



## STUDY TOOLS

Sunday, February 16, 2025

**Teaching Title:** Restoring Honor

**Key Scripture:** Revelation 3:14–19

# CEDAR VALLEY

### 5-DAY READING PLAN WITH QUESTIONS:

**Monday:** Deuteronomy 6:13–23

**Tuesday:** Luke 6:27–49

**Wednesday:** 2 Corinthians 9:6–15

**Thursday:** Psalm 29

**Friday:** Revelation 3:14–22

1. What does this passage tell you about God?
2. What does this passage tell you about people?
3. If this is God's word, what do I need to do?
4. What's your takeaway?
5. Who would you tell?

### MEMORY TOPIC:

Honoring God

### MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 3:9–10 NLT

Honor the Lord with your wealth and the best part of everything you produce. Then He will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

### LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION:

#### Introduction:

In the American Church today, wealth and comfort can have a stranglehold on our lives and prevent us from living the lives God desires for us. This was the issue for the church in Laodicea—a city in Asia Minor—that Jesus spoke a prophetic word to through John. The faith of the Laodiceans was “lukewarm.” They accommodated their culture so much that they believed they had everything they needed, not only materially but also spiritually. This false sense of security caused them to neglect their dependence on God. Just like the church in Laodicea, we must break the grip that money and possessions have on us. By releasing our money and possessions, we can finally experience the life God desires for us. How do we break free? When we release money, money releases us.

#### Questions:

Icebreaker—What is your favorite room in your house and why?

Read Revelation 3:14–22 together as a group.

1. What does it mean for Jesus to be the “Amen” and the “faithful and true witness”? How do these titles relate to His character and promises?
2. Why does Jesus say the Laodiceans are “lukewarm,” neither hot nor cold? What does it mean to be lukewarm in your faith, according to this passage? (see Digging Deeper for background information.)
3. What do Revelation 3:17 and Haggai 1:3–6 teach us about the dangers of relying on material wealth and self-sufficiency?
4. In Revelation 3:18, Jesus advises the Laodiceans to “buy gold from me.” What do these items represent, and how can we “buy” them in a spiritual sense? (see Digging Deeper)
5. Jesus says in Revelation 3:19 that He disciplines those He loves. How do you respond when God corrects

you?

6. Read Revelation 3:20–22. What promises does Jesus make to the church in these verses? How do these promises provide comfort for the Church today?
7. Jesus calls us to full obedience, not partial obedience, particularly when it comes to our wealth. Are there any steps you feel God is calling you to take in response to this message?

## Notes

In Pastor Neal's sermon, he talked about generosity beginning with tithing. For more on tithing, refer to the following passages:

Genesis 3:4; 4:3; 14:18–20; 28:22

Luke 6:38; 11:42

Matthew 23:23

Deuteronomy 12:22–23

Malachi 3:8–10

## Digging Deeper

### Question 2:

"Christians in Laodicea lived in the wealthiest city in the area, and apparently they share in that wealth. It was a commercial center and crossroad, and there were temples to numerous deities. Scholars have found cultural allusions in this message not only to Laodicea's wealth but also to the local production of eye salve, the use of black wool, and especially the city's lack of a good water supply. It has often been suggested that John is aware of the nearby hot springs in Hierapolis and the good cold water brought into Laodicea from outside the city. The lukewarm water may be a reference to that of the springs as they cascade over the cliff at Hierapolis, or to Laodicea's own water.

The problem with the Laodicean church is that it is neither hot nor cold but lukewarm, which is so disgusting that Jesus is about to spit or even vomit (Rev. 3:15–16). . . . The text, therefore, does not present a spectrum with two extremes – hot (for Jesus) and cold (against Jesus) – and a wishy-washy middle. Rather, it presents two antithetical points, the first of which is illustrated with two images, hot water and cold water. Both of these are pleasing and beneficial, which lukewarm water is precisely the opposite, disgusting to taste and not [useful]. "Lukewarm" here means so prosperous and supposedly self-sufficient (Rev. 3:17) as to be completely out of fellowship with Jesus. This is not a middle-of-the-road church but the most accommodating, not only participating with the status quo when necessary as a means of survival, but fully embracing the lifestyle and values of the elite and powerful.

The only solution for this church is to re-invite Jesus into its corporate life (Rev. 3:20), which will necessitate a rejection of the idolatries that have impoverished, [stripped], and blinded the church (Rev. 3:18). The challenge is to accept a complete makeover."

—Dr. Michael Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly*. Pg 96

### Question 4:

"Laodicea was a prosperous banking center; proud of its wealth, it refused Roman disaster relief after the earthquake of A.D. 60, rebuilding from its own resources. It was also known for its textiles (especially wool) and for its medical school and production of ear medicine and probably the highly reputed Phrygian eye salve. Everything in which Laodicea could have confidence outwardly, its church, which reflected its culture, lacked spiritually.

Although Greeks did not share Palestinian Jews' moral abhorrence of nudity, everyone agreed that the lack of clothing described here, that of poverty (here spiritual), was undesirable... White garments here may be a stark contrast with Laodicea's famous black wool."

—Dr. Craig Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*. Pg 737