



Revelation 3:14-22
Week 6 - March 10, 2024

Welcome!

Welcome to the Winter 2024 Life Group Series! In this session, we will be learning about the Seven Churches of Revelation.

First CRC of Hanford is in the midst of transition, and has been through quite a lot over the last few years. We've weathered political discontent, a pandemic, the loss of our Senior Pastor who'd served twenty years in the role, watched, prayed, and cried as we've lost beloved members of our church family.

All churches have struggles, and according to the book of Revelation, they always have. Join us in this seven week study as we examine ancient churches in their strengths and struggles.



Map of the Ancient Churches



Tips for Reading the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation, written by the Apostle John, is one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible. It's full of strange imagery that's unfamiliar to modern readers. However, the careful reader will discover patterns in the text that help us interpret it.

Our texts roughly have the following pattern.

1. Setting - the church under discussion.
 2. Title - a title of Jesus.
 3. Commendation - what the church is doing right.
- Complaint - what the church is doing wrong.
Correction - what the church needs to do to get back on track.

Before You Come to Life Group

1. If you're bringing a new person to the study, we recommend getting them study materials ahead of time so they can feel prepared.
2. Pray that the LORD will open your eyes and heart to receive the lessons he has to teach you in the study.
3. Read the scripture focus for the study.
4. Go through the questions and think about how you might answer them. We've provided space in the study for you to write down your answers if you'd like.

Chatechism Corner

Q & A 124

Q. What does the third petition mean?

A. "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" means:

Help us and all people to reject our own wills and to obey your will without any back talk.

Your will alone is good.¹

Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to,² as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.³

¹ Matt. 7:21; 16:24-26; Luke 22:42; Rom. 12:1-2; Tit. 2:11-12

² 1 Cor. 7:17-24; Eph. 6:5-9

³ Ps. 103:20-21

What We Believe

1. Read Revelation 3:14-22. What title does Jesus have in our text? What does the title mean?

2. There is no commendation for the Laodicean church. Why?

3. What complaint does Jesus have for the church in Laodicea? Do you think Jesus has a similar complaint against the First CRC of Hanford?

4. What correction does Jesus give to the church in Laodicea? What's the outcome if they correct themselves? What's the outcome if they don't correct themselves?

Laodicea Facts

Laodicea flourished under Roman rule as part of the province of Asia. The city's noteworthy banking assets are reflected in Cicero's remark about cashing his letters of credit in Laodicea (Cicero, Fam. 3.5.4). Laodicea had a famous school of medicine that was known for ophthalmology, a fact supported by coins from the area that contain the names of leading physicians from the school (Reddish, Guide, 233). The first-century geographer Strabo reports that Laodicea's economy thrived due to its textile industry, which was renowned for its raven-black wool (compare "white clothing" in Rev 3:18; Strabo, Geography 12.8.16).

The Lexham Bible Dictionary. Lexham Press.

God Speaks to Us

1. Are you lukewarm in any area of your life? Consider your finances, entertainment choices, working/family relationships, food/alcohol/drug use, care for your body, and sex life. How can your life group help you become hot or cold?

2. The Lord promises to reprove and discipline those he loves (see verse 19). How has the Lord reproved and disciplined you? Did you enjoy it at the time? Are you glad the Lord disciplined you?

Cross References

Rev. 3:14 - 2 Co. 1:20

Rev. 3:15 - Ro. 12:11

Rev. 3:16 - Pr. 25:25

Rev. 3:17 - Pr. 13:7

Rev. 3:18 - 1 Pe. 1:7

Rev. 3:19 - Pr. 3:12

Rev. 3:20 - Lk. 12:37

Rev. 3:21 - Mt. 19:28

Rev. 3:22 - Rev. 2:7



Temple of Zeus at Laodicea.



“I do not think the devil cares how many churches you build, if only you have lukewarm preachers and people in them.”

- Charles Spurgeon

God Speaks to Our Families

1. The Laodicean church thought they were rich and had prospered. Yet, the Lord told them they were wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. Share a time when a friend or family member didn't realize they were in trouble.

2. How can we share our concerns with others about their sin without upsetting them? Should we even be concerned about upsetting them if they're headed down a dangerous path?





God Speaks in Worship

1. When does the Lord confront us with our sin during worship? What avenue does the Lord give us during worship to repent?

2. We often think about confession as a personal matter where we bring our sins to the Lord and trust in his forgiveness. Yet, our text was written to a church, not an individual. What sin, if any, should First CRC of Hanford repent of as a body?

The Gospel Call

1. Is an able-bodied person who doesn't work on Sunday and professes faith in Jesus Christ, but also refuses to attend church, lukewarm? Why or why not?

2. How would you counsel the person described in the previous question?



“Gracious and Holy Father,

My lukewarmness distresses me and dishonors You. I have become spiritually complacent.

Warm my heart by showing me again the depth of Your love that sent Jesus to live and die for me.

Grant me the gift of repentance and pour Your love into my heart by Your Holy Spirit.

Grant me a thirst to know You better as well as a heart full of spiritual fervor for You.

Enflame my heart with the sure and certain hope of my future sitting with You on Your throne in heaven.

Prepare me for all that lies ahead in my earthly pilgrimage...

the smiles of prosperity as well as the frowns of adversity,

the days of spiritual conquest and victory as well as the days of defeat,

the dark nights of the soul as well as the bright days of spiritual blessing.”

— Adapted from *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions*, pp. 99, 116