

02-11-01b Revelation

When we come to Revelation chapter 3 verse 14, we begin the final letter from the Lord Jesus to the churches in Asia Minor. To the angel of the church in Laodicea write, Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot.

I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich, and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed, and anoint your eyes with eye salve that you may see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Laodicea, if you look at a map and look at the seven churches, they form a rough circuit.

Not quite circular, but roughly circular. The Lord Jesus has progressed around the circle in a clockwise fashion, starting at Ephesus, which was near to Patmos, and going around clockwise. We are now at the southeastern corner, or southeastern portion of that circle at Laodicea.

The Ephesus and Smyrna and Pergamos were sort of on the western part of that circle, going upward to the top, and then you come down through Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The Lycus Valley, if you may remember way back when we were studying Colossians, was a prominent feature of the geography there. The city of Laodicea was founded by Antiochus II, and he named it after his wife, Laodicea.

It was one of the more recently founded cities. It didn't have the long and ancient history of some of the other towns. It was founded for strategic reasons, because it controlled the entrance into the interior of Phrygia, that portion of Asia Minor.

All of the churches in that region, in the Lycus Valley, were quite famous. You had Hierapolis, which was on the north side of the Lycus Valley, you had Laodicea on the south side, and then if you went about 15 miles further up the river, you had Colossae, and further up was another town called Apamea. But, these churches and cities were well known in Asia Minor.

Paul, at the end of Colossians, says that Epaphras has a great zeal for you all at Colossae and

for them at Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis. Salute the brethren who are in Laodicea, when this epistle is read among you, cause it to be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. And, I am certain that the book that we call Ephesians is actually the letter to the Laodiceans.

We noted that when we studied Colossians, the flow of thought, Colossians is sort of the Reader's Digest condensed version of Ephesians, and yet there is some distinct material in each, and that is why it would be pretty strange for Paul to say, ensure that if you read this letter, you also read the other, and then for that other letter to not be found in the New Testament. And, someone in the early church saw that the Laodicean letter did not have a city in the greeting, because it was designed to be a letter that would be circulated all up and down the Lycus Valley throughout this region, and so when it says to the saints, and then it says in Epheso, that phrase in Greek does not occur in the oldest and best manuscripts of Ephesians. It is a late scribal addition.

Someone felt like they needed to fill in that blank. And, I don't think, although it was no doubt read in Ephesus, and may have even survived in copy form in Ephesus, the Ephesians may have even scabbled onto the original copy and kept it, and claimed it as their own. But, Ephesians is actually, and you'll get a chance to verify this someday, we'll all ask the Apostle Paul now, wasn't Ephesians really Laodiceans, and he'll say, yes it was.

I'm confident. Anyway, those are all in this region of the Lycus Valley. The Lycus Valley goes down and runs into the Meander River.

We have a word in English, well, the Meander, that's after the Meander River, which is a very windy, twisty river in that region. And, that river eventually goes down and runs through Ephesus. And, so you have a link from the mouth of the Lycus Valley there, where it hits the Meander, down to Ephesus.

And, of course, Ephesus is not very far from Miletus, and Miletus is just across the river, or across the sea really, out in the ocean. There are three islands, one of which was Patmos. So, you had Epaphras, who ministered in Colossae and in Laodicea.

You had Papias, who was the pastor at Hierapolis. Papias is one of the famous early church fathers, and we have some writings of his that have survived down to the present. And, you have Polycarp, who was the pastor at Smyrna.

We talked about him and the martyrdom of Polycarp at Smyrna. And, these, Papias and Polycarp, were both disciples of John. Epaphras had been trained and was well known to the apostle Paul.

You also have Archippus, who was the pastor at Colossae. And, that's the congregation where you had Philemon, who was the slave owner, who had the slave named Onesimus. And, you

have the letter to Philemon.

It talks as Paul asking Philemon to accept this runaway slave back into his fold, if you will, to not hold his running away against him because he has come to faith. So, that is the geographical background in Laodicea. But, in the district around Laodicea and Hierapolis, there were many hot mineral springs.

