

# THE BOOK OF REVELATION, REVISITED

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020 / First Assembly of God / Ft. Myers, FL  
with Pastor Dan Betzer

## **IN THE THRONE ROOM OF HEAVEN**

Revelation Chapter Four

Tonight we open the Revelation to discuss the most stupendous event in all human history.

But first, we have the seventh and final Church of Asia to discuss - and it is a very important one:

### **THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA**

Revelation 3:14-22

*And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; [15] I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. [16] So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. [17] 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: [18] 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. [19] As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. [20] 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. [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. [22] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

One of the most vicious Greek rulers in history was Antiochus. It was he who founded the Turkish city of Laodicea, located about east of Ephesus.

1 Antiochus named the city after his wife, Laodice. “Laodicea was a city of  
2 great wealth and commerce. There was a famous medical school there.  
3 Medical people there had developed a salve for the ears and eyes. Like  
4 America, it had so much going for it, except a true concept of a righteous  
5 and holy God. Instead, the people worshiped Jupiter or Zeus as he was  
6 named. The city was later destroyed by earthquakes.

7  
8 **Remember: what we read in this book of Revelation was given us by**  
9 **Christ Jesus Himself.** Verse 14 highlights this: *“These things saith the*  
10 *Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation*  
11 *of God.”* John also wrote in his Gospel, *“the same was in the beginning*  
12 *with God.”* Jesus is eternal, He has always been.

13  
14 Last week, AOL had a featured story about people (they claim) may never  
15 have existed. That included Jesus, despite an overwhelming historical  
16 evidence that He did, indeed, walk this earth 2000 years ago. (One of the  
17 feature editors of AOL told me via email several years back that he did  
18 not believe King Solomon ever lived. One has to wonder how AOL news  
19 is very accurate or not. Not! In this teacher’s opinion.)

## 20 21 **Christ’s Condemnation**

22  
23 Revelation 3:15-16

24 *“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot...because thou art*  
25 *lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”*

26  
27 It is vital to remember that each of the Seven Churches of Asia represented  
28 a specific church age in the following time periods. Laodicea is the last  
29 one and it represents the church today. Christ says the general church  
30 around the world today, including the U.S., is neither cold or hot - just  
31 lukewarm and is in grave danger of being cast away. With the other six  
32 churches, Jesus said, “I know your works.” There was commendation.  
33 But not with this Laodicean church. All is condemnation here.



The ruins of ancient Laodicea in Turkey

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Today, most churches are not obedient to Christ’s Great Commission of taking the Gospel to the nations. Even the cardinal doctrines of historical theology are denied. The lukewarm church in Laodicea was no longer “hot” in its love for Chris nor was it particularly antagonistic to Him. It was just - blah! Trying to compromise, middle-of-the-road activity.

I have said many times that there isn’t much difference today between churches and good civic clubs, such as Rotary, etc. They are fine organizations and do a lot of good things, as most churches do; but there isn’t a lot of spiritual fire in them.

God does not judge the Church by its material possessions. The church in Laodicea did, however:

1 Revelation 3:17

2 ***Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need***  
3 ***of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and***  
4 ***poor, and blind, and naked...***

5  
6 What a devastating summation of this church. God help us never to be  
7 like that. *The Laodicean church made its boast of material possessions.*  
8 *Conversely, it was the church in Smyrna that was poor in material things.*  
9 It was the church of slaves and poor folks.

10

11 Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:26

12 ***For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the***  
13 ***flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.***

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15

16 Worldly wealth is the measuring rod for the modern church while spiritual  
17 verities have all too often been forgotten or laid aside.

18

19 In Europe there is an old cathedral with these words inscribed:

20

21 Ye call Me Master and obey Me not.

22 Ye call Me Light and see Me not.

23 Ye call Me Way and walk Me not.

24 Ye call Me Life and choose Me not.

25 Ye call Me Wise and follow Me not.

26 Ye call Me Fair and love Me not.

27 Ye call Me Rich and ask Me not.

28 Ye call Me Eternal and seek Me not.

29 Ye call Me Noble and serve Me not.

30 Ye call Me Gracious and trust Me not.

31 Ye call Me Might and honor Me not.

32 Ye call Me Just and fear Me not.

33 If I condemn you, blame Me not

34

35 *The Church has failed to tell me that I am a sinner. The Church has failed*  
36 *to deal with me as a lost individual. The church has failed to offer me*  
37 *salvation in Jesus Christ alone. The church has failed to tell me of the*

1 *horrible consequences of sin, the certainty of hell and the fact that Jesus*  
2 *Christ alone can save. We need more of the last judgment and less of the*  
3 *Golden Rule; more of the living God and the living devil as well, more of*  
4 *a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. The church must bring me not a*  
5 *message of cultivation, but of rebirth. I might fail that kind of church, but*  
6 *that kind of church will not fail me.*

7

8

## Chapter Four

9

10 If you have questions about eternity and Heaven, read this chapter four  
11 carefully. Between chapters 3 and 4, THE EARTHLY CHURCH  
12 VANISHES! We call it the Rapture - the catching away, according to  
13 Webster's Dictionary.

