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# Letter of Jesus to the Church in Laodicea

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## **Revelation 1-3**

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“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

The Vision of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man (Revelation 1)



The Seven Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 2-3)

## Revelation 3:14-16

“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.’”

## Revelation 3:17-19

“For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing,’ not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.”



## Revelation 3:20-22

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

# Structure of the Seven Letters

## **1. Introductory Address**

- Identification of the Audience + Command to “write”
- Identification of the Author

## **2. A Letter Body**

- List of Strengths
- List of Weaknesses
- Call to Faithfulness

## **3. Concluding Address**

- “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”
- Promise of End-times Blessings for “the one who conquers”

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write...”

- While Sardis had been the richest city in Asia Minor, Laodicea was likely the wealthiest city of the region in AD 95.
- When the city was decimated in AD 60 by an earthquake, they were the only city to rebuild themselves without Roman assistance.



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# The Three Pillars of Laodicea's Economy

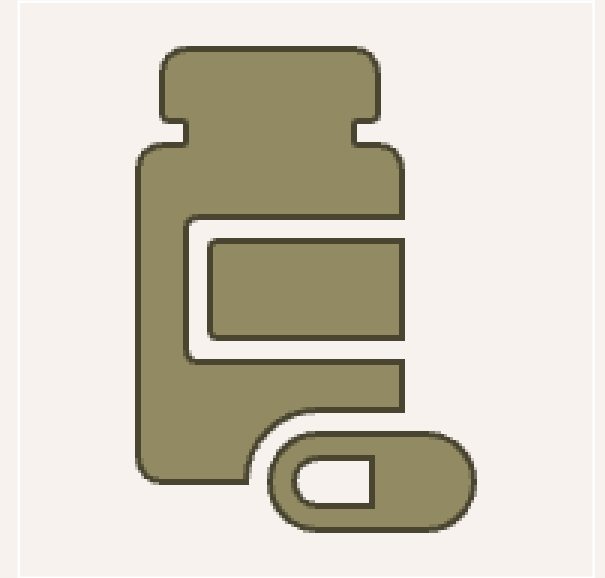
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**Banking**



**Textiles**



**Pharmaceutical  
s**

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“The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation” (v. 14b)

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Jesus addresses himself to the audience in three ways:

1. **“the Amen” (cf. Isaiah 65:16)**
  2. **“the faithful and true witness”**
  3. **“the beginning (Greek: arché) of God’s creation,” meaning, “the source or ruler of God’s creation.”**
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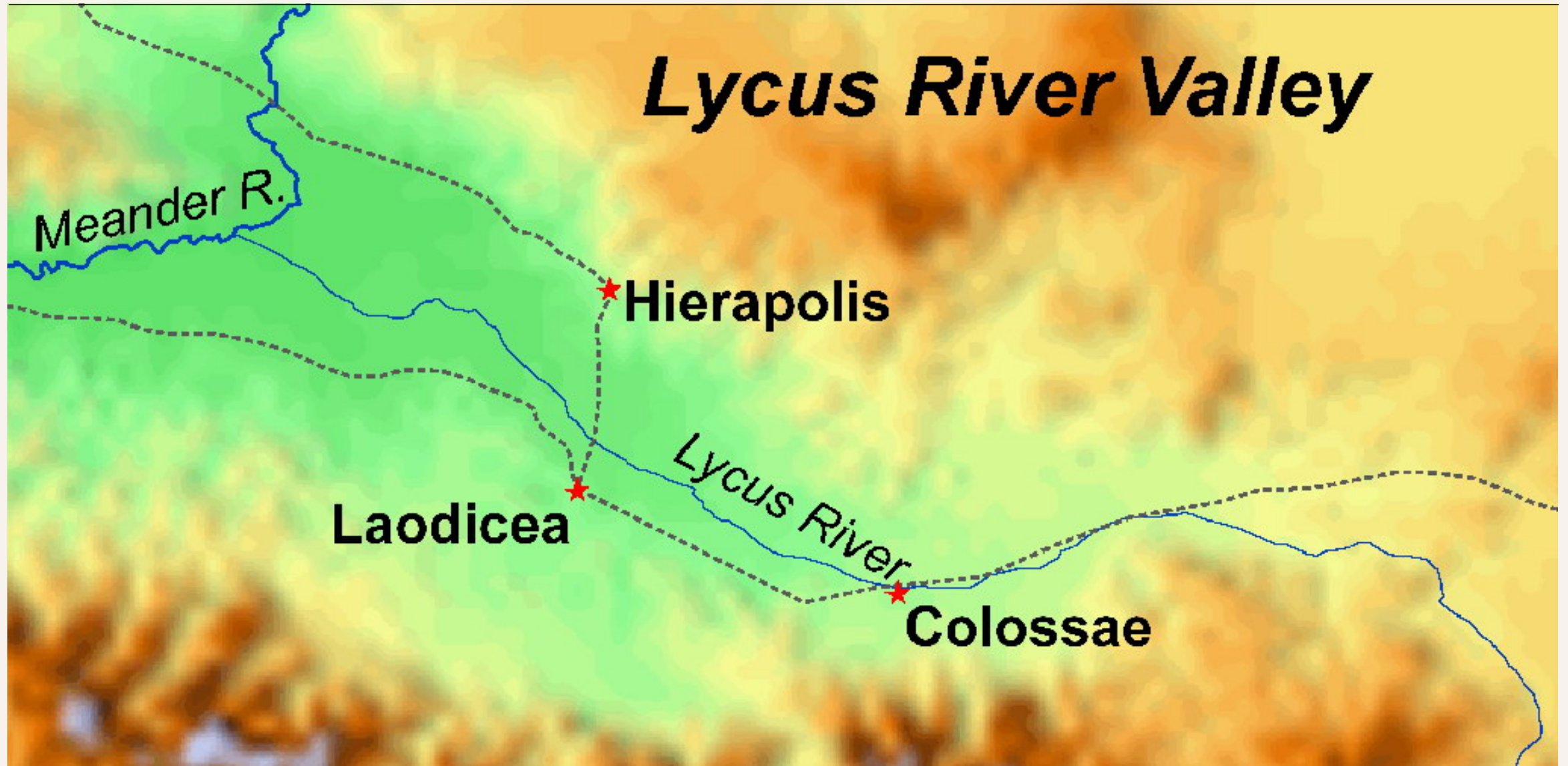
## The Weakness of the Laodicean Church

