



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 10.4.26

Revelation 3:14-22 // Tony Scialabba

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

CONNECT (10 MIN)

- 1 In the sermon on Sunday, Pastor Tony talked about a time when his wife, Kalyn, had to lovingly point out to him something he was doing that he didn't realize he was doing (Tony shared that he sometimes cuts people off in conversation without thinking about it in his excitement to share something with them). Can you think of a time when someone who cares for you has done the same for you - has pointed out to you something you needed to know but didn't realize on your own?

EXPLORE (30 MIN)

Create Context (5 min):

HERE is the Sermon Recap video playlist on Vimeo.

Study & Discussion (25 min)

Read Revelation 3:14-22.

- 1 Review Revelation 3:15-17. On Sunday, Tony made the point that Jesus exposes what we can't see. This was true in the case of the church at Laodicea, and it can be true of us (in our culture, our church, and our individual hearts) today.

In his book "On Christian Teaching," the church father Augustine once wrote, "Since the human race is prone to judge sins not by the strength of the actual lust (as defined by God and His Word), but rather by the standard of its own practices, people generally regard as culpable only such actions as men of their own time and place tend to blame and condemn, and regard as commendable and praiseworthy only such actions as are acceptable within the conventions of their own society."

Here Augustine is saying that we have a tendency as Christians to agree more with our own culture than with the Word of God - when Scripture presses against our cultural preferences or expectations, we often struggle to see things the way that God does.

This could have been part of the church in Laodicea's problem when they said, "I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing," and failed to see that, as Jesus put it, they were in spiritual reality "wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."

- What are some ways that you think our culture today can get this mixed up? To put it another way, where does our culture "commend and praise" things that God says are sin? Where does our culture "blame and condemn" things that God says are good and praiseworthy?

*This question continues on the next page.



- Where have you been or are you most tempted, because of your background or upbringing or personality, to “commend and praise” things that God says are sin? Where have you been or are you tempted to “blame and condemn” things that God says are good and praiseworthy?
- In what ways do you think churches in the U.S. today struggle most to separate spiritual reality from material prosperity? Where do you think our church has room to grow in this area? Where do you think you personally have room to grow in your understanding in this area?

② As Tony put it on Sunday, “Laodicea claims to need nothing while standing before the One from whom everything comes.” Like the church in Laodicea, we can be tempted to look at Jesus and say, without perhaps ever actually saying it out loud, “I’ve got this.”

- Where are you most tempted to rely on yourself, your skills, or your possessions rather than relying on Jesus?
- What do you think it will look like in this season for you to pray for and pursue growth in trusting in and relying on Jesus instead of trying to rely on your own self-sufficiency?

③ Review Revelation 3:18-19. On Sunday, Tony stated that Jesus supplies what we can’t provide. Read Philippians 4:11-13, 19-20. When writing the book of Philippians, the apostle Paul was in prison and unsure what his future held. And yet, in the midst of imprisonment, he could write that he had learned to be content in every circumstance - and he could write with confidence that he knew that God would provide for his needs and for the needs of those to whom he was writing (the Philippians).

- In Revelation 3:18-19, Jesus is telling the church at Laodicea that He is the only one who can meet the needs that they have - and He’s revealing their needs to them in the first place because He loves them! Jesus wants their repentance - He wants them to turn to and trust in Him. As Tony asked in the sermon on Sunday - when you recognize a spiritual need, do you turn to Jesus or immediately begin figuring out how to handle it yourself? As you reflect on your Christian walk, have you seen growth in this area over time? Why or why not?



- Consider the faith of Paul in Philippians 4 and elsewhere in Scripture. What was it that allowed him to grow in trusting in God so completely? What needs to shift or change in your life so that you can confidently and honestly say in the midst of any season that “my God will supply every need of yours (and mine) according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus?”

④ Review Revelation 3:20-21. In the sermon, Tony said that Jesus offers what we need most and shows us what true victory looks like. Jesus doesn’t want His people to seek self-sufficiency, but God dependency. And He wants them to know the truth that conquering and victory in Christ are not about power, status, or earthly success. With all this in mind, consider the following questions:

- Where in your life have you learned to function without depending on Jesus (consider: finances, career, kids, friendships, social status, entertainment)? What does it look like for you to grow in dependence on Him specifically in those areas where you most struggle with this?
- As Tony put it on Sunday, “CVC has people, leaders, resources, ministries, vision, and plans. But none of those things can produce spiritual fruit apart from Jesus.”
 - What does it, or could it, look like for you to participate, in prayer and in action, in the current and future work for the kingdom of God happening at CVC?
 - What does it look like for you to trust that, and lean into the fact that, no activity that we do (as a church or as individual Christians) can produce spiritual fruit apart from Jesus? Related - how does reflecting on this reality make you feel? Does it encourage you, overwhelm you, irritate you - or something else entirely?

RESOURCES

A Tale of Two Kingdoms Recommended Resources: https://cvconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/TaleOfTwo_Resources_CVC.pdf

CVC Blog: <https://cvconline.org/category/articles/>

“Augustine Could’ve Written ‘City of God’ in 2022” by Chris Watkin (The Gospel Coalition): <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/augustine-city-god-review/> (Note: While our study guide today quotes from a different book by Augustine, this article that’s about “City of God” is still helpful because it reveals and discusses Augustine’s methods for analyzing culture and the Church.)

The Book of Philippians: Genre and Setting (The Gospel Coalition): <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/philippians-introduction/#genre-setting>

PRAY AND APPLY

- Pray that Jesus would show us where we have become comfortable, secure, or self-sufficient.
- Pray that we would be willing to hear Jesus’ assessment of us, even when it is different from our own.
- Pray that we would recognize the spiritual needs we cannot meet for ourselves and depend on Jesus to supply what we lack.
- Pray that Jesus would expose areas of our lives where we have learned to function without depending on Him.
- Pray that we would receive His correction as an expression of His love and respond with repentance.
- Pray that CVC would never become a church with plans, resources, and activity that has learned to function without depending on Jesus.
- Pray that we would remain faithful to Jesus all the way to the end.



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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please take a moment to share these announcements with your group.

CONNECT

Baptisms - October 18

Jesus commanded us to be baptized as an outward symbol of an inward commitment. It lets others know that we have left the old life behind and we have entered into new life in Christ. And every time we see a baptism, we'll remember the day we publicly promise that we will live for Jesus. Click [here](#) to learn more about baptism and apply for upcoming opportunities.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Sunday Sessions - October 25

In this three-week series, we'll take a look at the importance of story, the gospel as story, the way that stories shape us, the story that digital technology is telling in our homes and in our hands, and some practical ways to intentionally teach and disciple our children as Christian parents living in an increasingly digital age and world. Join us in Room 104/106 at 9:30 am on Sunday, October 25, November 1 & November 8.

CVC YOUTH

Activate Event - October 11

Join us at Activate for an interactive gaming experience where students will jump, climb, dodge, problem-solve, and work together as they move through different game rooms. With tons of different challenges to try, there's something for everyone, whether you love being competitive, solving puzzles, or just having fun with friends. We hope to see you! Register [HERE](#)

High School Fall Retreat - November 20-22

Join us for CVCYouth's High School Retreat as we invite students to put down the things competing for their attention, spend intentional time with Jesus, and consider what it looks like to trust Him when life feels anything but still. Register [here](#).