There are great articles on all of these towns in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia and probably other geographies of the Holy Land and the region of Asia Minor. But, in particular, any of them you consult, you'll find that there were these hot springs and people would try to drink this mineral water for their health and it was kind of like coffee that tastes a lot better when it's hot than it does at room temperature. And, of course, that bears on some of the language in this letter.

You also have an eye salve that was manufactured in this region and was called Tephrafrygia. It was a tablet that was exported all over the Roman Empire and if you had an eye affliction, if you had a sty or some other malignant problem in your eye, you would take this tablet and crush it and put the powder in your eyes and it had analgesic and healing properties, a little bit of antiseptic property, and was very famous throughout the ancient world. Another industry they had in Laodicea was the manufacture of a particular kind of cloth from which an outer garment was woven.

This was a very black cloth. They raised a special kind of sheep that had black wool instead of white and from this they would make this fabric and create a garment called a Trimata. It was kind of like a toga.

And the Trimata was so famous that sometimes Laodicea had the nickname of Trimitaria, which was named after this garment. And, as you've seen from the content of the letter, all of these are going to be in the background of what Jesus says to the people in this area. Now, a unique feature of this letter that we have just read is, this is the only letter of the seven in which there is not a single commendatory remark.

The people in Laodicea are not commended for anything. And the people who believe that the letters to the seven churches are reflective of phases of church history, like to think that the Laodicean letter refers to our present time and that it also refers to the apostasy that is thought to precede the coming of Christ. In the last days there will be this great apostasy.

We have already decided that the chronological view is perhaps not the best. And while you still have that idea, that yes, the Laodicean description can fit our modern day church, so can the other six. And you will find believers, and you will find groups of believers, in every age, in every generation, who may be very faithful, who may endure under persecution.

There are believers in foreign countries today who are undergoing great persecution for their

faith, while the American church is more like the church at Laodicea. So I think it's a very selective view of history that says that these represent particular phases or ages in the time of the church. So having noted that, we'll move forward now and take a look at the content of the letter itself.

Again, we note similarities to the other letters. We've already discussed that the angel or messenger of the church is going to be the pastor. The language is addressed in the singular.

These things say the Amen. What does Amen mean? I believe it, so be it. It is an affirmation, if you will.

And Jesus says, I am the Amen. I am the faithful and true witness. Witness is *martus*.

You becomes *y* when it comes over into English, and we get the word martyr from this. The verb is *martureo*, to bear witness. Jesus told the disciples, you will be my martyrs, in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the outermost parts of the world.

And there's a little bit of a double entendre there. But he says, I am the *martus*, *pistos*, and *aleithinos*. *Pistos* means faithful.

Aleithinos means true. So thus says the Amen, the witness that is faithful and true. Then it says the beginning of the creation of God.

And this has caused some question. There's been disputes in church history about is Jesus, sometimes he's called the firstborn of all creation, or was he created, or did he always pre-exist? Well, the answer is yes. Both things are true.

He always pre-existed, and he was born into the human race at a point in time. God says, thou art my son, this day I have begotten you. But here the word is *arche*.

And *arche* has the idea of authorship. This has almost the idea of the creator. He is what caused creation to come into being.

He began the creation, or caused it to come into being. That is within the scope of this word. When God began to put creation into effect, Christ was at the beginning of that.

He was at the head of it. He was in charge of it, if you will. We go to scriptures where all three members of the Trinity are seen to be involved in creation.

But these are titles, as we've seen in all of the other letters, that pertain specifically to the message that applies to the situation of these particular believers. Why does Jesus introduce himself as the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning or the inception of the creation of God? Well, the Amen is the acceptance of a task. Again, going to our theological dictionary, the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, it confirmed the acceptance of tasks whose performance depended on God's will. In 1 Kings 1.36, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, Amen, thus may the Lord the God of my Lord the king say. There is a divine commission and Amen means I accept it, so be it.

I am all leaning forward in getting this accomplished. This sheds light and interacts with his title as the Arche of the creation of God, the beginning of the creation of God. In our understanding of the model of the Trinity, you have God the Father who produces the plan, designs the plan.

You have the Son who executes the plan. You have the Holy Spirit who provides the power for the execution of the plan that was designed by the Father. And so the Amen, Jesus is the XO.

