



LAODICEA: NEITHER HOT NOR COLD

We saw in the first part of this series that the word *Laodicea* means “the people’s justice”—laos+dike. And we saw that this justice is the counterfeit justice that Satan attempted to institute at the beginning of his rebellion against God’s government—the serpent’s brutal and punitive justice based on the balances of good and evil.

We also saw that Laodicea, the church living during the Antitypical Day of Atonement, is the church chosen by God to reveal the only true God as revealed by Jesus Christ. Laodicea was meant to be the “angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth.”

But The Amen, The Faithful and True Witness, and the Beginning of the Creation of God exposes some problems with this church, and shows that unless it repents, it will utterly and miserably fail it’s extremely important mission.

Jesus’ first rebuke to Laodicea is that it is neither cold nor hot.

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot,
Revelation 3: 15.

Jesus knows the works of Laodicea, because a tree is known by its fruits.

Beware of false prophets, who come to **you** in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. **You will know them** by their **fruits**.

Matthew 7: 15-16

Jesus knows that the works of Laodicea are not in harmony with His message from the Tree of Life. Laodicea is doing the works of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This church is one of the seven lamps that are supposed to light the world with the Tree of Life message given directly from Jesus, but its own works of good and evil—in particular its stance on the issue of justice—exposes that it is a fraud. Laodicea confuses God’s justice with Satan’s justice—*the justice of the people*—and no argument will move it away from its opinion. This will be further confirmed very soon by yet another Greek word coming up in the next few articles.

Jesus then goes on to say that Laodicea is neither cold nor hot. Now, surely we have all heard many preachers expound on what cold and hot means—but has it ever made sense? Really made sense?

First of all, most studies of this somewhat cryptic saying of Jesus don’t provide biblical texts to support it. The interpretation of these verses are based mostly on facts about the ancient city of



Laodicea and its abundant water springs, things that don't seem to have any relevance to the great controversy between God and Satan.

Recently, however, a study by [Brad Mock](#) was shared with us that finally made sense. The pieces of the puzzle appear to have fallen into place.

Our first question in solving a biblical mystery is: what does the Bible have to say about it? How does the Bible define any given word? How does it decode any seemingly unknowable mystery?

Take a look at how the Bible uses the word COLD.

Like the **cold** of snow in time of harvest *is* a faithful messenger to those who send him, for he refreshes the soul of his masters.
Proverbs 25:13

As **cold** water to a weary soul, so *is* good news from a far country.
Proverbs 25: 25

Will *a man* leave the snow water of Lebanon, *which comes* from the rock of the field? Will the **cold flowing waters** be forsaken for strange waters?
Jeremiah 18: 14

Can you see a theme starting to emerge? A theme that is in harmony with everything we have seen so far about Laodicea? This last church, the one living during the Antitypical Day of Atonement, just before Jesus' Second Coming, is supposed to be the messenger of the eternal gospel! Therefore, it should have a message that refreshes the soul, a message for the times of refreshing from the Lord:

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.
Acts 3: 19-21

Laodicea should be "cold:" it should be sharing "good news from a far country." The "far country" is the kingdom of God (Luke 19: 12), it is the eternal good news of God's character of agape love. The good news that God is only light at all times, and that there is no darkness in Him at all. The good news that God is only involved in life (light) and not at all with death (darkness). The refreshing news, like a cup of cold water, that Our Creator doesn't vacillate back and forth between good and evil. The good news that the God of the universe is a God of grace, and not a God of reward and punishment.



What has Laodicea done instead? It has done what is stated in Jeremiah 18: 14: it has forsaken the “cold flowing waters” from the throne of God, the waters of life, for “strange waters,” waters stored in broken cisterns, that do not hold water:

For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *and* hewn themselves **cisterns—broken cisterns** that can hold no water.
Jeremiah 2: 13

Now, this makes sense! We will buy this interpretation. Laodicea is basically failing the job of being a *messenger of good news* because, first of all, it is not cold—it is not a messenger of good news! But why should this be held against Laodicea? Why does Laodicea need to be a bearer of good news?

First of all, because God spoke directly to this endtime church at the transfiguration of Jesus, as we pointed out in the previous article. After six days, pointing to our time, at the end of six thousand years, the Father said: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him,” (Matthew 17: 5).

Laodicea does not have the good news because it is not listening to Jesus and Jesus only! Laodicea is full of riches and wisdom but not from the One who is The Truth.

