

Revelation 3:14–22
The Love that Restores Our Zeal

Thursday, January 30, 2025 • Read Revelation 3:14–22

Questions from the Scripture text: To the messenger/preacher (NKJ 'angel') of which church is this letter addressed (v14)? In what three ways does Jesus describe Himself? What does He know (v15, cf. 2:2, 2:9, 2:13, 2:19, 3:1, 3:8)? What does He know that they are not? What could He wish? But what are they (v16)? And what will He do to them? What do they say (v17)? But what don't they know? What does He counsel them to buy (v18)? From Whom? So that they may be what? And what else? So that they may be what? And what else? To do what? Why is He rebuking and chastening them (v19)? What should they do in response to this love? What does He command at the beginning of v20? Whom are they to behold? Where is He standing? How does He describe this repenting? What might one hear? What might one do? What will Jesus do? What does v21 now call this repenting and opening? What will Jesus grant to the one who does this? Who has previously done this? Whom does v22 address? What is such a person to do with this letter? Who is speaking this letter? To whom?

How harmful is spiritual pride? Revelation 3:14–22 looks forward to the hearing of God's Word, publicly read, in the holy assembly on the coming Lord's Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **spiritual pride keeps one from fellowship with the glorious Savior.**

Who Jesus reminds us that He is. He is the Amen (v14), the One Who Himself is as He ought to be, and in Whom all God's promises are true (cf. 2Co 1:20). And He is the Faithful and True Witness. He tells the truth about Himself, first of all, as well as about us. Finally, He is the beginning of the creation of God. The language does not imply that He is a creature, but that He indeed is the One Who is the first cause of God's creation—i.e. that He is God, the Creator.

What Jesus knows them to be. Sadly, Jesus knows that they neither boil with zeal for Him, nor are they cold and refreshing to Him—i.e. those who are glad to serve and please Him (v15). How did they get to be like this? They are satisfied with themselves (v17). They think that in themselves they are wealthy and need nothing, but the Faithful and True Witness says that they are "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked." Laodicea was renowned in the earth for wealth, a medical school that specialized in the eye, and luxurious textiles for clothing. But the church there was now infamous with Christ for being exactly the opposite, spiritually.

What they need Jesus to be. They are on the verge of being rejected by Christ (v16). The language of being vomited is one of judicial wrath and covenantal judgment (cf. Lev 18:28). But it is this very same Christ Who is their only hope. His is the counsel by which they may remedy the situation (v18). And it is from Him that they may purchase true gold (refined in fire), white garments (Laodicea's most famous cloth was black), and anointing salve. Jesus is all our riches, all our covering, and all our health and ability. He is the Beginning of the creation of God. In Him is all that we need.

What Jesus already is unto them. He loves them (v19). He is rebuking and chastening them in that love. This is the only letter of the seven that has no word of praise. But yet He loves them, and the letter is coming in that love. They may have grown cold to Him, but He has not grown cold to them. Dear believer, if you have grown cold to Jesus, know that His love to you urges love back to Him: "zealous" here is a word that means to boil unto Him (cf. being "fervent in spirit" in Rom 12:11). We do not stir up love to Him in order to get things from Him. We get the love itself from Him in the first place!

What thy must do unto Him. All that is required is to welcome Him. Though it can only be done by His own grace, which comes by the very Word that He now sends them, it is no great feat. There are two steps in v20: hear, and open. But it first takes humility. It would have been shocking to them to hear that Jesus was outside. For a backslider to have restored fellowship with Christ, he must admit that he has lost it.

What He does with them. Jesus promises to restore fellowship. In His earthly ministry, He was notorious for eating and drinking with repentant sinners. And for two thousand years, He has welcomed His saints to the Lord's Supper for the communion of His body and communion of His blood. And here He promises to come in to where the believer is and restore fellowship. But He also promises something much greater: to welcome the believer to where He is—even on His throne, which is His Father's throne (v21)! If He had not said it in holy Scripture, it would sound like a blasphemy, but the Lord marries the church to Himself, and she reigns with Him forever. Her members, He makes to be "kings and priests to our God" (cf. 5:10). What a reversal from "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked"! How could we ever be contented with what we are in ourselves, when this is what He offers to us in Himself?!

When was the last time you felt your neediness of Jesus? In what ways are you boiling toward Him with zeal? In what ways are you cool and refreshing to Him? How can you come to be like this? Who is urging you to do so?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for considering ourselves wealthy and needing nothing. We confess that, in ourselves, we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. So have pity upon us, and make us wealthy, clothed, and whole, in Yourself. In love, You have rebuked and chastened us. In love, come and have fellowship with us, and bring us safely, at last, to live and reign with You forever, we ask in Your Name, Lord Jesus, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP73C "Yet Constantly, I Am with You" or TPH508 "Jesus, Priceless Treasure"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Revelation, 3 verse 14-22. And to the angel of the Church of the laoda Sands, right? Things says the amen, the faithful and true witness. The beginning of the creation of God. I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot so then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot.