He is the one who will execute the plan. He is the one that makes it happen. Amen has the idea, make it happen.

That's why we end our prayers with it. The New Testament use of that word pretty much takes over the Old Testament. When you find Jesus saying, Verily, verily, I say unto you, in the King James, Verily, verily, is Amen, Amen, I say unto you.

This is what's going to happen. Other uses of Amen included confirming the application of divine justice. For example, in Numbers 5.22, there was a ritual involved for a woman who was accused of adultery.

Remember the dust from the floor of the tabernacle was mixed with water and there was the application of this water. If she would drink this water and she was guilty, her belly would swell and her thigh would rot. That whole story is quite alarming in Numbers 5. But at the end of describing that, he says in Numbers 5.22, This water that brings a curse shall go into your stomach and make your abdomen swell and your thigh waste away, and the woman shall say, Amen, Amen.

She is to assent before this trial begins, so let it be. And it was also used to attest the praise of God as a part of a doxology, as in 1 Chronicles 16.36, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting even to everlasting. Then all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord.

Indeed, truly, may it be so. Affirmation. These things say the Amen, the one who makes it so, the faithful and true witness.

Now a witness is one who attests to the facts, facts that he has observed, facts that have been communicated. Jesus says he is a faithful and true witness. Why is that important in this context? Well, stop and think about it.

You have a church where you have many prosperous people. It's a popular church. It's a fun church.

Think of some large, well-known, and kind of happy, thriving congregations here in Dallas. And someone comes on Sunday morning and stands up and says, Friends, we have received a personal letter from the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, everyone is very excited.

Let's hear what the Lord Jesus has to say. We are such a growing, thriving, happy group. I can hardly wait to hear what good things the Lord has to say, because people are constantly standing up and saying good things, and promoting, and encouraging, and smiling, and singing, and praising, and everything is great.

And so the Lord Jesus himself is going to chime in with the great Amen and the great affirmation. So the letter begins. They've heard the other six letters read, I'm sure, before it gets to them.

And they've seen the progress around the clock dial, starting at Ephesus and going through Smyrna, Thyatira, Sardis, and all the rest. It comes around to them. Oh boy, how that we're going to shine in comparison to these other churches, because we've got everything.

And it begins. These things says the Amen, and they're really gearing up for a big round of applause. The faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

And they're probably just thinking, you know, I bet we're going to end up being the crown jewel of these seven churches. We're going to come out the best. We sure think we're the best.

So everything is fine up through the end of verse 14. Then he says, I know your works. Oh great.

Here comes the great commendation. That you are neither cold nor hot. Well, what can this mean? The Greek words here are Sucros, P-S-U-C-H-R-O-S, Sucros, and Zestos, just like the soap.

Nesty is the best T, because it's zesty. Zest. Zestos is the word for hot.

Sucros is the word for cold. He says, I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. Then he says, aphelon, and this is from the Ophelo, which means to will, to desire.

Ophelia, the name, the girl's name comes from this. And he says, I would that you were Sucros, or Zestos, that you were cold or hot. Or it would be an advantage.

Ophelos has the idea of something that furthers, or helps, or is an advantage. It would be helpful. It would be good if.

There's really not a personal desire expressed here. It comes to mean, would that. It would be good that.

It would be an advantage if. It would be serviceable. It would be useful if you were cold or hot.

Ophelos had the idea of originally owing. Ought. You ought.

You should. Ophelos meant to owe, or to have, to pay, or to account for. To be a debtor.

To be bound, or to be obliged. We talked about obligation, referenced to this verb in a study not long ago. So, you ought to be cold or hot.

So then, because you are lukewarm, you are Klearos, this is C-H-L-I-A-R-O-S, you are Klearos, and not Zestos or Sucros. You are lukewarm. You are not cold or hot.

I will vomit you out of my mouth. I will spew you out of my mouth. This word, emesai, is where we get the word emetic.

Something that causes you to vomit. I will spew or vomit you from my mouth. At first, when he says, I know your works that are neither cold or hot, you might wonder, what does it mean, cold or hot? But once he says, because you are not cold or hot and you are lukewarm, I will spew you out of my mouth, now we see that the image is that this is a beverage of some sort, probably water, perhaps mineral water, such as they have that is supposed to be a benefit.

