① INTRO & SELF-IDENTIFICATION

v.14 And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans...

- As with the other churches, it seems Jesus uses the church surroundings to emphasis His teachings
- Pergamus was the capitol and had thrones
★ Jesus said that area was a "Throne of Satan"
- Philadelphia was known as the entrance or "Gateway" to the EAST
★ Jesus said the Church are the Pillars (Entrance) to God's house
- Using the same teaching style, we see Laodicea as a city surrounded by Hot Springs, but had lukewarm water by the time it entered the city (This was a 6 mile aqueduct)
- Also, Laodicea was known for its medicine... specifically help w/ weak eyes and had a well known "Eye Salve"
- the city also had soft black wool from its sheep and made well known "woven garments"
- Most of all, the city was known for its wealth
- So wealthy, that during an earthquake that destroyed the city the citizens rebuilt it w/ their own money w/o help from Roman Gov.
- The city, like the church, thought they were in good standings w/ God due to their affluence & wealth
- they were both wrong
- Also, very interestingly, the letter to the Colossians is argued by some to actually be a letter to the Laodiceans (by the Lycus valley)
- Colosse and Laodicea being neighbors

- Transitioning now to the self-identification, we see a beautiful, but much to discuss topic!

v.14 write, "These things says the Amen, The Faithful and True Witness, The beginning of the Creation of God.

- This 3-fold title is awesome BUT, easy to miss (unless one is familiar of God's identification of Israel throughout the O.T.)
- Isaiah, in particular, uses all 3 identifications to describe:
  - God as the Amen (True/verily)
  - God as the Origin of Creation (The Cosmos - Gen. 1:1 and the Creation of Israel... John 1:1 is Deliberate
  - And that Israel would be a witness of God to His creation

"You are My witnesses," says the LORD and My servant whom I have chosen (Corporate/National Election) that you (or a Nation) may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me"
"... I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed... therefore, you (Israel) are My witnesses." Is. 43:10, 12-13

★ It GETS BETTER...

- Now, the Christian community is to be the "witnesses" of God.
  - To know Him and proclaim Him
  - and the He alone is God and He alone saves... A CLEAR TRANSITION

"The Helper will come whom I will send you, the Spirit of Truth. He will TESTIFY of Me and you will bear witness..." John 15:26-27

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you (Christian community / New Nation 1Pt. 2) shall bear witness of Me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to all the end of the earth" ACTS 1:8

★ And in regard to the Amen and Creation titles we can go back to Isaiah's prophecy again

- It builds upon the scripture mentioned above in ch. 43

"Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing. It shall spring forth and you shall know it. I will make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Is. 43:18-19

- LATER in Isaiah, he reveals the "new" thing... the New Jerusalem
- God created the world/cosmos out of nothing - Gen. 1:1
- God created Israel out of nothing (Dt. 26, Is. 41:4, 43:9, 13, 48:8, 16 51:9, 63:16 and 19)
- AND Isaiah ends w/ a final prophecy Is. 65
  - My nation did not seek Me
  - another nation sought Me
  - I'm done stretching out My hand to a rebellious nation
  - They provoke Me to anger
  - I will not destroy them all (remnant)
  - I will number them for the sword
  - "Because when I called, you did not answer, when I spoke you did not hear, But did evil before My eyes and chose that in which I do not delight" v. 12
  - "You shall leave your name (GET A new name) says the God of truth/amen" v. 15
  - "For Behold, I create a new heaven and a new earth. The former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create. For Behold, I create Jerusalem" (a new Jerusalem... a "new thing")
    Is. 65:17-18
  - Is 66 speaks of new and true worship w/ streams and rivers of peace and glory for the Gentiles as new heavens and the new Earth

Ps. 89 Speaks of God's covenant w/ Israel were like/as the heavens and Earth

★ SO, NOW... Jesus is proclaiming to be the fulfillment of these promises/prophecies

- Jesus is the "Amen" AND
- Jesus has begun a new creation... KTIOIS (2 Cor. 5:17, Gal. 6:15, Rev 3:14)
- Jesus is not the Beginning of Creation (As is incorrectly translated) He is the ἡ ἀρχὴ

The ruler of "The New Creation" (or origin) - Col 1:15; Rev. 1:5 "πρωτοτοκος" "firstborn" 2 COR. 5:17
- ἐν ἀρχῇ - John 1:1 In the Beginning...
- ὁ ἀρχὴ - 1 Cor 15:24 Jesus has all rule / authority

The New Creation has begun w/ the "Church" and the Kingdom Col 1, Eph. 2:10 His work πεποίηκα "For in christ, we are a new creation" Gal 6:15 KTIOIS

This is why Mark 16:15 says: Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every "creature" (old creation... to become His new creation

② CONDEMNATIONS & REBUKES

v.15 I know your works...

