

Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #9 | Revelation 3:14-22 | Seven Letters for Seven Future Messenger, part 4

Our Previous Conclusion-

- In these four churches, there is nothing that directly fits with a theology of the age of grace, but everything fits in a *futuristic* interpretation.
- This gives hints that *all eyes should be on Turkey* for a future power-area in geo-political influence.
- If we apply the so-called “letters to the seven churches” directly to our churches today, we will create a mixture of works and grace, giving to neither their appropriate place.

Revelation 3:14-22 | To the Messenger at Laodicea

- Commendations to the messenger: *none!*
- Complaints against the messenger:
 - Jesus desired **hot or cold** but not **lukewarm**.
 - There is likely no benefit in finding meaning in cold vs hot. This is a figure of speech that is clear without assigning meaning to each temperature.
 - Furthermore, the book of Revelation characteristically gives explanation of symbolic messages.
 - The threat was that the messenger would be *spit out*. This graphic language also doesn’t need explanation. Jesus is saying, “I’ll be done with you.”
 - The reader should note that if this is applicable to the church age, then none of us could speak of a *blessed assurance*.
 - This messenger *thought he was something* when really, *he was nothing*.
 - His trust was in material goods, saying, **I am rich, and increased with goods...** (v. 17).
 - Sadly, he did not recognize his own poverty.
 - How easy it is to come to the place where we know, “I can handle this.” We must always remember that “pride goeth before destruction...”
- Commands to the messenger:
 - Buy gold – a reference, no doubt, to the messenger’s trust in the riches of this world. -compare Proverbs 23:23
 - Buy white raiment – be reminded that *the emperor has no clothes!*
 - Put on eye salve – the messenger was clearly blinded and needed spiritual medicine for spiritual sight.

- Repent! God disciplines those whom he loves. The words of verse 19 indicate that God loved even this miserable messenger and was giving him opportunity to repent.
- The Specific word to the church: *none*
- The general word to the churches:
 - Jesus gave an open invitation to open the door and let Him in.
 - This is most often applied to unbelievers in regard to personal salvation. While it probably does not do harm in such a setting, in the actual context of the words, something else must be in mind.
 - Since this is (as we have maintained) a *future letter*, it would most apply to those in the *future nation of Israel* and would relate to the Kingdom, not personal salvation.
 - With this as our assumption, we must search the Scriptures to find verification elsewhere.
 - Luke 12:32-38 is so similar that it cannot be ignored.
 - It is directed to the **little flock** (v. 32), a reference to Israel’s remnant.
 - Verses 33-35 sound much like the words to the messenger at Laodicea.
 - Verses 36-38 sound like the information of Revelation 3:21.

Summary of the Letters to the Messengers

- Each message contained information that was incompatible with the age of grace.
 - Messages of *loss of relationship*.
 - Messages of *salvation by works*.
- Rather than attempt to twist grace, it would be better to *rightly divide*.
 - C.I. Scofield said, “It is, however, of the most vital moment to observe that Scripture never, in any dispensation, mingles these two principles. Law always has a place and work distinct and wholly diverse from that of grace.”
 - If this is true, then *law* and *grace* cannot be mixed in Revelation 2-3. Thus, these two chapters are *either law or grace, but not both*.
 - It is my position that the letters are *law* because they are in the future period of the remaining years of the dispensation of the *law*.
- Today, you and I have the blessing of living in the age of grace, but it is an age which could end at any moment. Let us be faithful and diligent.