Now, we have such a fixation on lukewarm. We say, well, I put out my proposal, but it got a very lukewarm response. Well, the attitude in the room was very tepid.

It was unresponsive, lackadaisical, disinterested. That's our idea of lukewarm. And we think, Jesus says, I wish you were hot, meaning very good, or cold, meaning very bad, but because you're just kind of in the middle and lackadaisical, I will have to spew you out of my mouth.

But the language here will not support that view, because in that view, cold is bad, hot is best, but Jesus says, well, I wish you'd get off of the fence and either be totally evil or totally good, but don't just be kind of half-baked. But he says you ought to be either cold or hot. There are two different extremes here, both of which are good.

Most of our beverages we like to have either hot or cold. There are certain occasions where there's nothing better than an ice-cold beverage, an ice-cold glass of tea, an ice-cold Coke, just ice water is wonderful, and refreshing, and needful, maybe even medicinal in some cases. There are other times, bitterly cold days, you've been out, you come in and you want something hot, hot chocolate, hot coffee.

There's hardly ever a time when hot coffee is not great. But nobody, very seldom do you find somebody saying, well, unless it's wine, there are certain wines that are supposed to be served at room temperature, but wine is not in view here. And generally speaking, a beverage accomplishes its purpose of warming you up when you're cold because it's hot, or of cooling you off when you're hot because it's cold.

It is beneficial, it is useful, and it ought to be. What do you do when your coffee cools to room temperature? I go looking for a microwave. What do you do when all your ice melts and the glass

quits sweating on the table? You go get some more ice.

Dump it out and get a whole fresh beverage. And many times, I have two coffee cups that look very similar, and every once in a while I would have both of them out, and one of them might have yesterday's coffee standing at room temperature, and the other one has this morning's coffee that's nice and hot. And if I grab the wrong one and get the tepid, lukewarm yesterday's coffee in my mouth, my instinct is to spew it out of my mouth.

It does nothing for me like the hot coffee does. Well, this is the idea. There's nothing wrong with cold.

Cold or hot is great. Jesus says you ought to be. Be one thing or the other.

There are a range of options that are available. You don't have to be all one thing, but be what you should be. If you should be hot, be hot.

If you should be cold, be cold. You should provide refreshment. You should provide benefit.

You should fulfill the purpose for which you exist. A lukewarm beverage almost never is what you're looking for. Maybe if you've got really, really bad teeth, and you've got nerves hanging out that are sensitive, that need a root canal, or if you're a wine connoisseur, and there's, I understand, some wines that are supposed to be drunk, but generally speaking, it provides benefit.

It is useful. It is what it should be when it is either cold or hot. So don't let anyone bring this passage up and say, God would rather that if you're going to be evil, well, then be hung for a sheep as opposed to just a lamb.

If you're going to be evil, be really evil. If you're going to be a pagan, if you're going to be a backslider, if you're going to be no use in the spiritual realm, then just go whole hog in the other direction. That is not what this passage says.

There are two different extremes where, when you go for the gusto, either be chilled or be fiery hot. Don't lapse. You have to do something to a beverage to get it real cold.

You've got to ice it down. You've got to find a cold place and chill it. Put it in the bottom of a cold mountain stream in a wineskin or whatever.

You've got to do something to a beverage to get it really hot. You've got to put it on the fire and add energy to it. A beverage that is either cold or hot has been acted upon by an outside force and made better, made beneficial.

Left to itself, everything moves toward room temperature, doesn't it? And it is not active, it's not responsive. That's the idea here. Because you are lukewarm, you've just... Christianity is not a

crutch, it's a stretcher.

You have no active benefit. You're not a beverage that's useful. I will vomit you out of my mouth.

Well, we could use a little bit of elaboration on this. What does it mean to be lukewarm? Does it mean that they just do their activities in a half-hearted manner? Not at all. What is the nature of this lukewarmness? How is it defined? Look at verse 17.

Because you say, I am rich, I have become wealthy, and I have need of nothing. The definition of lukewarm is, I don't need the heat. I don't need the cold.

