

## **The Seven Churches Of Asia**

### **Chapters Two And Three**

### **Revelation 2:1**

"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write..."

### **The Church of Ephesus**

- At the time of John's writing Ephesus was an important seaport city of the Roman province of Asia.
- Ephesus was famous for its Temple of Artemis (Diana in Latin),
- It was 425-feet long by 220-feet wide with each of its 120 columns donated by a king
- It is considered to be one of the seven wonders of the ancient world

### **The Temple Of Artemis**



## The Temple Of Artemis Today



"The temple served as both a marketplace and a religious institution. For years, the sanctuary was visited by merchants, tourists, artisans, and kings who paid homage to the goddess by sharing their profits with her. Recent archeological excavations at the site revealed gifts from pilgrims including statuettes of Artemis made of gold and ivory... earrings, bracelets, and necklaces... artifacts from as far as Persia and India."

<http://www.kusadasi.biz/historical-places/temple-of-artemis.html>

## The Riot At Ephesus

"And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people,

saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship." Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"...And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Zeus?"--Acts 19:23-28,35

### Revelation 2:1-3

'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

### Jesus Holds The Seven Stars In His Right Hand

- The titles that are used for the seven churches are derived from Revelation 1:12-18
- In the title to the Church at Ephesus Jesus reminds them that He is the One who holds them by His power and authority
- The "right hand" represented authority and favor
- Jesus is the head of the Church and no one can take that position away from Him though many have tried throughout the ages

- "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone**, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."- Eph 2:19-22
- "**And He is the head of the body, the church**, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence."- Col 1:18

### Jesus Walks In The Midst Of The Church

- Jesus is in constant relationship with His church throughout the ages
- Jesus is also intimately interested in the actions of His church throughout the ages
- ""And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**" Amen.- Matt 28:18-20

## **What Makes An Effective Church?**

- "Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, **"Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"**--John 14:22
- "Jesus answered and said to him, **"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word;** and My Father will love him, and **We will come to him and make Our home with him.** 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me."--John 14:23-24
- **An effective church has a love for God's Word**

## **The Commendations Of Jesus To The Church At Ephesus:**

### **"I know your works..."**

- The word for "know" used here is "***Oida***": which literally means to understand based on facts. Always in the perfect tense which is a **past experience that is affecting the present in some way**
- Because Jesus is in constant relationship walking in the midst of His church throughout the ages He is aware of everything that happens
- There is nothing hidden from His sight both in His church and in our lives

### **"I know your works, your labor, your patience..."**

- Jesus commends the Church of Ephesus for their fruit and their patience
- The Christian life is very difficult at times but Jesus knows our fruit and it requires endurance that only can come through a relationship with Jesus
- "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."--1 Cor 15:10

**KEEP PRESSING FORWARD  
DURING DIFFICULT TIMES  
BECAUSE JESUS IS  
WALKING WITH US!**

• **Dan 3:16-18**

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

• NIV

**"But even if he does not..."**

**IN DIFFICULT TIMES WILL WE STILL:**

- WORSHIP
- GIVE THANKS
- TRUST
- LOVE

**"...you cannot bear those who are evil.**

- The problems that started in the Church at Ephesus originated from within.
- Paul had warned the Ephesians about having this problem
- Jesus commended the Ephesians for having an eye upon those "who are evil..."

### **Acts 20:27-31**

"For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. **For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.** Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

### **"....you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not..."**

- Jesus commands the Church of Ephesus for testing those who claim apostleship
- These false apostles had been found out to be "liars" because they have not been commissioned by Jesus to be apostles
- We are called to test people and what they say and make sure it lines up with the word of God before we endorse them as leaders within the body.

### **What Is An Apostle?**

- Apostle literally means a delegate, a person who has been commissioned or a person who has been sent with a specific task
- An apostle was a person who had been sent with the message of the gospel.
- Signs and wonders accompanied them
- An apostle was also an eye witness to the life and resurrection of Jesus
- An apostle is also a position of authority

- ""Therefore, of these **men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.**" And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen

- to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. **And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.**--Acts 1:21-26
- Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? **Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?** Are you not my work in the Lord?"--1 Cor 9:1

## **The Foundation Of The Church Is the Apostles**

- "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of **the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.."--Eph. 2:19-20
- "Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."-Rev 21:14

