

# God's Promises to His People that Overcome



-Part 7: The Church at Laodicea  
(Based on the Seven Churches in Revelation)

## Statement of Purpose for these Essays

This is the seventh and final part of our discussion on “God’s Promises to His People that Overcome.” In these series of essays, we have been discussing the messages that Jesus gave to what are known as, “the seven churches of Revelation” as found in Revelation chapters 1, 2, and 3. In this final essay we will be discussing the Laodicea assembly. This is probably the most recognizable “church” because many pastors and leaders use a most well known scripture verse from this message of Jesus, in their sermons or messages to their congregations. The famous “lukewarm” scripture found in 3:15 and 16.

We also find the scriptures that I believe reveal the crux of all the messages to the churches of Revelation, as well as to the Body of Christ today. Revelation 3:19 and 20 states, *“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 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.”*

As we review the message to the assembly at Laodicea, we will do so using our usual format.

- A brief history or description of that particular church location
- The description of Jesus given to that particular church
- A description of what that church did well and was commended for
- A description of what that church did not do well and was chastised for
- The things that Jesus told each church to overcome
- The promise given to those who overcome
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*“He who is able to hear, let him listen and heed to what the Spirit is Saying”*

At the conclusion of this part, there will be a list and review of all of  
“God’s Promises to His People that Overcome”

## Seven Churches in Revelation

- Ephesus – Revelation 2:1-7
- Smyrna – Revelation 2:8- 11
- Pergamum – Revelation 2:12-17
- Thyatira – Revelation 2:18-29
- Sardis – Revelation 3:1-6
- Philadelphia – Revelation 3:7-13
- **Laodicea – Revelation 3:14-22**



### The Church at Laodicea – Revelation 3:14-22

- **A Little about Laodicea** – Laodicea was located 45 miles southeast of Philadelphia. Originally called Diospolis and Rhoas, Antiochus II Theos (286-246 BC), the ruler of Syria, colonized it between 261 and 246 BC, and renamed it for his first wife, Laodice. In 133 BC it came under the control of Rome. Towards the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and in the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, Laodicea became one of the principal cities of Asia Minor. It became well known for its famous fabrics (made from a beautiful black sheep’s wool, and medicine (they were famous for their “eye-salve”). Laodicea also became a major “banking center” during that time. All of the above mentioned aspects of “commerce” of Laodicea would be alluded to and used as imagery in Jesus’ message to the church in Laodicea. Everyone in Laodicea, including the Christians experienced a somewhat wealthy lifestyle.

Christianity came early to the city through the ministry of Paul. Paul, in His writing of the Letter to the Colossians, implies a close relationship between the churches in Laodicea and Colossae. The church in Laodicea was probably founded by Epaphras from Colossae and they met in the home of Nympha (Colossians 4:15). Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake in 66 A.D. and rebuilt by Marcus Aurelius, the Roman pro-counsel of the time. By the time of the writing of Revelation, Laodicea was back to its bustling, financially sound city.

- **Description of Jesus** - *“...These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;”*

Jesus refers to Himself first of all as the "Amen." We are all very familiar with this word. We utter it when we close a prayer or when we want to express our agreement with a meaningful statement. We take it to mean, “So be it.” So why does Jesus use it in referring to Himself? Jesus did use this word frequently in emphasizing the importance of certain things He was saying to His listeners. In our English translations of the texts of the Gospels, we read Jesus saying and using the terms, "Truly, truly," or "Verily, verily." Actually, in the original Greek, He is saying the words "Amen, Amen."

The usage of this repeating of a word or phrase indicated that Jesus is saying something extremely important. It is “exponentially” important. It always marks a significant truth. Therefore, when you come to this word, “amen” in the Gospels spoken by Jesus, pay careful attention because Jesus, Himself is underscoring that what He is saying is not only true, but it is an important truth. The truth He expresses is actually Jesus, Himself who as we can see is “**the Amen**,” Himself.

He also refers to Himself as the “*faithful and true witness*.” This actually is tied with what Jesus just referred to Himself as – “*the Amen*.” His Word is final and absolute. His Word, Himself, is faithful and true. Jesus has emphasized his truthfulness in the previous letters to the churches. However, here he adds the word “faithful.” He sees and knows all and can be the only One entrusted to be faithful and true to speak the truth. Just as the Father testified to Moses when He called Himself, “*I Am Who I say I Am*” (YHWH), Jesus is declaring that He is who He says He is and He is the only faithful and true One that can testify and be the only Witness that can be relied upon. Why? Because just like the Father - Jesus was, is and always will be.

Jesus goes on to describe Himself as “*the beginning of God's creation*.” It is the same word used in which the Gospel of John opens with: “*In the **beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*,” (John 1:1). Two verses later in John 1:3 it states, “*All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made*.” Jesus is the origin, the beginning of God's creation.

- **What that Church did well** - “*I know thy works...*”

Yes, Jesus knew their works and obviously there was nothing good about any of it.

- **What that Church did not do well** – “*...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. 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: 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.*”

Wow!!! Where do we begin??? They were neither cold nor hot. They were “lukewarm.” Jesus used the imagery that they could relate to. The water supply to Laodicea came from another city called Hierapolis. At Hierapolis, were “hot springs” where people would go and reinvigorate themselves, in a way that, today, we would go to a spa. The water would run a few miles through an aqueduct to Laodicea and then to a city south of them where the water would, by that time, be so cold it would bring true refreshment “like a cup of cold water.” Laodicea was somewhere “in the middle.” In Laodicea, the water was lukewarm and its taste was horrible. It was neither invigorating nor was it refreshing. It had a horrible taste much like the compromising attitude of the Laodicea assembly to the “mouth of God.” They didn’t want to be on “fire” for Jesus, but they did not want to be “cold” for Him either. They decided to make a nice compromise and just be lukewarm and everybody would be happy. The word translated in to the fancy King James language, “spue,” really means “vomit.” He will “vomit” out this assembly, these types of lukewarm “Christians” because it is nauseating to Him. Hey!! It sounds to me like they were in danger of being cast out. Hmmm, again, this is another good scripture to throw into the “once saved always saved” debate, which we will not get into here.

