



# OVERCOMERS

## OVERCOMERS - PART 16

There is an absolute abundance of living manna to be eaten through these 'Overcomer' resources, which in turn builds God's eternal life within us, empowering us to live out a wisdom from above while we are here on this earth. These letters are describing the spiritual condition of God's people all the way throughout the ages, right up to today and in the future. The seventh church we will look at is no different.

***Revelation 3:14-22 "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"***

Just like the church of Sardis, we are going to see a very similar letter given to the church at Laodicea. The first thing I want to point out before we get into each verse is what the word Laodicea means. Lao means man and Dicea means opinions, so what we have here is a church of man's opinions, as opposed to the Word of God.

Being and becoming lukewarm is the outcome for the people of God who are built and formed on man's opinions, as opposed to the Word of God. The reference to being lukewarm has its origins based in it being customary to only drink either hot or cold drinks at religious festivals or ceremonies etc. as it was extremely distasteful to drink anything lukewarm.

Laodicea did not have its own water source and so it was dependent on Hierapolis a nearby city to provide its water. Hierapolis was constructed around numerous hot springs, so it enjoyed an abundant supply of hot water, that it sent to Laodicea by way of an aqueduct. However, by the time the water reached Laodicea it had cooled to a lukewarm temperature. It would need to be cooled or re-heated before it was fit for consumption.

Just as it was extremely distasteful to drink lukewarm water, the lukewarm taste of the Laodicean's forms of godliness made Jesus want to spit this church out of His mouth, which is exactly the same reality when



# OVERCOMERS

one drinks insipid warm water. This is the context behind this statement and one that should have us all paying close attention to the next few verses.

Have you ever asked yourself why Jesus prefers a person being cold as opposed to being lukewarm? The answer is, it is way easier to reach and turn a person who is stone cold, than it is to reach and turn a person who is lukewarm. You see someone who is lukewarm, is not cold enough to put a jersey on and they are not hot enough to take a jersey off, they are in a posture of doing nothing. They have been lulled into a deceptive false position where they are slowly but surely dying spiritually and they are completely unaware of the process of rigor mortis that is setting in.

Once again as we have already seen, Jesus knew the deeds of this church just like He knows all our deeds, whether they are of Him or ourselves, and just because we wrap His name around things doesn't mean these deeds are actually of Him.

Verse 17 is where things get really interesting. This is where we see man's opinion of himself and where man thinks his spiritual condition is at, as opposed to Jesus' perspective on man's spiritual condition.

***Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,"***

Now once again we are talking about believers here. This is not a non-believer who utters these words of absolute arrogance and pride. These words are coming forth from us, God's people. I wonder if we truly know of our absolute NEED for Him. Not just to save us but for the complete process of transformation back into our original state before the fall.

This blind posture of heart is extremely alarming and yet it remains completely and utterly unaware of its true heart condition and state before God, hence the words of Christ Himself in the second part of verse 17.

***"and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."***

The key words here are "you do not know." You do not know your true spiritual condition of heart.

These are the exact same words Jesus said on the cross, when He said "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." The only problem is when Jesus said this while he hung on the cross He wasn't referring to His church, like He is in this letter.

Would you say you have a true and accurate reference for your own spiritual condition of heart? How do you know whether this is accurate or not? Would Jesus agree with your personal appraisal or would He give you a completely different appraisal? Are you and I in fact lukewarm thinking we are hot?



# OVERCOMERS

We must be prepared to ask these questions of ourselves by asking others whom we trust, for their perspective of us as well. Someone in Christ is not afraid of doing this as they truly want to know, because they truly want to come into all He has for them.

Let's now look at Jesus' solution for this church at Laodicea.

***I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.***

He advises them to buy from Him. He is the One who holds the answers to their wretched and broken spiritual condition. He is the One who is Life, Light and Love. When we see the word 'buy' here it is not literal, where we have to give Jesus money in exchange for what only He can give us. What He is saying is that if you want the outcomes that only I can give, you have to be prepared to lose your entire life for My sake, and lay hold of all I have for you no matter what this involves.

Are you prepared to part with your life, to lay hold of a life you know nothing about yet?

Only then will you become rich in Me and receive all I have for you now and in the future, so as to not find yourself in the consequences above, which lead to the weeping and gnashing of teeth. To avoid all of this Jesus then gives us His way out of this unhealthy condition of heart.

***Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.***

The discipline of the Lord is an incredible blessing, and how awesome to know the reason why God disciplines us is because He loves us and wants the best for us. It doesn't get any worse than Jesus having to knock to be let in to the place, He always should have had complete access to and residence in - our hearts. The fact that we have used this verse in the context of non-followers is more evidence of how unaware we have been of our own spiritual condition of heart. The fact that we the church believe this is about the lost, is indicative of our own lukewarm state.

The letter was written to the church at Laodicea, not the non-followers at Laodicea.

If we will heed this warning from Jesus and repent of our lukewarm state of being, then the most amazing promise awaits us, as we truly allow Jesus to be Lord of our very lives. As He comes into us and us into Him and we dine together, the outcome of this is in becoming the overcomers who get to sit down with Him on His throne.



# OVERCOMERS

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*

This throne is a throne of judgement where the overcomer as Christ's bride, will reign and govern with Him in the 1000-year reign, and hold a position of intimate closeness in the new heaven and new earth. The promise of all promises for those who truly love their Lord with His incorruptible love and become His prized possession.

## QUESTIONS

1. Why is it so detrimental to His church to be built on man's opinion?
2. Put yourself in the Laodicean's shoes, what would your response be if you received this letter from Jesus?
3. How can we know the true condition of our own hearts? (Hot, Cold or Luke Warm)
4. Why does Jesus have to knock on the door of His church's hearts and invite them to dine with Him?
5. Are you willing to ask others what they see? Why or why not?

**GROUP ACTIVITY:** Spend some time in prayer together and ask the Spirit to reveal the true state of your hearts, if necessary repent of your luke warm state and ask Him to reveal and fill you with His love so you are able to love Him with that same incorruptible love.