

# 3 EASY STEPS TO RUIN YOUR FAITH

Revelation 3:14-18



## SYNOPSIS

Jesus's rebuke to the Church of Laodicea was the harshest he gave among the seven churches John wrote to. He had nothing positive to say about this large, wealthy church. The wealth of Laodicea warped the church's perception of themselves. Their decline is a cautionary tale to us that faith can be ruined in three easy steps: 1) believe in Jesus; 2) receive God's blessings; 3) love the blessings over God. Jesus offered a three-part remedy.

"I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see." (3:18)

For those of us who experience a level of spiritual ruin and feel the disgust of the Lord at our over-love of his blessings and the lukewarmness of our faith, may we buy from Jesus the remedy for the poison we've ingested.



## OUTLINE

1

### GOLD REFINED IN THE FIRE

Peter taught that Christian maturation requires us to "make every effort" (2 Pet 1:5). Jesus asks us to make every effort to buy from him, just as earning money to buy what we want/need requires effort.

Peter used gold as a metaphor for faith (1 Pet 1:7). The first part of the remedy could be understood to say: Make every effort to develop a genuine faith that is refined by trials, so we can become rich inwardly.

Application: Choose to suffer for Christ. Choose to honor Him and defend his truth.

2

### WHITE CLOTHES TO COVER SHAME

The Bible mentions 2 kinds of shame coverings: fig leaves and Jesus's righteousness credited to those who believe (Rom 13:14). Fig leaves could be understood as our attempts to outperform/out-possess others to cover our shame. The Laodiceans and Church in Rome were wearing these clothes.

Application: Make every effort to base your self-worth on Christ's unconditional acceptance of you. Designate a trustworthy person to call you out on posturing.

3

### EYE SALVE TO SEE

Matt 6:19-24 provides context to what makes eyes go bad: the love of money.

Application: Make every effort to change your outlook on life so that you may see true reality. Know that nothing we ever possess or do will remain on earth. Only loving and serving God will last eternally. Missing this is a case of bad eyes.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Do you identify with the Laodicean Church? If yes, which of God's blessings in your life do you love more than you love him?

2

Diagnose your ruin: How might you experience moral laxity, nominalism, and worldliness?

3

White Clothes/Righteousness: What would it look like to base your worth on Jesus's love? Who in your life could you ask to point out your posturing?

4

Eye Salve/Eternal Perspective: In what ways are you storing up treasures on earth? How are you storing up treasures in heaven?

5

Gold/Faith: What is your experience of self-sufficiency? How would you fill in the blank in Hosea 10:12? "you have depended on your own strength and on your many \_\_\_"



## BIG IDEA

As a young man, John asked Jesus to make him great, but his definition of greatness was incorrect. John died alone in exile, faithfully serving the Lord until the very end. Ultimately, that's all that mattered.

Action Point

Pray Prov 30:8b-9 this week:

"...give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the Lord?'

Or I may become poor and steal,

and so dishonor the name of my God."