I don't need something from the outside to act on me and transform me. I don't need to take on the properties of something outside myself. I have everything I need.

We talked in the first lesson tonight about the triad of Christian virtues that is mentioned so often in the New Testament, faith, hope, and love. What is it that motivates us? What is it that gives us the desire to exercise faith, to manifest love, to operate in hope? Hope that does not disappoint because love is shed abroad in our hearts. Why are we listening and looking at together the Word of God tonight? There may be a variety of reasons, but hopefully it is because we recognize that we need it.

Our souls need nourishment. We need the Holy Spirit to have a voice within us with which to speak. He needs the sharp sword of the Word of God in His hand to pierce and divide us under.

We need transformation. Many people need things, and they don't recognize it. Look around in your periphery.

Don't look at somebody in the same room, but think about your periphery elsewhere. Think about people that are not present. If you think for a few seconds, you'll think of someone who really needs a change, who really needs to wake up and break a bad habit, or who needs to stop engaging in a fruitless behavior or in a destructive behavior, someone who needs to change their priorities, someone who needs to get away from an empty ritual and move toward a reality, someone who needs to stop fooling themselves, someone who... It's easy to look elsewhere and see someone has a need, but this person you're thinking of, I would wager, has been in that condition for some time and doesn't really acknowledge the need.

People who need to break an addiction or who need to change out of a bad habit have to first of all acknowledge that it is a problem and that they need to change. People will not accept a solution that they don't feel they need. We hear a lot today in the Christian world.

One of the popular subjects is our brokenness and our neediness and our abject desolation, and there is an element of truth in that. We do have a need. We started out corrupt.

We live in a fallen world. The devil is after us. You have the world, the flesh and the devil all

mitigating against and dragging us down, and we have the call, the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

And that tension defines and illustrates and brings out to our attention our need because we can't move in the opposite direction. We can't swim against the tide and the stream of sin and evil in our own strength. It is not possible.

There are many substitutes that are offered. You've got Dr. Phil. You've got 12-step programs.

You've got counseling books by the shelf full, by the truck load, by the ship load, by the overloaded continent full. Go to any Christian bookstore or a bookstore that has Christian books, and you can drown yourself in books that say, here's a way to overcome a need. And people can wallow in their brokenness, and, well, we see others in their brokenness, and we have to minister to their brokenness out of our brokenness.

To me, that's all the same as saying the blind leading the blind. We don't minister to people's brokenness out of our brokenness. I defy anyone to find that anywhere on any page of my Bible, that we need to be broken and acknowledge our brokenness so that we can go to somebody else's brokenness and we can share our brokenness and put our broken pieces together and have a big pile of that.

It's just really weird and strange. But there is the necessity for recognizing that we do have a need. But who is it that supplies all of our needs according to His riches and glory in Christ Jesus? It's not looking to some broken person next to you.

It is God. God supplies His power to meet our needs. In our weakness, His strength is made manifest, not your neighbor's strength.

It's God's strength. And we are not to be abject and toe-stumping in the dirt and aw shucks and hanging our head. We have been made whole and complete in Christ.

We are a new creation. But we recognize our dependence on that which God supplies. And it is an objective, unemotional recognition that in the same way my body needs food, I don't particularly... One of my areas of enthusiasm is not gastronomy, cooking, and there are people who live to cook.

There's a lady I work with who has a friend who's up in the 300-400 pound range because she has a passion for cooking. She loves to cook. And, of course, if you cook stuff and there it sits, well, you eat it and pretty soon you're just having to modify your lentils and doorposts.

But she has this passion and she doesn't really recognize the need. She had dreams of going to the spa and to the exercise gym, but then she decided, oh, well, I can't really do that. She doesn't really recognize the need to change.

We have to recognize the need. That is what is missing. And that is being lukewarm.

Because if you realize that you need the power of God, you are going to hunger and thirst to get it. And you will not settle for Cheetos. You will not settle for spiritual chip and dip.

You will not settle for Twinkies. Tastes sweet, but mostly air. Very little nutritive value.