- The word "apostle" comes from a compound Greek word **"apo"** which means "from, or away" and **"stello"** which means "to send out"
- We get our word "stolon" which biologist use to describe a type of root that shoots forth from the parent plant establishing a new colony



## **False Apostles Predicted**

"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.** For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and **they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage**. But you, beloved, **remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ**: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit."--Jude 3-4;16-19

### **Paul Called False Apostles "Deceitful Workers"**

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."- 2 Cor 11:13-15

- The word for "transform" in these verses is "**metaschematizo**" and literally means "to disguise oneself, to deliberately change outward appearance, or to masquerade in clothing that depicts the person as differently than he really is".
- Paul was warning people to be aware of individuals who intentionally deceive in order to gain advantage by claiming to be apostles knowing full well they are not apostles

### **False Apostles Do Not Preach The Truth Of Jesus**

"Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly — and indeed you do bear with me. For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from **the simplicity that is in Christ**.

For if he who comes [preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached](#), or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, [or a different gospel](#) which you have not accepted — you may well put up with it!" Or literally "hold oneself up against, bear, or endure it"- 2 Cor. 11:1-4

### **Revelation 2:3**

"...and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary."

### **Working To Glorify The Name Of Jesus**

- Jesus commands the Church of Ephesus for laboring to glorify His name
- This is the opposite of the false apostle who labors to glorify himself seeking reward for his work from the people and not Jesus
- Jesus commands the Church of Ephesus for not becoming weary in their tireless effort and defense of His name against these false apostles
- One day "...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."- Phil 2:10-11

### **The Criticism Of Jesus To The Church At Ephesus:**

### **Revelation 2:4-5**

"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place — unless you repent.

### **The leaving Of First Love**

- Despite their good works and their patience there is something lacking in the Ephesian church.
- How sobering it would be to hear the Lord say "[“nevertheless I have this against you”](#) after a word of commendation!
- Jesus criticizes the Church of Ephesus for the forsaking of their first love
- It is not that they [have lost](#) their love but they [have left](#) their first love to chase after other things of more importance to them.
- Ephesus which means "Darling or Maiden of choice" begins the decline of dead religion that will end in the Church of Laodicea with Jesus on outside

### **Our Relationship With Jesus Is Seeded In Our Devotion To Him!**

- You and I free to leave if we choose
- We can [keep our own sovereignty](#) over our lives or we can choose to stay with Christ in love and [let Him have sovereignty](#) in our lives
- This changes our journey from obligation to willfully choosing to serve
- A journey born for a relationship with Jesus not enslaved to the religion of obligation, i.e. works

### **Believers Are In Love With Jesus**

- We don't do the things of the Christian life and call ourselves Christian! Believers are in love with Jesus and our actions represent this love.
- However it seems at times we get this backwards, and we believe as long as we are doing things for Jesus therefore we are loving him. [It steals our joy because the doing becomes a burden.](#)

## **Satan's First Attack Is Against The Word Of God**

"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."--Matt. 13:18-23

## **Things That Subtly Replace Our First Love**

- The cares of the world
- The worries of life
- The deceitfulness of riches
- The defense of the gospel
- Doctrines and traditions
- All of these have their proper place and importance but not in the place of devotion to Jesus

- "First love" carries the idea of purity and devotion in a relationship
- "I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown."- Jer. 2:2
- Israel had done amazing accomplishments because of their love for God. God protected them during their wandering years. Nevertheless, Israel thought they were special because of their accomplishments and not God's love for them. They left God and went after other gods.
- **In our own lives we have to be very careful that we are not doing works without a devotion to Jesus!**

### **God Chose Israel by Grace**

"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples;

but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;"-Deut. 7:6-9

### **1 John 4:9-11,19**

"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

### **Religion Without A Love For God**

- Jesus said to the religious leaders: "I do not receive honor from men. But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you."-John 5:41-42
- "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."- John 14:23

### **Powerless Doctrine**

- "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholly, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **having a form of godliness but denying its power**. And from such people turn away!-2 Tim 3:1-5
- "For the message of **the cross** is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it **is the power of God**."- 1 Cor 1:18

### **Powerless Traditions**

- "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ....making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."-Col 2:8; Mark 7:13

### **Remember, Repent, And Do**

- What was it like when you first came to know Jesus?
- Not the Jesus of religion but the Jesus Who loves you, Who died for you and Who picked you up when you had fallen!
- Remember that place when Jesus became your Lord and Savior
- The word for "repent" is "**metanoia**" and means to "change the way you are thinking" but also requires an action step towards changing behavior

### **Do The First Works**

- **These are the works that Jesus was calling Ephesus Back to in Acts 18 & 19:**
- A hunger for the things of God
- A hunger for God's Word
- A hunger for a relationship with Jesus
- A hunger to magnify the name of Jesus
- A hunger to learn about Jesus
- A hunger for people to be saved

### **Remember**

- Remember how you used to spend time in His Word?
- Remember how you used spend time in prayer?
- Remember the joy you used to have in getting together with other believers
- Remember how excited you were about telling others about Jesus?