14

15 From this point on in Scripture, the church is no longer seen in the world.  
16 In the first three chapters of Revelation, we read of the Rapture at least  
17 nineteen times. The subject of the last three chapters we have studied have  
18 been entirely devoted to the church in the world. But - from chapter 4 to  
19 the end of the book of Revelation, THE CHURCH IS NEVER  
20 MENTIONED AGAIN IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORLD.

21

22 John 17:16 *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

23

24 So...what has happened to the church? Raptured! Scripture is very clear  
25 as to what is going to happen:

26

27 I Thessalonians 4:13-18

28 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them*  
29 *which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*  
30 *[14] For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also*  
31 *which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. [15] For this we say unto*  
32 *you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto*  
33 *the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. [16]*  
34 *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the*  
35 *voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in*  
36 *Christ shall rise first: [17] Then we which are alive and remain shall be*

1 *caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:*  
2 *and so shall we ever be with the Lord. [18] Wherefore comfort one*  
3 *another with these words.*

4  
5 Today we sometimes read or hear of would-be Christs who have come on  
6 the scene, proclaiming they are Messiah. But we will not meet Jesus in  
7 New York or L.A. or London or even Jerusalem at first. We will meet  
8 Him in the air! This present age will end with His coming.

9  
10 Matthew 24:3  
11 *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him*  
12 *privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be*  
13 *the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? Matthew 24 and 25*  
14 *are very precise in the details of the Rapture. Jesus comforted His*  
15 *crestfallen disciples after He informed them of His ascension back*  
16 *to Heaven:*

17  
18 John 14:2-3  
19 *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have*  
20 *told you. I go to prepare a place for you. [3] And if I go and prepare a*  
21 *place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where*  
22 *I am, there ye may be also.*

23  
24 Our Lord's return to Earth to instantly collect His followers, living and  
25 dead, will be sudden:

26  
27 James 5:8-9  
28 *Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord*  
29 *draweth nigh. [9] Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be*  
30 *condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.*

31  
32 Revelation 22:10  
33 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book:*  
34 *for the time is at hand.*

35

1 Jesus spoke of His return, the Rapture, as a time when the nations of Earth  
2 shall mourn as they see Him:

3

4 Matthew 24:30

5 *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then*  
6 *shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man*  
7 *coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* But for  
8 Christ's followers, the Rapture will be a time of massive rejoicing:

9

10 Philippians 3:21

11 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his*  
12 *glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to*  
13 *subdue all things unto himself.*

14

15 Jude 1:14

16 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying,*  
17 *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints...*

18

19 Colossians 3:4

20 *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear*  
21 *with him in glory.*

22

23 I could fill page after page of biblical passages to substantiate the  
24 Rapture - the return of Christ. At time, all believers in Him vanish. But to  
25 where? Chapter 4 of Revelation is exquisite in its references to this grand  
26 entre into God's presence.

27

28 We will go into this in great detail next week - and perhaps even beyond.  
29 It truly is the greatest story ever told. When you open your eyes, you will  
30 be at the Grand Throne room of God as revealed:

31

32 Revelation 4:1-11

33 *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the*  
34 *first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me;*  
35 *which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be*  
36 *hereafter. [2] And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne*

1 *was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. [3] And he that sat was to*  
2 *look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow*  
3 *round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. [4] And round*  
4 *about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw*  
5 *four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had*  
6 *on their heads crowns of gold. [5] And out of the throne proceeded*  
7 *lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of*  
8 *fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. [6]*  
9 *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in*  
10 *the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts*  
11 *full of eyes before and behind. [7] And the first beast was like a lion,*  
12 *and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man,*  
13 *and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. [8] And the four beasts had*  
14 *each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within:*  
15 *and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God*  
16 *Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. [9] And when those beasts*  
17 *give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who*  
18 *liveth for ever and ever, [10] The four and twenty elders fall down before*  
19 *him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever,*  
20 *and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] Thou art worthy,*  
21 *O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created*  
22 *all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*