



Lent 2020: Coming back to Jesus

Week 5: To the church in Laodicea

## Welcome and worship

*Have you ever been served some food or drink that was neither hot nor cold, but somewhere in between? Did you get it in a restaurant and have to send it back?*

'To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. <sup>15</sup> I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! <sup>16</sup> So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> You say, "I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing." But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. <sup>18</sup> I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so that you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so that you can see.

<sup>19</sup> Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. <sup>20</sup> Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

<sup>21</sup> To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. <sup>22</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

## The story of the Church in Laodicea

- A prosperous city at the crossroads of some major communication routes. It was, however, far enough from both the hot springs at Hierapolis and the cold springs near Colossae that by the time the water got there it was all... lukewarm
- *In this passage Jesus seems to suggest both hot and cold water are good and useful, as we know. It is the in-between kind that is a problem. What do you think lukewarm faith might look like?*
- *How do we feel about the idea that lukewarm things are 'spat out' by Jesus*
- *Do you think that the coronavirus crisis will help people to see that without meaningful faith in Jesus they are 'wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked'?*
- *Let's be open to God rebuking us and correcting us. Let's think about where we might be lukewarm. Show your openness to Jesus coming in and changing things by physically opening a door in your house and standing there to welcome him.*
- *Use the simple words below, and perhaps some bread and wine or juice, to sit and eat with Jesus, as he wants to sit and eat with you. Celebrate that he gives the victorious the right to sit on his throne.*

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Jesus said  
I am the bread of life.  
Whoever comes to me  
will never go hungry,  
and whoever believes in me  
will never be thirsty.