

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

d. The Errant Views On The Spirit's Conviction And Their Harmful Effects

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

I. Introduction

- A. Having **critiqued** the errant **judgments** of today's two 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. 3:14, 17b[d], Christ exposed **errant views** on the **Spirit's convicting work** and **their harmful effects:**

II. The Errant Views On The Spirit's Conviction And Their Harmful Effects, Rev. 3:14, 17b[d].

- 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. Significantly, Calvinist theologian Loraine Boettner (*The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, p. 59) noted that **Calvinism's five points of belief** are "not isolated and independent doctrines, but are . . . inter-related . . ."
- C. In viewing these five adjectives **in order**, we see **Christ critiqued** the **five points of Calvinism in order AND** their **opposing views** in **Arminianism**, with **insight** on the **harmful effects** each view has had on **believers:**
1. Calvinism's **fourth** point is "Irresistible Grace," *the view that the Holy Spirit makes the elect become spiritually insightful and convicted of sin so that they irresistibly trust in Christ, and that this spiritual insight increases over time by means of God's predestination*, Ibid., p. 162-181, especially p. 171-172.
 2. Arminians hold that the *unsaved by the Holy Spirit's insightful conviction may or may not trust in Jesus, and if they believe, they contribute faith to be saved and retain their salvation and insight if their faith does not fail* (Bettenson, *Doc. of the Chr. Ch.*, 2nd ed., p. 377f; Chaf./Walv., *Maj. Bib. Th.*, 1974, p. 220ff).
 3. However, **Christ critiqued both views** on the **Holy Spirit's convicting work** and their **harmful effects:**
 - a. Christ said that the Laodiceans were **fourth** "blind" (from the Greek word *tuphlos*; Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.), and (i) its **solution** in Rev. 3:18 NIV (and the Greek text, Ibid.) was to apply **Christ's poultice** to their **eyes** that they might **see**. (ii) Elsewhere in Scripture, **only** in John 9:1-41 did **Christ** apply a **poultice** to a blind man's eyes that **first** gave him **physical** sight and **later led** to his **spiritual insight** that **Jesus** was "**the son of man**" [John 9:35 in the Greek, Ibid.], Who in Daniel 7:13-14 is **God! Enlightened**, the man **trusted** in **Christ** as **God** and was **saved** (cf. John 20:31), (iii) so, "blind" in Rev. 3:17 is a **lack of spiritual insight!**
 - b. Thus, "blind" in Rev. 3:17 **critiques both Calvinist and Arminian** views of the **Holy Spirit's convicting ministry:** (i) Calvinism holds that the Holy Spirit **irresistibly** makes the elect be **permanently spiritually insightful of God's truth**, but the Laodiceans were **saved** as seen in Christ's readiness to discipline them as **God's true sons** (Rev. 3:19 with Heb. 12:6-8) **while they were also "blind"!** **Accordingly, there is no "irresistible grace"!** (ii) Arminians hold that the Holy Spirit causes the **unsaved** to **discern their need for salvation** so they **can contribute faith** to God to **exist as saved**, but the Laodiceans who were **truly saved** (since Christ was ready to discipline them as God's true sons, Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:6-8) were **"blind," so by existing as saved without spiritual insight, they were saved by God ALONE!** (iii) In summation, **the Holy Spirit convicts an unsaved person so that he can either accept the Holy Spirit's revelation of God's truth in Christ or reject it** (John 16:8-11), **and if the unsaved believes in Christ, God ALONE saves him!**
 - c. **Both factions' views have led to spiritual blindness in believers:** (i) The **Calvinist's** belief that he **gains spiritual insight** by "**irresistible grace**" has led him to hold that **spiritual insight** is **sustained** in his walk by **predestination**, so he does **not rely** on the **Holy Spirit** for **insight, what leaves him "blind"!** (ii) The **Arminian's** belief that he **exists as saved only if he discerns God's truth** errs, for the Laodiceans were **saved while "blind," so the Arminian has gone "blind" by relying on faith instead of the Holy Spirit.**

Lesson: (1) Calvinists have erred in holding that the Holy Spirit convicts the elect so that they irresistibly WILL trust in Christ, and (2) Arminians have erred in holding that spiritual insight MUST reside in believers who are STILL saved. (3) Rather, the Holy Spirit graciously convicts the unsaved WORLD so that ANYONE can author faith in Christ (John 1:9; 16:8-11; Rev. 22:17), BUT the Holy Spirit illumines ONLY those BELIEVERS who RELY by FAITH on HIM for spiritual insight IN their Christian WALK!

Application: May we rely on God the Holy Spirit at ALL TIMES for ALL of our SPIRITUAL INSIGHT needs!