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**“I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot.  
Would that you were either cold or hot! So,  
because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor  
cold, I will spit you out of my mouth” (vv. 15-16).**

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# ***Lycus River Valley***











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## The Weakness of the Laodicean Church

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Laodicea struggled to supply water for its citizens. Their water was brought in via an open-air aqueduct that ran to a pair of springs 2 miles to the south. By the time the water reached the city, it was lukewarm, having been warmed by the sun, and was unpleasant to drink until cooled.

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## The Weakness of the Laodicean Church

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Jesus would rather the Laodicean church be **useful** like the warm water of Hierapolis, or **useful** like the cold water of Colossae.

But they were **useless**, and therefore, Jesus wanted to spit them out of his mouth!

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# Biblical Usefulness

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**What does it mean to be useful to God  
and his Kingdom?**

**— — —**

**How does one make oneself useful to God  
and his Kingdom?**

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## Biblical Usefulness

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“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, **for apart from me you can do nothing**”  
(John 15:5).

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## What Caused the Laodicean Church to Become Useless?

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“For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered,  
and **I need nothing**,’ not realizing that you  
are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked”  
(v. 17).

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## The Incomparable Love of Christ for His Own

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**“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so 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 eat with him, and he with me” (vv. 19-20).**

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## Jesus's Call to Faithfulness

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“I counsel you to buy from me **gold** refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and **white garments** so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and **salve** to anoint your eyes, so that you may see” (v. 18).

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## A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God

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“When the Lord divided Canaan among the tribes of Israel Levi received no share of the land. God said to him simply, ‘I am thy part and thine inheritance,’ and by those words made him richer than all his brethren, richer than all the kings and rajas who have ever lived in the world.”

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## A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God

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“And there is a spiritual principle here, a principle still valid for every priest of the Most High God. **The man who has God for his treasure has all things in One.** Many ordinary treasures may be denied him, or if he is allowed to have them, the enjoyment of them will be so tempered that they will never be necessary to his happiness.”

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## A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God

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“Or if he must see them go, one after one, he will scarcely feel a sense of loss, **for having the Source of all things he has in One all satisfaction, all pleasure, all delight.** Whatever he may lose he has actually lost nothing, for he now has it all in One, and he has it purely, legitimately and forever.”

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## The Incomparable Love of Christ for His Own

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**“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so 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 eat with him, and he with me” (vv. 19-20).**

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# The Promise of Eschatological Blessing

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**“The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne” (v. 21).**

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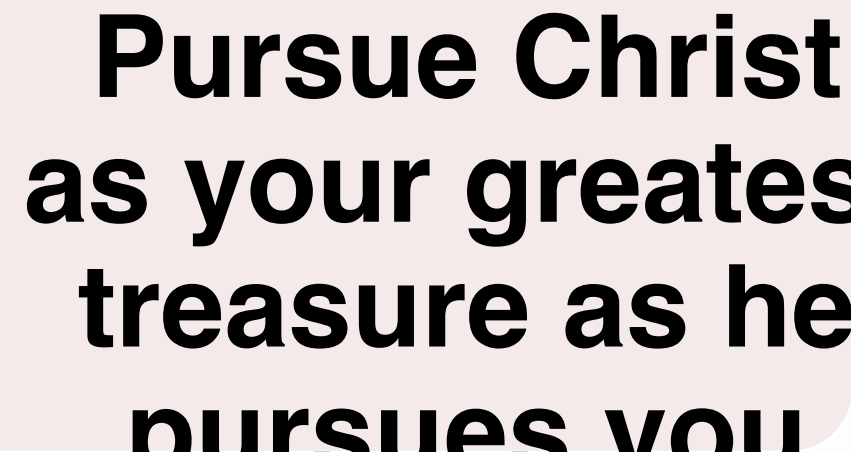


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“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (v. 22).



**Be useful by  
depending on,  
surrendering to,  
abiding in  
Christ**



**Pursue Christ  
as your greatest  
treasure as he  
pursues you**