

# REVISITING CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO TODAY'S EVANGELICALS

## Part II: Christ's All-Sufficiency For Evangelicals Presented

### B. Christ's All-Sufficiency For Discipling The Carnal

(Revelation 3:14b(b))

#### I. Introduction

- A. In prophetically addressing us believers in our *current Evangelical* era of Church History, Christ revealed that a great lack exists in effectively **discipling carnal** believers, and He also showed how to correct this problem.
- B. Revelation 3:14b(b) exposes Christ's all-sufficiency for meeting this need of **today** (as follows):

#### II. Christ's All-Sufficiency For Discipling The Carnal, Revelation 3:14b(b).

- A. In **preparing to comment** on today's Evangelical era, Jesus gave a threefold description of *Himself* in Revelation 3:14b as "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the head of the creation of God."
- B. The **second** title, "The faithful and true witness," appears elsewhere in Scripture **only** in Jeremiah 42:5 where the phrase "faithful and true" is reversed, to read "true and faithful" (Strong's Exhaust. Conc., p. 1179), and the Jer. 42:5 context illustrates Christ's all-sufficiency for effective ministry to carnal believers today:
  1. After Judah fell to Babylon *in fulfillment* of *decades of Jeremiah's prophecies* (Jer.19:14-20:6), Judah's survivors **at first treated** Jeremiah as a *true* prophet by calling on God to be a "true and faithful witness" **against them** if they did **not** heed God's *future* messages to them *through Jeremiah*, Jeremiah 40:1-42:6.
  2. **However**, these survivors did **not truly trust God's prophet**, for they did **not believe God**, what had led to Babylon's invasion! Nevertheless, God in grace had Jeremiah tell Judah's survivors to **stay** in Judah and **trust Him to protect** them *there* from Babylon, but that if they fled to Egypt, the harm they *feared* Babylon might do to them in *Judah* it would do to them in *Egypt* (Jer. 42:7-18). However, the survivors said this message was not from God, but from Jeremiah's scribe Baruch whom they claimed had manipulated Jeremiah tell them to stay in Judah! Thus, they forcibly took Jeremiah with them to Egypt, Jer. 43:1-7!
  3. God then had Jeremiah predict Babylon's invasion of Egypt to harm these Hebrews there, Jer. 43:8-44:30!
- C. **Applying** this passage to us today, **Christ's message** on ministry to *carnal* evangelical believers is as follows:
  1. Though claiming that their pastors speak God's truth, carnal believers **today** tend **not to believe** this claim, but think their pastors **either** preach their **own ideas** or *voice* what **others manipulate** them to preach!
  2. The **cause** of such thinking is failure to **trust God, resulting** in one's facing repeat events of **God's painful discipline** that are **not viewed by** the *carnal* as God's discipline, but **only** as *evils* by *others* against *them!*
  3. Such **unbelief** in **God** comes from (a) a failure by *Calvinists* to live by faith in God, for they believe that God gave them the gift of faith to believe at salvation, so God's predestination will automatically preserve and develop that faith without any human responsibility to live by faith in God (Beveridge, [Calvin's] Institutes, v. I, p. 484ff [Book Third, ch. II, 15-17]). Also, (b) *Charismatic-Arminians* trust in the power of their faith, not in God, producing powerlessness in living! (Chafer/Walvoord, Major Bib. Themes, p. 220; Bettenson, ed., Docs. of the Christ. Church, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p. 377) Charismatic-Arminian believers thus try to use various experiential practices to enhance their faith in faith itself, deeds like indulging in excessive emotional expressions, wordy, demanding prayers, voicing mantras, etc. to obtain God's "blessings"!
  4. However, failing in any way to **trust in GOD** and His use of His messengers only brings more discipline, so the *carnal* in **both Calvinist and Charismatic-Arminian** groups face **repeat** bouts of **God's discipline!**
  5. Also, **pastors** are **tempted** to *fear* persecution from *carnal* hearers, so, like Jeremiah, they are **tempted to say** what the *carnal want* to hear or **resign** or **change churches** or **careers** to avoid being **persecuted!** Either way, such actions by pastors reflect **their** unbelief in God, so they **also** face God's repeat discipline!
  6. Christ thus gave the solution for effective discipling ministry to **both carnal pastors and carnal hearers:**
    - a. As we before noted, Rev. 3:14 **reverses** the Jer. 42:5 **order** of the adjectives, "**True** and Faithful" to be "**Faithful** and True," what stresses **Christ's reliability** to judge **now** as in *Jeremiah's era*. Thus, **pastors** must trust Christ's **reliability** to **vindicate** them *NOW* so that they might **bravely give God's truth NOW!**
    - b. Also, *carnal hearers* must heed God's experiential signals with Scriptural support that He provides *today* to certify **who** are His God-led pastors, and repent and heed His Word for God's discipline to cease!

**Lesson:** Based on errant views of FAITH in BOTH Calvinism AND Charismatic-Arminianism, many pastors and hearers alike FAIL either to LIVE by faith, or to live by faith in GOD, resulting in God's repeat discipline events.

**Application:** May every pastor and hearer alike rely on the Lord to live in victory over carnality for blessing!