

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

2. Christ's Exposure Of The Factions' Errant Beliefs Behind Their Errant Judgments

c. The Errant Views On Faith And The Atonement And Their Harmful Effects

(Revelation 3:14, 17b[c])

I. Introduction

A. Having **critiqued** the errant **judgments** of today's evangelical Calvinist and Arminian factions, Christ detailed **how they arrived** at this troubling state by the **influence** of their **respective errant BELIEFS!**

B. In Rev. 3:17b[c], Christ exposed their **errant views on faith** and the **atonement** and their **harmful effects**:

II. The Errant Views On Faith And The Atonement And Their Harmful Effects, Revelation 3:14, 17b[c].

A. In Rev. 3:17b in the Greek text, the words "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, naked" are inter-related, for they are linked by 4 conjunctions (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 845; A. T. Robertson, A Gr. of the Grk. N. T., p. 777).

B. Similarly, Calvinist theologian Loraine Boettner (The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, p. 59) wrote that **Calvinism's five points of belief** are "not isolated and independent doctrines, but are . . . inter-related . . ."

C. In viewing the Rev. 3:17b five words **in order**, we note that **Christ critiqued Calvinism's five points in order AND their opposing Arminian views**, with **insight** on the **harmful effects** each view has had on **believers**:

1. Calvinism's **third** point is "Limited Atonement," **that since the unsaved are totally depraved so that God must give them the gift of faith so they can believe, and because He chose some people to trust in Christ, Christ's death atoned only for the elect, not for those God "predetermined not to save,"** Ibid., p. 61-161.
2. Arminians hold that **any human being can contribute faith to cooperate with God to be saved, so the atonement is unlimited, atoning for every person** (Bettenson, ed., Docs. of the Chr. Ch., 2nd ed., p. 377).
3. Nevertheless, Christ **critiqued both views** and their **harmful effects** on **believers** in Revelation 3:17b[c]:
 - a. Christ's **third** critique is that the Laodiceans were "**poor,**" what translates the Greek word **ptochos** that literally means "beggarly" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 845; Abbott-Smith, Man. Grk. Lex. of the N. T., p. 393). The **solution** to this **destitute** state, given in Rev. 3:18, is "gold tried in the fire," and **elsewhere in Scripture, ONLY** in 1 Peter 1:7 does this "gold tried in the fire" **concept** exist, and there it refers to **faith** (Moulton & Geden, Conc. to the Grk. Test., p. 1019). Thus, **ptochos** in Rev. 3:17 means **destitute of faith!**
 - b. **Ptochos** in Rev. 3:17 does **not itself define** the **extent** of the **atonement, but since Calvinists developed the limited atonement point by LOGIC to ALIGN IT WITH their OTHER FOUR POINTS** (Ibid., Boettner, p. 59, 61-161), **Christ in Rev. 3:17 critiqued Calvinism's errant view of FAITH, for that view is the CAUSE of Calvinism's errant views on ALL of its FIVE POINTS going back to Augustine** (as we will document in our future salvation security lesson)!: (i) **Calvin and Augustine taught that God's gift of faith can never leave a believer destitute of faith** (Beveridge, trans., Ins. of the Chr. Rel., v. I, p. 482-485 [Bk. Thrd., ch. II, 15-17]; In "Predestination 3," Augustine wrote, "'The faith by which we are Christians is the gift of God,'" W. Walker, Hist. of the Chr. Ch., p. 165; emphases ours). However, though **destitute of faith**, the Laodiceans as **God's true sons** were about to be disciplined by Christ (Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:6-8), **what counters Calvin's and Augustine's view of faith!** (ii) **Arminians** hold that **since one contributes faith to be saved, if his faith lapses, he loses his salvation** (Chafer/Walvoord, Major Bible Themes, p. 220; Ibid., Bettenson, p. 378). However, though **destitute of faith**, the Laodiceans as **God's true sons** were about to be disciplined by Christ (Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:6-8), **what counters the Arminian view of faith!**
 - c. In grand summary, (i) the **unsaved can author faith, but faith is powerless to contribute to help one be saved, for only God can save.** (ii) Since **anyone can believe in Christ, Christ's atonement is unlimited!**
4. The **errant views on faith** and the **atonement** have had **harmful** effects on **believers**: **Calvinists have not responsibly trusted God** due to their **view** that **He predestined** them to **persevere in God's gift of faith**, and **Arminians** have **relied** on the power of an **impotent faith**, leaving both groups living **destitute** lives!

Lesson: (1) Calvinists hold that God gives faith only to the elect, so they have held to a limited atonement belief to fit God's alleged will to save only the elect. This has left Calvinists relying on predestination to retain their faith versus trusting in God for living. (2) Arminians hold that faith helps save the soul. This has left them believing in an unlimited atonement but also made them impotent as they trust in a powerless faith and not God for living.

Application: May we hold to unlimited atonement and initiate faith in Almighty God for spiritual power for living!