



Session 9 | Revelation 3:14-22 plus interpretive issues with Revelation 2-3

THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA | REVELATION 3:14-22

THE DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST | V. 14

- The Amen: A Hebrew word meaning *established and verified*.
- The Witness who is faithful and true
- The Beginning of the creation of God
 - This is not in the sense of the "first thing of God's creation," but the "source" of the creation of God.

THE MESSAGE TO THE MESSENGER | VV. 14-18

- I Know...
 - *Thy works*
 - *That you are neither cold nor hot* (I would rather you be one or the other)
 - No morality is assigned to cold or hot, but this passage is clearly speaking figuratively of lack of conviction.
- The Commendation:
 - None given
- The Condemnation:
 - I am going to spew thee out of my mouth – v. 16
 - The counsel:
 - Buy gold, to be rich
 - Buy white clothes, to be covered
 - Anoint your eyes, to see

THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH | VV. 19-22

- I rebuke and discipline those I love, therefore be zealous and repent.
- I stand at the door and knock: I will come in if the door is opened.
- The overcomer will sit with me in my throne

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES

THE HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

- The seven churches were seven literal churches in John's Day.

- The messages to the seven churches are specific to the particular church, but dynamically applicable to all churches.

THE PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

- The seven churches were seven literal churches in John's Day.
- The messages were specific to the particular church and dynamically applicable to all churches.
- The messages also have an implicit prophecy giving a testimony of the history of the church.
 - This is a dangerous method of interpretation, but not an unacceptable method.
 - Implicit prophecy is only seen perfectly in the "rear view mirror."
 - Psalm 22 is implicit prophecy
 - With Psalm 22, we have a Biblical key to interpretation (the fulfillment through the crucifixion of Christ). With Revelation 2-3, we do not have that Biblical key.
 - Any prophetic interpretation must be given for insight, not for doctrine.
- The typical prophetic interpretation:
 - Ephesus: *the apostolic church* | 33 AD to 100 AD
 - Smyrna: *the post-apostolic church* | 100-300
 - Pergamum: *the Constantinian church* | 300-600
 - Thyatira: *the Catholic church* | 600-1450
 - Sardis: *the reformation church* | 1450-1700
 - Philadelphia: *the missionary church* | 1700-1950
 - Laodicea: *the contemporary church* | 1950-present

THE FUTURIST INTERPRETATION

- The seven churches were not necessarily churches in John's day.
- The messages should not be applied to a historic congregation nor to any church today (any more than the remainder of the book of Revelation).
- The churches are seven future Jewish assemblies, and the entire book is *futurist*.