Secondly, as the last church to be alive on the earth before Jesus’ Second Coming, Laodicea has been given *special revelation* about the great controversy between God and Satan and the issues involved in the controversy. Laodicea should indeed have been rich, had it learned directly from the Great Teacher, the bringer of glad tidings:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him Who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings **glad tidings** of good *things*, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”
Isaiah 52: 7

All of this will become clearer as we continue these studies, and as we examine each of Jesus’ solutions for this church. We will then realize how it all harmonizes together when we allow the Bible to be its own expositor.

But what then, of the word “hot?” How does the Bible define this word? Once we find out what it means, will it harmonize with what we just saw about the word “cold”?

The Greek word for “hot” itself is *zestos*, and it means “boiling hot, hot. Metaphorically of fervour of mind an zeal” (Thayer). If we search this Greek word in the Bible we can see how else it is used. The problem is, there is no other place in the Bible that uses the word *zestos*! But *zestos* comes from the root word *zeō*, which is a primary verb. It means “to *be hot* (*boil*, of liquids; or *glow*, of solids), that is, (figuratively) *be fervid* (*earnest*): – be fervent” (Strongs).



There are only two passages in the entire New Testament that use the word *zeō*. This makes our research much easier! Take a look; the word *zeō* is translated as FERVENT in both Romans 12: 11, and in Acts 18: 24-28:

Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord
Romans 12: 11

Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being FERVENT in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 18: 24-28

We find this last passage very interesting, because Laodicea, who has *special revelation*, does not have the same fervor as this man Apollos, who has *general revelation*. Notice that “he knew only the baptism of John,” not of Jesus. And yet, with the little that he did know, he was on fire for God, and in fact he was a messenger for Jesus, because he had some understanding of the truth and spoke boldly about what he did know. It was then that “Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.”

Laodicea doesn't live up to the *special revelation* it has, and even fails at *general revelation*! It is neither a bearer of good news from Jesus Himself, nor does it respond to the calling of God's Holy Spirit, which calls on all people. Check out the following passage from the Book of Romans:

For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Romans 2: 12-16

As we have read above, those who have the law—those who have *special revelation*—will not be justified by the law if they don't live up to their knowledge. But there are many in the world who respond to God's agape love without having great knowledge. They are “a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts.” In other words, they are as fervent as Apollo was, even in their limited knowledge. But Laodicea is not even this. It is lukewarm. It is a watered down version of both, contaminated by the mixture of light and darkness of the Tree of the



Knowledge of Good and Evil, and therefore, it is neither cold—does not have the good news of the Tree of Life—nor hot—nor the fervor that this message would produce.

Why doesn't Laodicea have God's law of agape love in their hearts as the Gentiles mentioned above do? We believe it is because Laodicea doesn't know "the only true God and Jesus Christ whom You [GOD] have sent," John 17: 3. And this has a direct relationship with Laodicea's concept of justice, as mentioned in the first part of this series of articles. This will become evident as we continue these studies.

There is no other place in the Bible that uses the word "lukewarm." We have found no cross reference, no substitute word that would help us bring clarity to this word. We would welcome any comments that would help us understand this better.

Notice however, what Matthew Henry Commentary says about "lukewarm:"

The heavy charge drawn up against this church, ministers and people, by one who knew them better than they knew themselves: *Thou art neither cold nor hot, but worse than either; I would thou wert cold or hot*, Rev 3:15. Lukewarmness or indifference in religion is the worst temper in the world. If religion is a real thing, it is the most excellent thing, and therefore we should be in good earnest in it; if it is not a real thing, it is the vilest imposture, and we should be earnest against it. If religion is worth any thing, it is worth every thing; an indifference here is inexcusable: *Why halt you between two opinions? If God be God, follow him; if Baal (be God), follow him*. Here is no room for neutrality. An open enemy shall have a fairer quarter than a perfidious neuter; and there is more hope of a heathen than of such. Christ expects that men should declare themselves in earnest either for him or against him.

Matthew Henry Commentary

Matthew Henry hits the issue straight on the head: Laodicea should have known the difference between Jehovah and Baal. Especially as it pertains to their respective brands of "justice." How long, O Laodicea, will you vacillate between two opinions? If we should know the character of God through Jesus, a merciful, forgiving, nonviolent, unconditional, impartial loving God, then follow Him. If we should know the character of God through Baal, the god of reward and punishment who is cruel and punitive, violent, vindictive, conditional and partial, then follow him!