

Revelation 3: The Lukewarm Church of Laodicea

Revelation 3:18–22 | Sunday, January 25 | Revelation Series

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OVERVIEW

Hal picks up inside the Lord's verdict — you are naked — and answers it out of 2 Corinthians 5:21: the moment we believe and receive the gift of pardon, Christ clothes us with his own righteousness, and that is worth more than the finest clothes we could ever buy. From the counsel to buy gold refined by fire he turns to what he calls S.O.P., the standard operating procedure when trouble comes: praise first, then confess anything you know to be wrong, then claim Romans 8:28. Then the structural point of the message. Verse 18 is spoken to the church in general; in verses 19 and 20 Jesus turns and addresses individuals inside it — the first time in these letters he does — first the believer, whom he disciplines because he loves him, and then the one still outside, at whose door he knocks in the perfect tense and keeps on knocking. Hal closes where the Church age closes, back at the outline in Revelation 1:19, and reads ahead to chapter 4, verse 1: metatauta, after these things.

KEY SCRIPTURES

2 Corinthians 5:21 — He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him

1 Thessalonians 5:18 — The first step of S.O.P. — there is power in praise

Romans 8:28 — God causes all things to work together for good, for those who love him

Verse 18 — “Buy from me gold refined by fire” — the counsel to the church in general

Verse 19 — “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline” — now spoken to individuals

Hebrews 12:5 — Those whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives

Verse 20 — “Behold, I stand at the door and knock” — spoken to the one who is not a believer

Revelation 1:19 — The outline: the things you have seen, even the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things

Revelation 4:1 — “Come up here” — metatauta, after these things

KEY TERMS

S.O.P. — Hal's standard operating procedure when something happens: praise God first, then confess anything you know to be wrong, then claim Romans 8:28

Homologeo — the Greek behind “confess” — to say the same thing as; you say about your sin what God says about it, and agree with him

Metanoeo — the Greek behind “repent” — a change of mind; here in the imperative mood, a command, and transitive, so it takes an object

The white garment — the imputed righteousness of Christ, the only thing that clothes our nakedness before God

Gold refined by fire — faith tried by fire and found to the praise and honor and glory of God — finer than gold

The perfect tense — the tense of “knock” in verse 20: I knocked in the past, with the result that I keep on knocking

Metatauta — “after these things” — the Greek phrase that turns the book; Hal says he would name a church after it

Tetelestai — “paid in full” — the name he says he already gave to one church

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer from the message itself. Every answer is in the teaching.

1. What does Hal say clothes a person before God, and what does not?

2. What does he say about money, and why is the distinction important?

3. What are the three steps of S.O.P.?

4. What does homologeo mean, and what follows confession?

5. What if you are conscious of nothing wrong and trouble comes anyway?

6. What is the white garment, and what is the gold refined by fire?

7. Who is verse 18 addressed to, and what changes at verses 19 and 20?

8. What does Jesus say to the believer inside the system, and where else is that taught?

9. How did Hal tell whether a young convert had really believed?

10. What does metaneo mean here, and what is its object?

11. How do we know verse 20 is addressed to someone who is not a believer, and what is in the perfect tense?

12. What does the promise to dine mean, and how does the outline of Revelation 1:19 carry into chapter 4?

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Hal's first move in trouble is praise, before anything is fixed. What makes that hard, and when have you actually done it?

2. Confession, he says, is agreeing with God about what you have done. How is that different from feeling bad about it?

3. He treats the Lord's discipline as evidence of belonging rather than of rejection. Where have you experienced it that way?

4. Jesus stops addressing the church and starts addressing individuals. What does it mean if the group you belong to is drifting and the call comes to you personally?

5. The knocking is continuous, and the invitation still has to be given. Who in your life is hearing that knock, and what is your part?

6. "Change your mind from the human viewpoint to the divine viewpoint." Name one thing you currently see from the human viewpoint that you would like to see differently.

MEMORY VERSE

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with me."

— Revelation 3:20, as Hal reads it in this message