- Like the church of Sardis, the church of Laodicea gets no praise or commendations
- Some argue that the Laodicean church was worse than Sardis
  - although it would be hard to imagine being worse than a church that Jesus calls "Dead" 3:1
  - One of the main problems w/ the Laodicean church was their view of themselves was in
★ complete contrast w/ Jesus' view
- actually amazing how opposite their view/assessment was compared to Jesus!

v.15 You are neither cold nor hot

- like the city, they were lukewarm
- no spiritual fervor
- nothing useful for the King Jesus

v.15 I could wish you were cold or hot

- This has been interpreted two ways:
  1) hot is a positive/good thing AND Cold is a negative/bad thing
  - Jesus would be saying: pick a side... are you for Me or against Me?
  - now, Jesus is recorded as saying: "that you are either FOR OR Against Him" Matt 12:30, Luke 11:23
★ However, Jesus is never recorded as saying He "wishes" You were against Him.

This leads to an alternate interpretation of Rev. 3:15 option #2)

- Both hot and cold are positive attributes of a christian
- As mentioned, the city had lukewarm water from the surrounding springs
- hot water was brought in for medicinal purposes (healing, sauna, steam rooms, for those sick)
- And cold water was useful for refreshments, staying cool, etc
★ Lukewarm water was neither refreshing or healing... BUT unuseful and totally ineffective
- Being ineffective & un-useful is metaphorically "distasteful" to the Lord.

v.16 So then, because you are lukewarm, I will vomit you out of My mouth

χλιαρὸς: TEPID

ἐμέω: vomit, spit, spue throw up

- There are some mentalities and Behaviors that literally make Jesus sick and want to throw up
★ Being "TEPID", not useful is disgusting to our KING!

v.17 Because you say, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing

- this was the church's self-assessment
- Possibly, they believed that since they were wealthy, they were in good standing w/ Jesus
- Thinking there is some tie or correlation between spiritual maturity and economic prosperity
- They couldn't have been more wrong
- Later in the Book of Revelation, unbelievers and people of prosperity are guilty of having "intercourse" w/ the ungodly world system
  - 6:15 Rich men try to hide in caves
  - 13:16 Rich men receive the mark
  - 18:3 Rich men have fornicated with Babylon...
  - 18:15 ... rich men will weep and cry when Babylon falls
- Paul even mocked and used heavy sarcasm to the Corinthians who lived so luxuriously:

"You are full! You are rich! Your live like Kings w/o us... God has us, the apostles last (sarcasm, they were!") as men condemned to death. We are a spectacle to the world and look like fools, but we are fools for Christ's sake, but your are so wise in Christ (sarcasm) We are weak, but you are strong. You are distinguished, but we are dishonored. We hunger and thirst, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless. We labor and work. When reviled, we bless. When persecuted, we endure. We are slandered, yet we entreat. We look like the scum of the earth and the refuse of all things." 1 Cor. 4:8-13
"... I urge you to become imitators of me" 1 Cor. 4:16

- This common confusion of spiritual obedience = physical wealth
★ probably comes from a mis-understanding of the Transition of physical Nation of Israel to the Spiritual Nation of Christians
★ There is a clear Transition from physical Israel to TRUE/Spiritual Israel (Now is a spiritual nation, priests, temple sacrifices, weapons, armor, etc!)
- To physical Israel, God Did give physical blessings, land, people, weapons, armor, etc for Godly obedience
  - Christians operate in the spiritual realm
  - all we are promised physically are our needs met: food and clothing 1 Tim. 6:8
- The Christians in Laodicea had an inaccurate barometer of spiritual growth

v.17 You do not realize you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked

- The "you" is emphatic in the Greek
  - they were the ones who were poor!
- they thought others were poor & blind

★ Similar to the "Rich Fool" parable Luke 12:13-21

"Beware of covetousness... πλεονεξία: wanting more
..."for ones life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" v.15
Then He taught a parable:
- rich man thought he was so wise
- God said, "You fool... whose will those things be which you have. So also (is a fool) is the one who lays up treasures for themselves and is not rich toward God" Luke 12:20-21

- very beautifully, in the next verse Jesus tells them to buy from Him
  1) refined gold to be rich
  2) white garments to be clothed
  3) and anointing so you can see