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## Responding to God's Hospitality

### Scripture Reading: Revelation 3

*(Jesus says) "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Laodicea. This is the message from the one who is the Amen—the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation:*

*"I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish you were one or the other!*

*But since you are like lukewarm water, I will spit you out of my mouth!*

*You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.*

*I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. And also buy white garments so you will not be shamed by your nakedness. And buy ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see.*

*I am the one who corrects and disciplines everyone I love. Be diligent and turn from your indifference.*

*"Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends.*

*I will invite everyone who is victorious to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat with my Father on his throne.*

*Anyone who is willing to hear should listen to the Spirit and understand what the Spirit is saying to the churches." (Revelation 3:14-22 NLT)*

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### Thoughts to Chew On

- What's the first word that comes into your mind when you hear the word "Lent"?
  - What's your experience of Lenten disciplines – yours or someone around you?
  - If you had to guess why it became a practice in the Church – what's your best guess?
  - What triggers you to think about adding disciplines to your life – personal, business, spiritual?
  - When you've found yourself in a renewed place with God, what's been the path there?
  - What's Jesus' tone of voice in this letter?
  - What words of his caught your attention as you heard it read?
  - What's opening the door to Jesus' invitation look like for you?
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## Thumbnail Sketch of Laodicea

- when Romans took charge of it in 140 BC. they rebuilt road system which made it a strategic communication centre. It grew in size and wealth.
- centre for a host of temples, religions as well as a multi-cultural population.
- it became an affluent society with strong banking, business, scientific and political influence.
- it was known for the manufacture of clothes from a costly and glossy black wool.
- also known for the production of a ground powder which was used as a salve for eye diseases.
- proud of their self-sufficiency - would not accept imperial aid when rebuilding after the earthquake disaster of around 60AD.
- church likely established by Paul's preaching or one of his friends (Col. 2:1). It seems again that John acquires pastoral oversight at some point in the process
- although the church is judged harshly, some benefit must have come from this letter because it has a good and solid history in early church development in the centuries after Revelation

## A Lenten Prayer

*God of all seasons, in your pattern of things there is a time for keeping and a time for losing – a time for building up and a time for pulling down. In this holy season of lent, as we journey with our Lord to the cross, help us to discern in our lives what we must lay down and what we must take up – what we must end and what we must begin... For Jesus' sake*

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Group Guide  
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