I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say, I am rich. Have become wealthy and have need of nothing. And do not know that you are wretched. Miserable. Blind. Naked. I counsel you to buy from me, gold refined in the fire. That you may be rich. And white garments that you may be clothed.

That the shame of your nakedness, may not be revealed. And anoint your eyes with salve that you may see. As many as I love. I rebuke and chasen. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him.

And here with me, To him who overcomes and will grant to sit with me on my Throne, as I also overcame And sat down with my father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear. What the spirit says. To the church. So far. Reading of Gods inspired and And it worked.

The first part of chapter three, we had the letter to the church in Sardis. Who had a name as if they were alive, but they were dead. Things are not always as they seem. In the case of the Church of the laodiceans, They thought that. They were. Rich wealthy and had need of nothing.

And this is not talking about Earthly wealth, although that was true and probably At least it was generally true in laodicea. the the layout is People generally were very wealthy. There was Medical school. There that Specialized in the treatment of the eyes. And And there was a textile industry, there that Made one of the most luxurious black cloths.

in all of Rome. The city was so wealthy that they once had a Natural disaster. And the Empire. Offered financial assistance and they said no thank you. We don't need it.

And so as is likely that the Christians in Rome, Thought of the general laodicean, people as being Very worldly in carnal security. And, Those people, of course, are self-deceived. But spiritual self-righteousness. Spiritual self-deception is much worse. They thought that they were. A sound church but they're the only Church of the seven

that receive letters here.

That the Lord Jesus doesn't give a single compliment to There's not one thing here that he Praises about the church. In laodicea. For whatever else they did. As a church in their worship or discipleship or Evangelism. They were neither hot nor cold. Both of which are desirable things. So, this is not hotness of heart and coldness of heart.

the Lord, Jesus does not wish that any of his people were called of heart. rather. Idea is boiling hot drink or a refreshingly cold drink. To be hot towards the Lord to be full of zeal as Romans. 12 says, never lacking in Zeal, but keeping your spiritual fervor.

And that word for, For fervor. Is a word of of boiling.

Like the word zealous. In verse 19, therefore be zealous. And repent. So, there's a hotness towards the Lord Jesus in which And our hearts should always be boiling, fizzing bubbling, With desire to. Love him and serve him. It's an action word. And then the idea of being cool or refreshing.

The distinctiveness and the change of pace. And The slaking of thirst. Implies here Holiness and differentness in character and conduct from the world. You know, so one is the zealous of Of love and service in action. And, you know, that's the hotness and then the coldness or the coolness As that refreshing difference.

Between the Christian, the world Holiness, piety godliness, uprightness Integrity. Christians. Should have both of those. And sadly. The Lord Jesus tells laodice he in church. That not only do they lack. Or the other. And we've seen in other letters to the churches. A church that lacks one or the other.

But Leo to see that locks both.

And still. They think that they are rich and Wealthy and have need of nothing. And the implication is All of that in spiritual things. And so, A very Alarming warning to us. That you may think that you are spiritually. Well. And have neither. Further towards the Lord Jesus. Uprightness Holiness.

Godliness. And this is the certain. Case with them. As in the other letters, Jesus customizes. The way he describes himself. To the particular case. He calls himself the, ah, men. the one who is truth. In himself. He calls himself the faithful and true witness. So the one who tells the truth about himself and about us, And so he's telling them the truth about himself.

And he calls himself the beginning of the creation of God. here not describing himself as a created thing. But as the first cause, the from whom all God's creating came and therefore, the one who has all of the resources, how silly for anyone to think themselves Rich in the presence of Jesus?

Unless Jesus is the riches. When literally everything belongs to him, everything was made by him. From him and through him, and to him, are all things. as they are. Because he created them. They came from him and they are his.

And so, the Lord Jesus is warning them. He warns them of what is about to happen. He is going to vomit them out of his mouth, that's language.

That's language, not just of. disgust. Over lukewarmness. It's judgment language. It's the language. Leviticus. 18 years. Of what the land will do, if The nation of Israel is not cold and refreshing. Well, as it were towards God and their difference from the nanites. That if they don't expel the Canaanites, if they act like the Canaanites, then they will receive the same thing.

And the land will vomit them out. And so, the language of vomiting is language of God's wrathful judgment. The language of vomiting is of covenantal. Punishment, when it comes to Israel. And now, when it comes Untilio to see. It is because Lack of hotness toward him and the lack of cool refreshingness in piety and Holiness.

It's because these things have put Jesus outside. That he is about to vomit the church out. And yet the church may be spared Of being vomited, perhaps. The individuals in the church. Become hot towards him become zealous. Full of love towards him, become Holy in their, in their refreshing distinction. From the rest of the world.

He offers himself as their counselor. I counsel. He says. We should not trust our own opinions. About ourselves, but come to the Lord Jesus for his counsel. He offers himself as their supplier. I counsel you to buy from me. This true gold gold refined in fire and not the Fool's gold. That they have their, their Then conceits about being spiritually.

