

REVISITING CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO TODAY'S EVANGELICALS

Part III: Christ's Appraisal Of Evangelicals As Two, Offensive, Judging Factions

B. Christ's Evaluation Of Evangelicals Detailed

1. Christ's Exposure Of The Factions' Errant Judgments Of Their Ministries (Revelation 3:14a, 17a[a,b,c])

I. Introduction

- A. Since Jesus predicted that our era of Church History would be marked by an errant division of two judgmental evangelical groups of Arminians and Calvinists, we would expect Him to provide a detailed explanation of it.
- B. Revelation 3:14a, 17a[a,b,c] gives Christ's detailed explanation of the factions' **errant judgments** of their *own ministries*, what we will study in this lesson. [However, Revelation 3:14a, 17b[a,b,c,d,e] gives Christ's detailed explanation of the factions' **errant beliefs** that have **produced** these *errant ministries* with their *errant spiritualities*, what we will study in the five lessons that will follow today's lesson!]

II. Christ's Exposure Of The Factions' Errant Judgments Of Their Ministries.

- A. We learned in Revelation 3:14 how **Christ** is the **All-Sufficient Source** for *ministry* to the **godly** ("The Amen"), the **carnal** ("the faithful and true witness"), and the **unsaved** ("the Ruler of the creation of God").
- B. **However**, the *self-evaluations* of the two evangelical **factions** that promote their **own respective faction's ministries** are **EXPOSED** by **Christ** to be both *errant* and *ineffective* in **disciplining** all three groups noted in section "II, A" above – the **godly**, the **carnal**, and the **unsaved** (as follows):
 1. The *self-evaluation* of both factions' ministries to the **godly** are flawed: (i) Jesus said evangelicals **judge themselves**, saying, "I am rich," Rev. 3:17a[a] NIV. This phrase exists elsewhere in Scripture **only** in Zechariah 11:5 where Israel's spiritual shepherds in Christ's era were predicted to take financial advantage of God's flock while failing them spiritually (Merrill Unger, Zechariah, p. 192). (ii) This sin is also critiqued in Ezekiel 22:25-30 where Israel's spiritual shepherds failed to expound Scripture, but they took financial advantage of God's flock for their own wealth and fame instead of teaching and exemplifying Scripture truth. (iii) Thus, Arminian and Calvinist leaders have **not rightly** expounded Scripture, but they have instead taught the errant views of their respective factions to avoid conflicts with other leaders in their factions to preserve their jobs, ranks, and pensions at the cost of the spiritual welfare of God's flock. (Robert Culver, A Wake Up Call, 1993, p. 68-77, exposed this problem in the Evan. Free denomination!)
 2. The *self-evaluation* of both factions' ministries to the **carnal** are also flawed: (i) Jesus said evangelicals **judge themselves**, saying, "I have acquired wealth" (Rev. 3:17a[b] NIV), (ii) a phrase appearing elsewhere **only** in Hosea 12:8 LXX (Moul. & Ged., Conc. to Grk. Test., p. 818-819; Hatch & Red., Conc. to LXX, v. II, p. 1150). Ephraem there saw its wealth as a shield for its sin, so (iii) Arminian and Calvinist leaders have often used the existence of personal wealth or wealth in the church to assert that God is blessing them though not using Scripture to address sin! (John H. Armstrong, gen ed., The Com. Evan. Crisis, p. 36-41)
 3. The *self-evaluation* of both factions' ministries to the **unsaved** are also flawed: (i) Jesus said evangelicals **judge themselves**, saying, "(I) do not need a thing," Rev. 3:17a[c] NIV. (ii) The Greek words in this phrase exist elsewhere in the N. T. **only** at 1 Thess. 4:12 (Ibid., Moul. & Geden, p. 1010). (iii) Paul there called the Thessalonians to work with their *own hands* to **uphold** a good **testimony** before the **unsaved**. (iv) Applied to the Revelation 3:14, 17a[c] context, Jesus critiqued evangelical leaders for **relying** on *their own human efforts* to **evangelize**, sabotaging *spiritual* effectiveness in evangelism **by human effort**. [Dallas Seminary's founder, L. S. Chafer, exposed this problem in True Evangelism as early as 1911!]

Lesson: Christ taught that today's evangelical Arminian and Calvinist factions' self-promoting judgments of their own ministries err: (1) Both factions' leaders judge themselves to be upright in ministry to the godly when they fail to expound Scripture effectively, not truly heeding belief in Sola Scriptura, that they might voice their errant factions' views so as to preserve their jobs, pensions, and renown at the cost of shepherding God's flock. (2) They have also hidden behind their own and/or their factions' wealth, not addressing sin in the church and (3) they have errantly judged themselves to be effective in evangelism in spite of their futile, human, evangelistic efforts.

Application: Evangelical leaders must stop yielding to peer pressure in their factions in mouthing the false beliefs of their respective erring Arminian and Calvinist factions for financial gain and livelihood security and instead rightly expound Scripture! Evangelical leaders must study, proclaim and example what Scripture actually says in place of mouthing their factions' errors, trusting God versus their factions to provide for their livelihood needs!