### **I Will Remove Your Lampstand**

- Jesus is saying to the Church at Ephesus if you continue being a church that is moving gradually away from your devotion to Me and My word He will remove His presence from them.
- Churches today focus so much on their own ideas and flattering words that lead to their own orthodoxy, but are far from the love of God and His word.

### **Ephesus Today**



### **Ephesus Today has An Islamic Mosque**



### **Revelation 2:6-7**

But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

### **The Deeds Of The Nicolaitans**

- Is Jesus intolerant?
- Isn't Jesus accepting of everyone?
- Can Jesus "hate" anything?
- After all Jesus is love and anybody who is a Christian loves everybody?
- It is not the Nicolaitans that Jesus hates but it is their deeds!



### **Who Are The Nicolaitans?**

- The name literally means "to conquer the people"
- They were possible followers of Nicolas who was a convert from Antioch (Acts 6:5)
- They held to three main heretical views:
  1. A hierarchy was necessary to control the spiritual training of the laity
  2. The spiritual and physical natures were separate giving license to sexual sin or the ascetic lifestyle
  3. The Nicolaitans charged money for services which linked them to the doctrine of Balaam (Rev. 2:14-15)

- The Nicolaitans, like all deceivers which come from the body of Christ, claimed "not that they were destroying Christianity, but that they were presenting an improved and modernized version of it." (Barclay)
- In Revelation 2:15, the practices of the Nicolaitans become formalized into the "doctrine of the Nicolaitans"

### **"He who has an ear, let him hear..."**

- In Isaiah 55:3, God instructs man to: "Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live."
- A soul can die when it does not listen to the word of God. As grass dies without water so our soul dies without the word of God.
- It is Christ's desire that "those who hear the words of this prophecy" not only hear the subject matter, but *understand* its significance
- The highest act that a person can do in this world is to engage in serious Bible study to hear and understand His Word.

### **Promise To The One Who Overcomes**

- The one who overcomes will "eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."
- The person who holds out until the end will gain eternal life living with God
- The reverse of the curse that was lost at the Fall of man
- A sure reward awaits those who chose to endure and remain faithful

### **Jesus Took The Curse For Us**

- For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse ; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."-- Gal 3:10
- Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.- Gal. 3:13

### **THE EFFECT OF THE FALL UPON MANKIND:**



**SEPARATION FROM GOD**

## **Cherubim Guard The Tree Of Life**

- "So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, **to guard the way to the tree of life.**"- Gen 3:24
- Cherubim are also always associated with the dwelling place of God (Ex 25:10-22)

## **Mercy Seat**

"And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. **And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim** which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel."--Ex. 25:20-22

## **The Cherubim On The Mercy Seat**



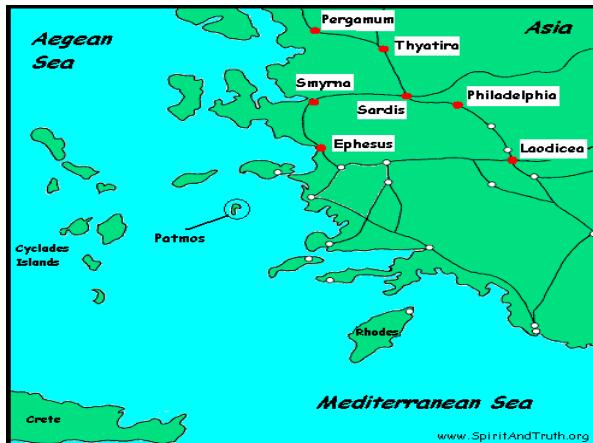
## **Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment**

- "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy . Mercy triumphs over judgment."- James 2:13
- Mercy is not getting what a person deserves despite a wrong action

