

# Revelation 3:14-22 (We Ourselves Are They Who Are Wretched, Miserable, Poor, Blind, and naked.)

by Hans R. Waldvogel

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*The sermon emphasizes the need for repentance and spiritual awakening in the face of self-deception and lukewarm faith.*

**Scripture:** Revelation 3:14

**Topics:** "Repentance", "Spiritual Awakening"

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## Description

Hans R. Waldvogel emphasizes the dire spiritual condition of the Laodicean church, warning that many believers are unaware of their true state of wretchedness, misery, and spiritual poverty. He calls for repentance and a genuine seeking of Christ, who stands ready to offer Himself and the true riches of faith. Waldvogel highlights the danger of complacency and the need for believers to recognize their need for spiritual awakening and transformation. He encourages the congregation to exchange their flawed nature for the divine nature offered by Christ, urging them to open their hearts to His call. The sermon serves as a reminder that true faith requires action and a willingness to confront one's own shortcomings.

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## Transcript

Selected Verses:

Revelation 3:14-22. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; 15I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. 19As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 20Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 21To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Opening:

[...] Our next stop will be the Valley of Humiliation, perhaps--like you read in Pilgrim's Progress. They said, "Now, you're going to catch many a slip going down that hill. It's harder going down than coming up." And maybe that's so. But something that will help us very, very greatly, I believe, is found in the book that we have studied. You don't need to turn to it unless you want to. It's in the third chapter, and it's a very well-known scripture: Revelation 3, and the 14th verse.

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things saith the Amen...'" I like these names that are given to Jesus: "Amen." Oh, Jesus, You're truly wonderful! And to think that You're coming so close to us and that You call us by name, and that You offer us Yourself, and that You make us feel the touch of Your hand, and that You Yourself open the heavens and pour out Your power upon us! And, O God, we do love these epistles of Christ.

Thus "saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.'"

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Selected Quotes:

Oh, how terrible is this religious pride! And we used to think, you know, that God was talking here to the so-called dead churches. Beloved, He's talking to us. Let's face it: we are the people that think we are "rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." If we didn't, we'd do something about it. Isn't it strange that people don't begin really to seek the Lord until they get into real trouble? Then they begin to seek the Lord.

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How very helpful it is, then, if we go from this place to know that every day, and every moment of the day, Jesus Christ offers Himself to us--Himself! He does not want us to fool ourselves and to think that we're ready for the Marriage of the Lamb when we're not. "They that were ready went in!"

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What have You got to give me, my Lord? Why, He tells us here: Himself! "I stand at the door and knock." I like to think of my prayer time like that. It's hard for the flesh: "The carnal man does not understand the things of the Spirit of God." The spirit of God doesn't lead you into a moving picture house, or into a Coney Island affair, or someplace like that to pamper your flesh, but He'll "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts." "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." And we don't like rebuke. We don't like God to come to us and tell us, "You're fooling yourself. You think you're rich and increased with goods? You're a whited sepulchre. You don't know what's in your heart. You don't realize what vermin dwells in your heart."

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"I have gold tried in the fire." What is He talking about? Why does He say I have to buy gold tried in the fire? What do we do when we buy? We exchange value for value. And here is something that you can exchange: you can exchange your vile nature for His divine nature.

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But when I got in touch with Holy Ghost preaching, how it went in! How it found me where I lived! How it showed me my wretchedness, my natural wretchedness, thank God! He dug right in, and He showed me the depths of my fall, and He showed me the impurity of my heart and of my thoughts. And I knew outwardly, everything was okay. Everybody thought I was a top-notch Christian. I had learned to have a "form of godliness," but I didn't know the "power thereof." And in my heart, all the works of the flesh had their inception. There were all these things that the Bible names: pride, impurity, self-seeking, sensitiveness, dumps, and whatever comes of the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest which are these." And when I saw my need, I cried to God. I said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Jesus says, "I stand at the door. If you'll hear My voice, if you'll open the door..." Beloved, it means, like we heard a while ago, a change of occupation; it means a change of master, a change of kingship.

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"It is time for judgment to begin at the house of God." Beloved, we're "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." And here's the King of Glory with a load of "gold tried in the fire": with an overcoming life that laughs at all our foes, that defeats all hell. But we don't pay the price. Why, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith upon this earth?"

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Illustrations:

The story of a man who sought the Lord for healing only. "One day the pastor got notice from him... that the fellow got better and now he didn't need to pray anymore." (from 4:26)

The story of a capital offender illustrates the need of parental and divine discipline. (from 11:43)

An illustration of "an old-time saint" with an unsanctified tongue. "'A mother in Israel,' she called herself... We can preach like a house of fire, and still have a tongue that's inspired by hell." (from 18:39)

The story of a blind and sinful minister. (from 20:22)

Some comments especially for young people. (from 28:19)

References:

A Short and Easy Method of Prayer, by Madame Guyon. "I have wondered ever since I got acquainted with it why Pentecost has not taken to A Short and Easy Method of Prayer. It's the most classical, the most spiritual declaration of Almighty God of what prayer means." The full compilation of books out of which this translation of Madam Guyon's work is taken is available here.

Columbus

Joaquin Miller, 1892

Behind him lay the gray Azores,

Behind the Gates of Hercules;

Before him not the ghost of shores;  
Before him only shoreless seas.  
The good mate said: "Now we must pray,  
For lo! the very stars are gone.  
Brave Adm'r'l! speak! What shall I say?"  
"Why, say: 'Sail on! sail on! And on!'"  
"My men grow mutinous day by day;  
My men grow ghastly, wan and weak."  
The stout mate thought of home; a spray  
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.  
"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l, say,  
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"  
"Why, you shall say at break of day:  
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"  
They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,  
Until at last the blanched mate said:  
"Why, now not even God would know  
Should I and all my men fall dead.  
These very winds forget their way,  
For God from those dread seas is gone.  
Now speak, brave Adm'r'l, speak and say"--  
He said: "Sail on! sail on! and on!"  
They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:  
"This mad sea shows his teeth tonight.  
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,  
He lifts his teeth, as if to bite!  
Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word:

What shall we do when hope is gone?"

The words leapt like a leaping sword:

"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then pale and worn, he paced the deck,

And peered through darkness. Ah, that night

Of all dark nights! And then a speck--

A light! a light! a light! A light!

It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!

It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.

He gained a world; he gave that world

Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

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