

In verse 15 the Lord certifies that the congregation in Laodicea is not cold, indicating they are not heathens, nor are they hot, signifying they are not mature believers, but rather somewhere in between because of advanced reversionism. Merrill F. Unger addresses this circumstance:

The Laodicean condition describes the spiritual lukewarmness and worldliness that will prevail in the professing church of Christ at the end of the age. Rich, cultured, religiously ritualistic—the church will have become so self-satisfied and worldly as to have ostracized Christ completely. He is represented prophetically as standing on the outside knocking for admission (Revelation 3:20). No longer is He admitted by the corporate body, but stands outside extending an invitation to individuals. The awful spiritual condition, so utterly abhorrent to God, calls forth one of the boldest figures used in the New Testament. “So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth” (3:16; cf. 2 Timothy 3:1–8 for the spiritual and moral conditions at the end of the church age).¹

The Lord advises them in verse 18 to get back to serious Bible study so “the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed,” an appeal to move into reversion recovery. This adjustment must begin with rebound which is the subject of verse 19.

In verse 19, the Lord expresses His unconditional love for them indicated by His efforts to “reprove and discipline” (NASB). The word “reprove” is the Greek verb, **ἐλέγχω (elénchō)**: “to prove one in the wrong and to shame.”

The word “discipline” is the Greek verb, **παιδεύω (paideúō)**: “to correct or chastise.” Here is a summary of how this verb is applied in New-Testament contexts:

Originally to bring up a child, to educate, used of activity directed toward the moral and spiritual nurture and training of a child, to educate. To instruct, particularly a child or youth; to instruct by chastisement. To chastise for the purpose of educating someone to conform to divine truth.²

¹ Merrill F. Unger, “Laodicea, Church At,” in *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1985), 757.

² Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “παιδεύω,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 1088.



Jesus Christ is the superior ranking authority over the churches and His intervention at Laodicea is designed to influence them to “be zealous and repent,” not “to become emotionally energized and believe in Him.” This is not a salvation passage, but one directed toward reversion recovery.

Therefore, in Revelation 3:20, the Lord makes the case that first the majority of those in the church are out of fellowship, divorced from biblical reality, and in the cosmic morass of reversionism.

As a result, these people are not presently receptive to divine viewpoint. This means that the Lord’s presence is absent from the auditorium. Therefore, He is situated outside the room, yet He stands at the door and “keeps on knocking.”

Then comes the protasis of the third-class conditional statement: “If anyone hears My voice and opens the door,” maybe some person will hear and open or maybe someone will not, but in all likelihood, someone will open the door.”

Opening the door is a figure of speech for rebound recovery. Those who allow Him in may then “dine with Him,” the reestablishment of fellowship through the resumption of Bible study.

This passage has nothing to do with evangelism. No appeal from the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ is mentioned. The circumstance is reversionism and the Lord’s desire is that reversion recovery will occur at which point fellowship with Him may resume.

Qualification for Evidence Testing: The advance to the high ground of spiritual maturity is put to the test. The overwhelming power of the Word of God is expressed to the maximum by the believer who functions in problem-solving device #10: Occupation with Christ:

1. The capacity to love someone who is invisible requires a tremendous amount of information in the *kardia* of the soul. The capacity to love Jesus Christ comes only from maximum doctrine deployed on the FLOT Line of the soul.
2. The acronym FLOT refers to “Forward Line Of Troops.” This is a military term used to describe the Invisible War and the believer’s strategy and tactics in that conflict.
3. The mature believer knows when to use offensive action or defensive action during the scrum of the Angelic Conflict.
4. Offensive action is related to several categories of the believer’s spiritual life:



(1) Evangelism of the lost, (2) utilization of problem-solving devices, (3) discernment in the use of one's invisible assets, (4) execution of the protocol plan of God, and (5) the function of Christian service in producing divine good rather than dead works.

5. Defensive action is confined to one's dealings with cosmos diabolicus. Lucifer and his fallen angels and those he recruits from the human race coordinate to do his bidding.
6. Next year we will study a passage by James that gives the believer guidance about defensive action against the Dark Side:

James 4:5 Do you think the scripture means nothing when it says, "The Spirit that God caused to live within us has an envious yearning"?

v. 6 But He gives greater grace. Therefore, it [**Proverbs 3:34**] says, "God opposes the proud, but He gives grace to the humble."

v. 7 So submit to God. But resist the devil [**stand your ground**] and he will flee from you. (NET)

7. Standing your ground is your defensive action. The FLOT Line is the deployment of the problem-solving devices that defend the *kardía* of the soul.
8. Example: The ever-advancing acceptance of cosmic thought throughout our society tempts the weak believer to acquiesce due to cowardice toward its demands.
9. Loss of divine thought means human viewpoint intervenes and controls the soul. Lucifer presents his cosmic rationales in language designed to propagandize believers who do not want to be considered "unchristian."
10. Acquiescence indicates the person is incapable of discerning the lie and out of ignorance winds up buying the lie.
11. Submission to the Word of God is a defensive action. You deploy divine thought to the situation and then stand your ground regardless of the ramifications.