CHURCH	NAME	DATES (A.D.)	COMMENDATION	CRITICISM
EPHESUS	"MAIDEN OF CHOICE, DARLING"	< 100 EARLY CHURCH	REJECT FALSE APOSTLES	LEFT FIRST LOVE
SMYRNA	"MYRRH, BITTER, AFFLICTION"	100–313 PERSECUTION	FAITHFUL IN PERSECUTION	<b>NONE!</b>
PERGAMOS	"MIXED MARRIAGE"	313–500 FALSE DOCTRINES CREEP INTO THE CHURCH	FAITHFULNESS	TOLERATE TEACHERS WHO TEACH FALSE DOCTRINES
THYATIRA	"CONTINUAL SACRIFICE"	590—TRIBULATION FALSE DOCTRINES RULE THE CHURCH	LOVE, SERVICE, FAITH PATIENCE, GROWING	TOLERATED EVIL DOCTRINES TO SPREAD
SARDIS	"REMANENT"	1517—TRIBULATION REFORMATION	REMANENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES PURE	ALIVE IN NAME ONLY
PHILADELPHIA	"BROTHERLY LOVE"	1730—RAPTURE MISSIONARY CHURCH	KEPT GOD'S WORD AND DID NOT DENY HIS NAME	<b>NONE!</b>
LAODICEA	"RULE OF THE PEOPLE"	1900—TRIBULATION MODERNISM, DOCTRINES OF MAN	NONE	CHRIST ON THE OUTSIDE

## Church Of Smyrna

- Ephesus represented the Apostolic age of the Church from 30 A.D.-100 A.D.
- Smyrna 100 -313 A.D. represented the age of persecution, approximately 2,000,000 to 7,000,000, Christians were martyred during this period; it was organized, it was determined and it was a systematic effort to abolish the Christian name;
- The persecution ended with the “Edict of Milan (Edict of Toleration), 313 A.D. thus making Christianity the official state religion



- Since Smyrna was port city it provided access to many parts of Asia Minor
- The city also overflowed with sailors, soldiers, and commercial travels who sought the services of prostitutes giving the city a thriving prostitution industry
- There was large Jewish community that lived in Smyrna from pre-New Testament times and all the way up to the Ottoman Empire.
- Smyrna was also one of the most vile cities in Asia Minor with there huge stadium which was used to execute believers as well as gladiator fights
- The people of Smyrna enjoyed watching people torn apart by savage beasts.

## **Polycarp Bishop Of Smyrna**

- Polycarp was disciple of John
- Polycarp was martyred in 156 A.D.
- Polycarp, the venerable bishop of Smyrna, hearing that persons were seeking for him, escaped, but was discovered by a child. After feasting the guards who apprehended him, he desired an hour in prayer, which being allowed, he prayed with such fervency, that his guards repented that they had been instrumental in taking him.

- He was, however, carried before the proconsul, condemned, and burnt in the market place.
- The proconsul then urged him, saying, "Swear, and I will release thee;--reproach Christ." Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never once wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my King, Who hath saved me?" At the stake to which he was only tied, but not nailed as usual, as he assured them he should stand immovable, the flames, on their kindling the fagots, encircled his body, like an arch, without touching him; and the executioner, on seeing this, was ordered to pierce him with a sword, when so great a quantity of blood flowed out as extinguished the fire.

Foxes Book Of Martyrs

## **The Name Smyrna**

- The name of the city of Smyrna comes from the Greek word "Smurna" which is from the Hebrew root that is translated "myrrh"
- Myrrh was an ointment that was used for the embalming of the dead bodies
- It was used to embalm Jesus by Nicodemus (John 19:39)
- It was one of the gifts of the Magi (Matt. 2:11)
- Today it is known as the city of Izmir located in Turkey and is the second largest city

## **The Theme Of This Letter Is Persecution And Death**

- These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life.-Rev 2:8
- "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich)- Rev 2:9
- Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer- Rev 2:10
- Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison-Rev 2:10
- Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.-Rev 2:10
- He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death. - Rev 2:11

### **Revelation 2:8**

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

### **...the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:"**

- Jesus emphasizes His eternal life because this is the church which is to suffer martyrdom and to which He holds out the promise of the "crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).
- "Who was dead" literally is "became dead"
- Jesus wants the Church at Smyrna to know that He has conquered death because He asks them "to be faithful until death".