Well, So they may have the true riches to come only from Jesus. If our spiritual. Wealth comes from within us or something that we have done or advice that we've received from others. If it is not from Jesus himself and we are not actually rich. He offers himself as a supplier of garments.

That the shame of their nakedness, may not be revealed. That their spiritual bankruptcy. There's, there's spiritual nakedness might be covered instead. By his righteousness. Both by Jesus being your righteous standing with God. And, Try Jesus being the one who begins to make you actually righteous clothing you Both with his imputed righteousness and Clothing, you with the good works of the Saints, which we will read elsewhere.

this Revelation in this apocalypse, Are the the good works of the Saints. And he offers them. to be their supplier of iself. To be the one who. Is not only in himself the ah, man and Tells the truth to us as the faithful and true witness.

But gives us the ability to see things truly, and rightly. So that they don't look in the mirror of the word of God. With these horrible cataracts. And and think that they are, well, if they are not But that he would be the the supplier of this miracle. I South that brings them from blindness to sight and enables them to see themselves and things as they really are.

So he offers himself as counselor, he offers himself as Supplier. And he offers himself as lover and friend and fellow.

Seeks to provoke their love with his own. Just, the spirit carried John along to say. In first John, we love him because he first loved us. He begins with his love in verse 19. He affirms to them that this rebuke this training is coming in love as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.

Is, of course, because the love of the Even in his office as mediator, especially in his office, as mediator is the perfect reflection of the love of the father. And this is what Hebrews 12 tells us of the love of the father that every true son. Whom he loves he disciplines.

And so, the love of the son is the same. As many as I love, he says, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, boil over with love to me be zealous. And repent. And then he offers the one thing that those who are loved and love, want more than anything else.

Fellowship with their beloved. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. It would have been shocking to them. To hear that. They thought that they were A rich wealthy lacking. Nothing. Of course. The Lord Jesus is Among Us, they would have thought not outside. Makes you wonder. How frequently there are churches that are very sure

that they are really alive, like, The Church of Sardis.

Or that they really have Christ among them. Like the Church of laodicea. But in the case of Sardis, they were almost dead. And in the case of laodicea, Jesus had become an outsider to their church. He had been squeezed out. focus on themselves, their love of other things.

And then, Compromise and becoming more and more like the world. So that rather than being refreshing and cool, they were lukewarm. He?

I had pushed him out. So that now he's in the position of an outsider. He says I stand at the door, so he's in the outside. But look at the mercy of Christ, the patience of Christ, with those who are backslidden whose lives, have squeezed him out. Look at the patience of Christ with this church, that corporately collectively.

Has back slitting and squeezed him out. Although, he's on the outside, he is knocking. And he is calling. every letter has ended with let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. But now we are reminded that. As the spirit speaks to the churches in scripture. The voice is the voice of the Lord.

Jesus, if anyone hears my voice, So, he who has an ear to hear he, whom the Lord, Jesus is giving even by his word, the ability to hear and respond and receive. this word And, He welcomes, he urges you to have fellowship with him again. Says, if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him.

And dine with him and he with me. And you know what the mutuality of adding that he with me at the end? The Fellowship of the Lord. That he calls us back to summons us back to. Urges us back to. And then he describes this overcoming. And how different are the two overcomings in verse 21.

Jesus. Overcomes. By the Incarnation and the perfectly obedient life. And, succeeding in going to and suffering the wrath of God on the cross. Our overcoming is one that Jesus gives to us. And that consists of welcoming him. And yet. Because his overcoming is so great. And he even as the mediator, As the god-man.

Sets upon the throne. Those who are his Are brought into. the ruling of the Lord Jesus, he espouses to himself a bride, a queen The great queen of Psalm 45, the great bride. Of later in the Book of Revelation. So that as we will be praising him in chapter 5 of this book.

He makes us Kings and Priests. Unto God. the overcoming of a Christian is one. Of being joined to the Lord Jesus. Of being caught with love towards him and belonging to him of answering. Answering his pleas is urging. That we would open to him. And have fellowship with him.

And we receive. Participation in. His own reward. for the overcoming. That he has done. In his life and Ministry. And so may the Lord be Our counselor. Our supplier. Our lover. And our reward. And then, let's pray.

Lord, grant that we would not be self-deceived. But by the same word now. We pray that you would give us the ears to hear. And to welcome you. To turn back from our back, sliding and be full of Love and Zeal unto you. And the cool refreshing distinction of Holiness.

Supply us because we do not have Within ourselves. Any good thing. But you have all in you in yourself. And so, we praise that you would use even this word and this time in it, To do the work in. That in the last day at the last. We will be members of that Bride, adorned for her husband.

Perfectly. Holy, With your work finished in us. And married to you and reigning with you. Grant it, we ask do it by your spirit. Free ask it in your own name. Lord Jesus. Amen.