1 Peter 5:5 You younger believers, likewise, be subordinate to the authority of you pastor; clothe yourselves with humility toward each other because “God makes war against the arrogant believer, but He gives grace to the humble believer” [**Proverbs 3:34**].

v. 6 Therefore, humble yourselves under the powerful hand of God, in order that He may promote you in the proper time,

v. 7 casting all of your anxiety [**cares, worries, fears**] on Him because He cares for you.

v. 8 Be sober and alert [**from spiritual self-esteem**]. Your enemy, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

v. 9 Stand your ground against him, strong in doctrine, because you know that your fellow believers throughout the world are experiencing this same category of suffering. (EXT)

12. Principle: Direct offensive action against the devil means defeat for the believer; this is not mandated in Scripture.
13. The application of resident doctrine in the soul is the basis for defensive action. Defensive action in the soul may be illustrated by the U.S. Army’s system of defensive areas:
 - a. **Covering Force:** The principle of security from the defensive position supported by eternal security.
 - b. **Forward Defence:** The main defensive force supported by doctrine circulating in the seven compartments of the stream of consciousness through the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. **Reserve Area:** This force is able to launch offensive action from a defensive position.
14. The spiritually advanced believer is able to take offensive action from behind the FLOT Line illustrated by:



Ephesians 6:17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword³ of the Holy Spirit, which is the Word of God. (NET)

15. The believer has no human power comparable to demonic power; he must utilize divine power, including the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

The Angelic Conflict and Evidence Testing

1. Evidence Testing is related to the Angelic Conflict and involves Church-Age believers as witnesses for the Prosecution.
2. This Invisible War is subsequent to events that took place in eternity past when God delegated Lucifer authority over the angelic population.
3. At some point during that vast expanse of time, Lucifer became arrogant and actively sought to replace God as commander-in-chief of the angelic population.
4. His rebellion is noted in two major passages of Scripture, Isaiah 14:12–14, Satan’s Five Assertions, and Ezekiel 28:12–17, that describes his rise and fall.
5. Found guilty of rebellion, God sentenced Lucifer and his demonic hoard to eternity in the lake of fire.
6. These events and what followed are chronicled in various passages. We are all familiar with the Bible’s opening verses that introduce events that occur in time.
7. By means of prophecy certain things are revealed that conclude with the destruction of the universe noted in 2 Peter 3:10–12 and Revelation 19:7–21:1.
8. It is after the universe is destroyed that Lucifer’s sentence to the lake of fire is carried out.
9. Therefore, the question arises, “Since Lucifer and the fallen angels were convicted prior to human history, why is their sentence delayed until after human history is completed?”

³ “The Greek term translated sword (μάχαιρα, μάχαιρα) refers to the Roman *gladius*, a short sword about 2 feet long, used for close hand-to-hand combat. This is the only clearly offensive weapon in the list of armor mentioned by the author” (*The NET Bible* [Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 1996–2005], 2290sn21).



The Chronology of Events Prehistoric, Historic, & Postmillennial

1. To establish a frame of reference, we commence our research with the beginning of time which distinguishes the universe from the eternal state:

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
2. The word “beginning” is the noun **רֵאשִׁיִּית (re’shiyth)** and refers to a beginning of something different. God and eternity always preexisted the universe. The “beginning” noted here is the beginning of the universe including planet earth.
3. This “beginning” occurred by divine fiat with the Qal perfect singular of the verb, **בָּרָא (bara’)**: “to bring into existence that which did not previously exist.”
4. The Qal perfect indicates a completed action. There is no time element indicated. Modern cosmology insists the origin of the universe and its present structure is the result of an evolving process triggered by a “Big Bang.”
5. God is not the God of disorder. He does not waste time by initiating a process requiring billions of years to achieve its objective.
6. The latter is the thesis of modern cosmogony⁴ whose definitions have evolved over the course of the last century. Here are four dictionary definitions of this term:

Cosmogony. The creation and origination of the world or universe, or a theory regarding such creation.⁵

Cosmogony. The creation or origin of the world; the generation, origin, or creation of the universe.⁶

Cosmogony. The branch of science that deals with the origin of the universe, especially the solar system.⁷

⁴ Adaptation of the Greek, “κοσμογένεια (*kosmogéneia*), creation or origin of the world” (Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. and aug. Henry Stuart Jones [New York: Oxford University Press, 1968], s.v. “κοσμογένεια.”)

⁵ *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 2d ed. (Springfield, Mass., 1953), s.v. “cosmogony.”

⁶ *Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language*, 2d ed. (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1962), s.v. “cosmogony.”

⁷ *The New Oxford American Dictionary*, eds. Elizabeth J. Jewell and Frank Abate (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), s.v. “cosmogony.”



12. It is also interesting to see how cosmogony has “evolved” over the past century. Below are two excerpts from *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The first is from *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*’s thirteenth edition published in 1926:

Cosmogony, a theory, however incomplete, of the origin of heaven and earth, such as produced by primitive races in the myth-making age, and is afterwards expanded and systematized by priests, poets and philosophers.