You can snack on a Twinkie once in a while and it doesn't necessarily hurt you. But if that's all you do, if that's all you get when you go to worship and you think, I'm fine, you are in denial. You do not recognize the need for nourishment, the need for God's power.

God's power comes into the life of the believer through God's Word and through God's Spirit. Our little study in Revelation chapter 1, at least in my mind, emphasizes our need for God the Holy Spirit. We can't conjure in our own imagination the Millennial Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Father.

But God the Holy Spirit can impress us with the reality of it through His ministry, His connection to God the Father and God the Son. He takes the things that belong to them and transmits them to us. He is the conduit to the Eternal.

And so is the Word of God. They are two sides of the same coin. That is what we need.

And if we recognize that need, it is going to set us on fire. It is going to make us want to be what we should be, a refreshing cold drink or a bracing hot beverage, one or the other, both of which are good. We are not all hot cups of coffee.

We are not all iced tea. Some will be one way and some will be another. Some people are very toward the emotional side, great hymn writers, great poets, great expressors of appreciation and praise and worship and thanksgiving.

Others are more academically inclined. You have the right brain and the left. I think of the hot and cold as right brain and left brain.

I think that the cold objective appreciation is so necessary in our church. If all you have is, let's see how hot we can get everybody to boil, let's raise the pitch of the music, let's stir them up with inspiration, well, that could be a form of hot. Light the burners.

Make the fire seven times hotter. Let's get everybody really perking here. Inspire.

But you don't want to be that all the time. You have got to have objective, cool, rational content of instruction and content of thought. You have to know your promises, know your principles, know your doctrines.

There is a time to be cold. There is a time to be hot. There is a time to be a base.

There is a time to abound. We go from extremes, but it is our center in Jesus Christ. It is our foundation in the Word of God.

It is the consistent ministry of God's Spirit that is the gyroscope that keeps us going down the straight path that goes right through the narrow gate that leads to life. But we can partake. We can enjoy our emotions.

We can enjoy the academic study of the Word of God and doing word studies and comparing Scripture with Scripture and doing the trench work that is required for a good understanding. I wish that you were cold. I wish that you were hot.

Do the things you are supposed to do in the context that they are supposed to be done, but don't just... What happens to a living thing when it dies? It assumes room temperature. Death is room temperature. And that's what has happened here.

They are neither cold nor hot. I will spew you out of my mouth. Why are they room temperature? Why are they dead? Because you say, I have need of nothing.

I have everything I need to get through my day. I am rich. I have become wealthy.

And you do not know that you are wretched, you are miserable, you are poor, you are blind, and you are naked. Jesus says, I counsel you to buy from me. And this is the word from the Agora.

It can mean to purchase, but in this context it means to obtain. I counsel you to obtain from me. It's kind of strange when you say, to buy from me gold refined in the fire.

If it meant buy, in terms of obtain by way of exchange, it means what you think you have by way of wealth, exchange that for the genuine gold. I counsel you to obtain from me gold refined in the fire that you may be rich. What is the gold refined in the fire? We've just got through studying that, haven't we? Build on the foundation with gold and silver and precious stones.

It is righteousness by faith. That is what lasts. How do you obtain from Christ gold refined in the fire? It is faith that is perfected in testing.

It is hupomone. The trial of your faith works hupomone. So that you may be rich indeed.

You think you're rich, you fool yourself into thinking that you have what you need, but you don't have what you need because you are totally unprepared for the kingdom. You are totally unprepared for actual service. And the Lord Jesus Christ, what does it mean for a believer to be spewed out of the mouth? This is rejection.

This is the door closing. This is being in the darkness which is outside. This is loss.

This is separation. This is distance in the kingdom, in the resurrection, because you were self-sufficient. What was the Pharisees' problem? Pursuing their own righteousness and not accepting

the righteousness of God.

They sought a righteousness of their own making. You need the gold that has been refined in the fire so that you may be rich. You need white garments that you may be clothed.

This is the white garment of righteousness. The garment is the righteous deeds of the saints. He is going to say that here in Revelation later on.

That the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed. If you don't have the righteous deeds of the saints, production and fruit after salvation, the shame of your nakedness will show. There's no getting around it.

Scripture teaches it all the way through.