### **Revelation 2:9**

"I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

### **Tribulation And Poverty**

- This is not the "Great Tribulation"
- We all have tribulation, trouble persecution, feel the pressure for our faith at times (John 16:33)
- The word for "poverty" in the original language is "*ptocheia*" which is a state of having nothing at all to your name implying beggary
- "Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?"-James 2:5

### **The Poor Church Is Rich**

- The riches of the church at Smyrna were laid up in heaven as ours should be also
- The church at Laodicea had great material prosperity, but Christ said they were "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17)
- Material goods have no ultimate value but will all be destroyed. Knowledge of this reality should bring a shift in priorities towards spiritual things which are truly lasting. (Proverbs 13:7)
- A person can be poor yet rich in the things of life

### **Synagogue Of Satan**

- The most severe persecution of the early church came from the Jewish population.
- The Jews started lies (blasphemy) about the Christians
- Jesus told the unbelieving Jewish leaders in John 8:44, that their father was Satan because did not believe in Him
- Jesus knew that these Jews were "not Jews" because they did not practice one of the main tenets of the *Torah* which is "love your neighbor" (Lev.19:18,34)

### **Early Lies About Christians**

- They were said to be cannibals because Christians celebrated the "Lord's supper"
- They were said to be involved in orgies of lust because Christians enjoyed love feasts, i.e. meals together
- Christianity split families apart
- Christians were atheist because they worshipped a god you could not see
- Christians were politically incorrect because they would not say "Caesar is Lord"

### **Revelation 2:10-11**

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

### **The Devil Is About To Roar**

- Satan is the great accuser and father of lies
- Jesus warns the Church of Smyrna that they are "about" to be tested and imprisoned for being faithful to Jesus
- Persecution and oppression come by way of people but the Bible makes it clear who is behind it (Rev.12:10;Job 1:6;Zech. 3:1-5;Eph.6:12)
- However God makes use of evil for His own purposes

**DOES GOD CAUSE  
GRIEF TO FULFILL  
HIS GOOD  
PLEASURE?**

### **Lamentations 3:31-33**

"FOR THE LORD WILL NOT CAST OFF FOREVER. THOUGH HE CAUSES GRIEF, YET HE WILL SHOW COMPASSION ACCORDING TO THE MULTITUDE OF HIS MERCIES. **FOR HE DOES NOT AFFLICT WILLINGLY**, NOR GRIEVE THE CHILDREN OF MEN."

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."- Romans 8:18-25

### **LUKE 22:31-32**

AND THE LORD SAID, "SIMON, SIMON! INDEED, SATAN HAS ASKED FOR YOU, THAT HE MAY SIFT YOU AS WHEAT. **BUT I HAVE PRAYED FOR YOU, THAT YOUR FAITH SHOULD NOT FAIL**; AND WHEN YOU HAVE RETURNED TO ME, STRENGTHEN YOUR BRETHREN."

### **Tribulation For Ten Days**

- These "ten days" have been debated probably more than any other topic in the Book of Revelation
- Some believe it to mean "ten years" of persecution
- Some believe it to be the persecution over the reign of ten Roman Emperors
- Some believe it to be an expression of speech meaning the tribulation has a limit
- Some believe it to be a literal "ten days" of intense persecution.

### **Daniel's Ten Day Request**

- "So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants." So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

- And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies."-Dan. 1:11-15
- Satan seems to think that if he persecutes and oppresses the Church of the living God that it will be destroyed
- The Church of the living God has never been destroyed by persecution but as it has been persecuted it becomes stronger throughout the ages
- At the end of the "ten days" Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah entered into the king's service as does the church in 313 A.D.-Dan 1:19

### The Crown Of Life

- The crown is *stephanos* which means a reward for achievement, i.e. trophy given to a conquering athlete
- It is a reward for works not salvation
- There is the crown of life for those who suffered for his name- James 1:12;Rev 2:10
- There is the crown of righteousness for those who loved his appearing- 2 Tim. 4:8
- There is the crown of glory for those who fed the lambs, sheep, and flock-1 Pet 5:4

- There is the crown incorruptible for those who press on with perseverance-1 Cor. 9:25
- There is the crown of rejoicing for those who win souls-1 Thess. 2:19
- It doesn't matter what crown the believer has because all of the crowns will be cast at the feet of Jesus since He is the only one worthy
- "...the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne..."- Rev 4:10

### Commendation

- No criticism for the Church of Smyrna
- Jesus writes His commendation to "**the churches**" persecuted through out the ages
- The one who overcomes will not be "**hurt by the second death**"
- The second death refers to the final judgment where God casts those who do not know Him into Hell and the lake of fire- Rev. 20:14;21:8

