stone cold. It is half and half.

And God says here, 'I will spue thee out of my mouth because you are lukewarm.'

Out of the mouth of God comes the Word of God, and unfortunately, in many churches today, we can see exactly this. The churches not always preaching God's Word. They're preaching philosophy, they're preaching social goodness, they're preaching to get orphans, to help the sick, to build hospitals, that's not what the church was intended. Those other things are fine. Schools, hospitals – lovely. That's all part of, and should be part of, our world. But the church is called to preach the gospel, to preach the Word of God. And here, many churches today, simply do not. And if anyone points this out, nine times out of ten, it's no, no, rubbish, we are the church, we are the clergy, we are the organised people, and so on.

And it says in verse seventeen, *'Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;'*

And that's often the way a lot of churches are.

And God says, *'and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:'*

Wretched because they're not achieving, they know in their heart of hearts that they're not really achieving what they're supposed to do. Miserable, and poor, they have no riches, they have no nuggets of gold, no life of the Word of God itself, no understanding. Blind. They're not seeing what God is doing, any more than the Pharisees or the Sadducees saw what God was doing when Jesus Christ was here on earth. And naked. Now, to be naked is to have all your sins exposed. It is the raiment, the white raiment is the covering that Christ gives His people. And here it's saying that the church of the world, not individual churches, there will be churches that are true, people who are true, and ministers who are true, not saying that. But, as a general rule, the church of the world is naked. It does not accept the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as the covering for sin. They have other things. You can join the church and think you're saved by shaking of hand, or by a special ceremony, or by being a member of a specific church or whatever. That isn't it. The only way is to be covered by

the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, shed for us on Calvary. And without that we are naked, so as we stand before God our sins are exposed, we have no covering.

In verse eighteen the call of Christ is, *'I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich;'*

It's available. The gold is there.

*'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.'*

All these things are available, and they're available now.

*'As many as I love,'* in verse nineteen, *'I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.'*

Being told off, being spanked by God is not a bad thing. It means He loves you. He wants you to change. All too often we centre on ourselves. But God, Jesus Christ, is the key. He is the One that we should be looking to. All too often we put ourselves first. Even in our prayers, 'Lord, we need this, Lord, I need money. Lord, I need healing, Lord I need' – it's not 'Lord, what do You want me to do? What would You have me do today?' You catch the concept.

Jesus said in verse twenty, *'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock:'*

Now, if Jesus is at the door of the church and knocking, where is He? He's outside. He's outside. Jesus Christ has been put outside of the church of today.

But it says, *'if any man' any individual, 'hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.'*

The call is for us to recognise Christ, not a church. Christ. And accept Him into our lives. And then He will communicate with us, then He will feed us, then He will give us what we need.

*'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.'*

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

Jesus Christ told us that unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone. The early church started off but it fell into the ground. And through the Pergamos church age and the Thyatira church age it looked as if it were dead, but in Luther's age, in the Sardis age, it started to sprout up again. Back to God, preaching the Word. The just shall live by faith, not relying on the church itself. And in Wesley's time it put out its arms. It was the greatest missionary period in the history of the church. And finally, in 1906, well, not finally, but in 1906AD, there's nothing final, God is always revealing more of Himself, in 1906AD came the gifts of the Holy Spirit, what is sometimes termed as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Not quite true, but certainly the outward pouring of the gifts and the spiritual abilities that God wants His church to be equipped with.

And then we go on. We'll pick that up in the very next chapter of the book of Revelation.

Thank you for reading.

May God bless you.