Remember we said that the people of Laodicea were wealthy, which included the Laodicea Christians. However, Jesus told them that they were really “spiritual poor.” They were destitute in

their relationship with Jesus. In a city that boasted having the best textile and clothing industry, they were “naked and wretched” in the Lord’s sight. The sad thing is that they didn’t even know it nor realize their “lukewarmness.” They thought everything was fine. The “prosperity message” was in full swing and everything was fine. But it wasn’t. They thought they were in need of nothing. However, they were in need of everything. They were in need of true salvation in Jesus.

Jesus, in His love for His Bride, His Body, gives them a “door of opportunity.” He counsels them *“to buy of me gold tried in the fire.”* With all their wealth that could purchase any material thing they wanted they could not purchase what they really needed - salvation. Jesus implores them to “buy of me.” He is telling them not to look anywhere else for what you need. What you need is salvation. Therefore, what you need is ME!!! Yes, our faith will be tried with fire but when it is, it will be refined to a greater value. Just do not compromise to get out of going through the fire.

Jesus goes on to tell them, *“...buy of me...white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed.”* Laodicea was a center for the textile and clothing industry as we had mentioned previously. Yet the assembly there was “naked.” They needed the “white garments” of righteousness that can only be found and given, by and through Jesus. Their “spiritual nakedness” needed to be covered. They needed to be clothed and be brought back into their “right standing” with Him which is always symbolized by “white garments.” Remember, the pagan god of this city required “white garments” to enter their temple. This is a pointed and direct mocking to this aspect of God and his people.

Jesus tells them, *“...to anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”* Laodicea was noted for their eye ointment. But Jesus says they needed “spiritual eye salve” that will enable them to truly “see” clearly. The scriptures tell us concerning the anointing of the Spirit which opens eyes to understand the truth of God, His love and His Word. They needed their “spiritual eyes” to be opened.

We then read the scriptures that we have used throughout our discussions in these essays that apply to this assembly at Laodicea and all the churches in Revelation. These scriptures apply to every assembly, every leader and every believer within the Body of Christ, today, as well.

- Revelation 3:19 and 20 - *“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 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.”*

- **What to Overcome**

The assembly at Laodicea needed to overcome everything we had just discussed. They needed to repent and overcome the deception they were in of being spiritually lukewarm, spiritually blind, spiritually naked, spiritually wretched, and break the deception of compromise that has gripped their “Christianity.” Jesus was giving them in Laodicea, as well as those of us to whom this may apply to today, an opportunity to “open the door” and allow Jesus in and partake of all that He is.

- **The Promise of Overcoming** - *“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.”*

Jesus states very clearly what is at stake to those in this deceived state - their eternal salvation. If those He was addressing truly heeded His warning and repented they would be able to partake of the greatest promise of all - salvation and eternity with Jesus and the Father. Those that have “ears to hear” and turn from their ways, will be allowed access to the Throne Room of Heaven and sit in the presence of our Father and our Lord and Savior. We will sit with Jesus in heaven next to the Father. Just as Jesus overcame sin and death, so shall we. Praise the Lord!!!

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As we conclude our discussion concerning “God’s Promises to His People that Overcome,” I want to encourage us all to take a moment and check where we are at, personally. I believe no one is immune to any of the warnings that Jesus gave to His Body, His Bride - the Church. As I have stated at the onset of these essays, just as John the Baptist, in the “spirit of Elijah,” at the first coming of Jesus declared, I believe the Lord is bringing this message forth to prepare the Bride, the Body of Christ, the Church for Jesus' soon return. The Spirit is exhorting every one of us within the Body of Christ to "Consider their Ways;" to "repent for the Kingdom of Heaven (Jesus’ return) is at hand;" to "turn towards and kiss towards" the Lord like never before (return to your first love); to beware of false prophets and prophesy; to beware of seductive, "new" doctrines; etc.

Below is a review of all of “God’s Promises to His People that Overcome” as spoken by Jesus to the “seven churches of Revelation” as well as a few other promises. *“He who is able to hear, let him listen and heed to what the Spirit is saying”* - corporately as the Body of Christ and individually as the Bride of Christ.

1. Revelation 2:7 - *“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”* - Eternal Life - be a partaker of the Tree of Life – Salvation!!!
2. Revelation 2:10, 11 - *“...and I will give thee a crown of life.” “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”* - Will not be injured by the second death - the Lake of Fire
3. Revelation 2:17 - *“I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”* - Will be given the true manna - the true understanding of the Word. Given a new name etched in stone - forever
4. Revelation 2:26-28 - *“...to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.”* - Authority and power over nations – rule and reign with Jesus
5. Revelation 3:5 - *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”* - Robes of Righteousness will be placed upon you. Your name will not be erased from the Book of Life - Jesus will confess you before the Father and all of heaven
6. Revelation 3:12 - *“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God...” “...and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”* - You will be a pillar in the sanctuary of God; God will place HIS NAME upon you. You will be a part of the new Jerusalem - for eternity
7. Revelation 3:21 - *“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.”* - Eternal Life - We will sit with Jesus in heaven next to the Father - Just as He overcame so shall we. Salvation!!!

Other note worthy scriptures and promises

- Revelations 12:11 - *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*
- Revelation 21:7 states that, *“He that overcomes shall inherit all things and I will be his God and he shall be my son.”*
- *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*  
- 2Corinthians 1:20