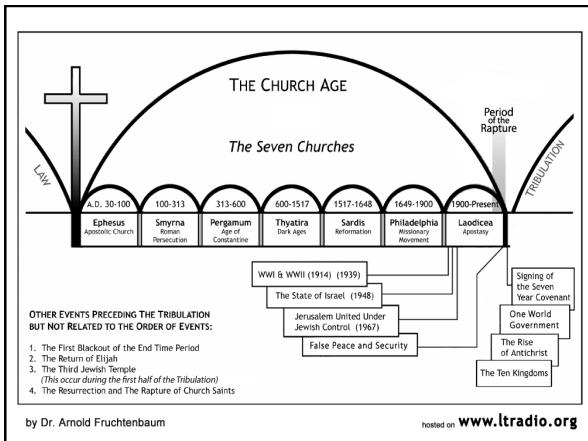
<b>Births, Deaths, and Resurrections</b>			
<u>Event</u>	<u>Unbeliever</u>	<u>Believer</u>	<u>Description</u>
Born again	No	Yes	The first birth is physical. A person is "born again" through faith in Jesus.
First Death	Yes	Yes	The first death is of the body
First Resurrection	No	Yes	The first resurrection occurs prior to the seven year tribulation and is only for the believer
Second Resurrection	Yes	No	The second resurrection occurs at the end of the Millennial reign of Jesus. All those who did not believe in Jesus will be resurrected to face the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:14-15)
Second Death	Yes	No	This is for the unbeliever to be cast in the lake of fire for eternity. It occurs after the Millennial Kingdom

## Review Of The Churches

- Jesus said: "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear **the words of this prophecy**..." Rev 1:3
- They are real churches with real problems in the first century
- They represent all churches throughout the ages that develop these issues within their local congregation
- The letters are specific to the individual: "he that has an ear..."

## "...to the seven churches which are in Asia." Rev. 1:4

- Why these churches?
- Why not churches in Galatia, Philippi, or Antioch, or even Jerusalem?
- They were actual churches in history
- These seven churches apparently lay out the entire history of the church age!
- If these churches had been in any other order than the inspired order given to John from Jesus it could not lay out the prophecy of the Church Age



## The Church Age Progression

- If chapters two and three are read in one sitting one cannot help but recognize the mood change of these seven letters addressed to the Seven Churches
- **This is the logical conclusion of the exaltation of church over the Word of Christ.**  
It begins with the practice of the Nicolaitians; the deeds are then transformed into a doctrine that supports power over the people; the clergy are then married to the world for financial and political purposes and then it pretends to speak for God!

CHURCH	NAME	DATES (A.D.)	COMMENDATION	CRITICISM
EPHESUS	"MAIDEN OF CHOICE:DARLING"	< 100 EARLY CHURCH	REJECT FALSE APOSTLES	LEFT FIRST LOVE
SMYRNA	"MYRRH, BITTER, AFFLCTION"	100–313 PERSECUTION	FAITHFUL IN PERSECUTION	<b>NONE!</b>
PERGAMOS	<b>"MIXED MARRIAGE"</b>	313–500 FALSE DOCTRINES CREEP INTO THE CHURCH	FAITHFULNESS	TOLERATE TEACHERS WHO TEACH FALSE DOCTRINES
THYATIRA	"CONTINUAL SACRIFICE"	590—TRIBULATION FALSE DOCTRINES RULE THE CHURCH	LOVE, SERVICE, FAITH PATIENCE, GROWING	TOLERATED EVIL DOCTRINES TO SPREAD
SARDIS	"REMENANT"	1517—TRIBULATION REFORMATION	REMENANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES PURE	ALIVE IN NAME ONLY
PHILADELPHIA	"BROTHERLY LOVE"	1730—RAPTURE MISSIONARY CHURCH	KEPT GOD'S WORD AND DID NOT DENY HIS NAME	<b>NONE!</b>
LAODICEA	"RULE OF THE PEOPLE"	1900—TRIBULATION MODERNISM, DOCTRINES OF MAN	NONE	CHRIST ON THE OUTSIDE



## The Church Of Pergamos

- Pergamos is located about 60 miles north of Smyrna
- Pergamos was a great religious and cultural center
- Pergamos had a library with over 200,000 volumes second only to the city of Alexandria.
- Pergamos is the present city Bergama with a population of about 55,000
- Pergamos literally means "mixed marriage". It signifies the period when the Church becomes influenced by pagan beliefs.