To many the interest of such stories will depend on their parallelism to the Biblical account in Genesis 1; the anthropologist, however, will be attracted by them in proportion as they illustrate the more primitive phases of human culture. In spite of the frequent overgrowth of a luxuriant imagination, the leading ideas of really primitive cosmogonies are extremely simple. Creation out of nothing is nowhere thought of, for this is not at all a simple idea.¹¹

13. This article then goes into discuss the cosmogonies of various peoples around the world: North American Indian tribes, Mexican, Peruvian, Polynesian, Indian, Egyptian, Iranian, Phoenician, Greek, and Babylonian and Israelitish. There is no analysis or commentary about Genesis 1:1 in the section that discusses the cosmogonies of the Israelites.
14. Now let’s jump to the twenty-first century and *The Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*’s and *Macropaedia*’s fifteenth edition published in 2010. Their articles are discussed under the entry, *The Cosmos*.

The Cosmos. Every visible star is a sun in its own right. Ever since this realization first dawned in the collective mind of humanity, it has been speculated that many stars other than the Sun also have planetary systems encircling them. The related issue of the origin of the solar system, too, has always had special fascination for speculative thinkers, and the quest to understand it on a firm scientific basis has continued into the present day.

¹¹ Thomas Kelly Cheyne, “Cosmogony,” in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th ed. (New York: The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1926), 7:215.



On cosmological scales, galaxies (or, at least, clusters of galaxies) appear to be racing away from one another with the apparent velocity of recession being linearly proportional to the distance of the object. This relation is known as the Hubble law (after its discoverer, the American astronomer Edwin Powell Hubble). Interpreted in the simplest fashion, the Hubble law implies that roughly 10^{10} years ago, all of the matter in the universe was closely packed together in an incredibly dense state and that everything then exploded in a “big bang,”¹² the signature of the explosion being written eventually in the galaxies of stars that formed out of the expanding debris of matter. Strong scientific support for this interpretation of a big bang origin of the universe comes from the detection by radio telescopes of a steady and uniform background of microwave radiation.

The observed expansion of the universe immediately raises the specter that the universe is evolving, that it had a beginning and will have an end. The “steady state”¹³ alternative is no longer considered viable by most astronomers. Yet, the notion that the Cosmos had a beginning, while common in many theologies, raises deep and puzzling questions for science, for it implies a creation event—a creation not only of all the mass-energy that now exists in the universe but also perhaps of space-time itself.¹⁴

15. Neither the commentators of the 1920s or the 2010s have made much of an advance in figuring out how we got here, what allows us to stay, and when it will all end.
16. However, the Bible is crystal clear, from the beginning to the end.

¹² “**Big-bang**, widely held theory of the evolution of the universe. Its essential feature is the emergence of the universe from a state of extremely high temperature and density—the so-called big bang that occurred at least 10,000,000,000 years ago. According to the big-bang model, the universe expanded rapidly from a highly compressed primordial state, which resulted in a significant decrease in density and temperature” (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia* [Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2010], 2:205).

¹³ “**Steady-state theory**, in cosmology, a view that the universe is always expanding but maintaining a constant average density, matter being continuously created to form new stars and galaxies at the same rate that old ones become unobservable as a consequence of their increasing distance and velocity of recession. A steady-state universe has no beginning or end in time. Observations since the 1950s have produced much evidence contradictory to the steady-state picture and supportive of the big-bang model” (Ibid., 11:228).

¹⁴ Frank H. Shu, “The Cosmos,” in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropaedia* (2010), 16:762.



17. Genesis 1:1 affirms that God created the universe: “the heavens,” plural, includes the atmosphere around the earth called the “first heaven” and the remainder of the universe, referred to as the “second heaven” (vv. 14–18). [The “third heaven” is eternity (2 Corinthians 12:2).]
18. Whereas eternity is timeless, the first and second heavens exist in a time/space continuum in which events can be categorized as past, present, or future.
19. Genesis 1:1 establishes the beginning of the time/space arrangement within a yoctosecond.
20. We also know that when this creation event occurred the angelic population was already in existence. We know this is true from:

Job 38:4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? [**The creation event of Genesis 1:1**] **Tell Me if you possess understanding!** [**Knowledge of cosmology¹⁵**]

v. 5 Who set its measurements—if you know—or who stretched a measuring line across it?

v. 6 On what were its bases set, or who laid its cornerstone— (NET)

21. These three verses are God’s personal commentary to Job revealing to him the Creator’s wisdom displayed in creation. To illustrate, God uses the mechanics of constructing a building to describe His creation of “the heavens and the earth.”

Job 38:7 when the morning stars sang in chorus, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (NET)

22. For our present emphasis, the phrases “morning stars” and “sons of God” refer to the angelic hoards who witnessed the creation and sang and shouted their approval.

(End JAS3-08. See JAS3-09 for continuation of study at p. 81.)

¹⁵ “Cosmology. The study of the physical universe considered as a totality of phenomena in time and space. The astrophysical study of the history, structure, and constituent dynamics of the universe” (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. “cosmology.”)