- Pergamum was connected with the worship of Asclepius, the god of healing and knowledge.
- Asclepius was termed “savior” and his symbol was the use of a single serpent around a rod. The Greeks later changed the symbol to a two headed snake around a rod combined with the symbol of Hermes the messenger of the gods
- There was a medical school at his temple in Pergamum and the sick and diseased people from all over the Roman Empire flocked to Pergamum for relief.

## Asclepius



## Pagan Rituals Enter The Church

- Do you ever wonder where the church got some of its rituals and practices?
- The word of God definitely doesn't support some of the rituals that most of Christendom accepts as normal.
- "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? - James 4:4-5

- An organized religion that sets itself up against the word of God and seeks to please man rather than God.
- An organized religion that is marrying itself to the world to fit in and be accepted.
- It is no surprise that the title that Jesus uses for this church is: "These things says He who has **the sharp two-edged sword**." -Rev 2:12
- Jesus also says: "Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, **which thing I hate**." - Rev 2:15

### **In It But Not Of It**

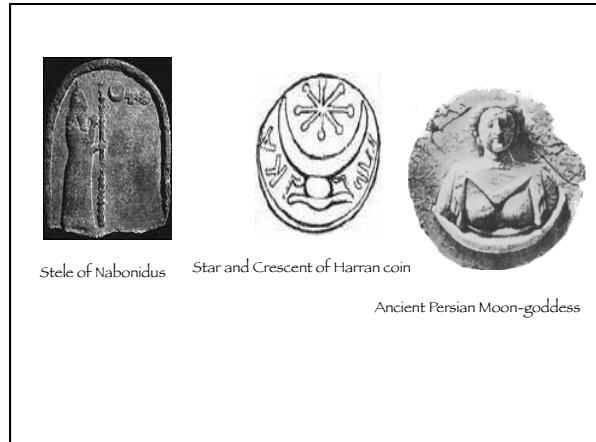
- "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world , just as I am not of the world . 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world , but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world , just as I am not of the world . Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."- John 17:14-18

- Moon worship has been practiced in Arabia since 2000 BC. The crescent moon is the most common symbol of this pagan moon worship as far back as 2000 BC.
- The moon god was also referred to as "al-ilah". This is not a proper name of a single specific god, but a generic reference meaning "the god". Each local pagan Arab tribe would refer to their own local tribal pagan god as "al-ilah".
- "al-ilah" was later shortened to Allah before Muhammad began promoting his new religion in 610 AD.

### **God Warned About The Worship Of The Moon God**

- Deut 4:19  
"19 And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage."

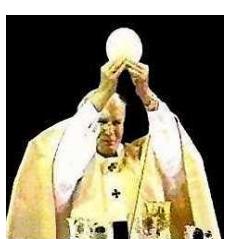
**ALTHOUGH ISLAM IS TODAY A MONOTHEIST RELIGION, ITS ROOTS ARE IN PAGANISM**



### King Josiah's Reforms

"Then he removed the **idolatrous priests** whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and **those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven.**" -2 Kings 23:5

### A Canaanite Pillar and The Pope



### Stele of Ur-Nammu and the Catholic Monstrance



- Many monstrances use this crescent, which is officially called a "lunette" or "luna" (moon), to hold the round wafer host. The sun disk in the crescent moon is a quite common symbol for pagan religions, to include Babylon, Syria, and India.

## The Crescent Mount For The Wafer



## Sun Worship



Babylonian sun-god Shamash  
9th century B.C.



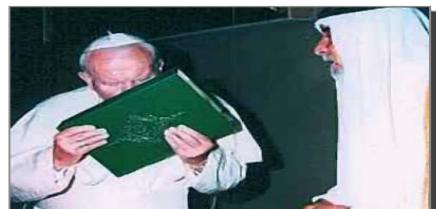
Pope John Paul II 1996

## The Hat



- The Pergamum altar in the Museum in Berlin has a depiction of Dagon the fish god of Babylon and the Philistines mentioned in Judges 16:23, 1 Samuel 5:2-7 and 1 Chronicles 1:10

## Kissing the Koran



Pope John Paul II kissing the Koran,  
May 14, 1999.

### The Ishtar Eggs



### Job 31:26-28

"If I have observed the sun when it shines, or the moon moving in brightness, so that my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand; this also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, for I would have denied God who is above.

### **What About Today?**

- "To me, it's important to start exploring the doctrine of initial creation with Scripture. It's no surprise Christians place a premium on what the Bible says. It does surprise many who look at Scripture carefully, however, to find the Bible never says God creates out of nothing. The Bible does not explicitly affirm *creatio ex nihilo*. Instead, biblical authors consistently say God creates out of something. When exploring options for how Christians might best think about God as Creator, it's difficult to overemphasize this biblical point: according to Scripture, God creates from something."

- "The Bible is not only compatible with the idea God creates through evolution. I also think some themes in evolution actually reinforce and correspond with themes in Scripture."
- "As a theologian, I find it exciting that science and theology need not conflict. I'm free to think biblical authors operated from a worldview different from mine shaped by contemporary science. But because God uses the Bible in ways to teach me and others truths for our salvation, I'm not worried that ancient worldviews don't match contemporary science."

- "We live in changing times. We are changing people. Postmodern theology – rightly understood and discerningly appropriated – can be a resource for Christians in the midst of change. We know that the times and people change, of course. Each generation differs from the previous. We always dream up something "new and improved." The teacher was wrong: there is something new under the sun."

### **The Word Of God Is True**

- "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God , which also effectively works in you who believe." -1 Thess 2:13

### **Revelation 2:12-14**

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

### **"These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:"**

- The significance in the title to the Church of Pergamos is a harsh warning to those who teach and promote doctrines that are contrary to His word.
- The doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolatians will be judged by God's word.
- Any system that sets itself up against the truth of God's word will be judged by God's word

### **Jesus Is The Revealed Truth To Man**

- "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and **truth** ." -- John 1:14
- "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, **the truth** , and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." -- John 14:6
- Revelation always begins with God the fountain of all truth. Man never creates the truth but receives the truth as revealed by God through His Word

### **The Living Word**

- "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." - Heb 4:12-13

### **What Does The “Sword” Of The “Word Of God” Judge?**

- The word of God "...Judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."
- The word for "judges" is "critikos" and we get our word critical from this word
- Critical according to Webster is characterized by careful and exact evaluation and judgment of something
- The word of God is the standard by which God judges or evaluates the heart and the life of the believer and the world

### **The Word of God As An Instrument Of War**

- "Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will **fight against them with the sword of My mouth** ." - Rev 2:16
- "**Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations**. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." - Rev 19:15

### **Who Will He Fight Against?**

- He will not fight against His church which is His body
- What He will fight against and judge by His Word is organized religion that follows the traditions of men rather than His word as doctrine
- It is the authority of God's word that makes the distinction between right and wrong not any church or organization
- So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, **I will vomit you out of My mouth.**"- Rev 3:16

### **Beware Of Those Who Teach False Doctrine**

- "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and **you are complete in Him**, who is the head of all principality and power.- Col 2:8-10

### **The Nature Of History**

- Most of the world starts from the foundation that God plays no part in the movement of history. In fact most are driven to diminish or eliminate God's role in history.
- This is in direct conflict with a Biblical worldview that begins with God who is involved in all of history not just religious history but all of secular and sacred movements in time.
- It all began when God "spoke" creation into existence and since then all of creative history has been moving to an appointed end. The end will come when God's "word" is fulfilled.

### **God Is Involved In History**

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him.-Dan. 2:20-21

15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. 17 **For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.** —Rev. 17:15-17

### **God's Word is Eternal Creative and Judgmental**

- "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."- Mark 13:31
- "For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old..."-2 Peter 3:5
- "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God , so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."- Heb 11:3
- Isaiah informs us that the mouth of the Messiah is "like a sharp sword" (Isa. 49:2) and with His lips He will "slay the wicked" (Isa. 11:4)

### **Watch Your Doctrine**

**"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will SAVE both yourself and your hearers."**

**1 Tim 4:16**

- **Save: Sozo**
- **"to save, to keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction**
- **Universally one (from injury or peril); to save a suffering one from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health: Matt 9:22**

### **Satan's Home**

- "....you dwell, where Satan's throne is...." (2:13)
- "...My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells." (2:13)
- Does Satan have a home or a stronghold from where he engages his war against God?
- In Pergamum two saviors competed with the One True Savior. Asklepios, associated with the serpent was said to be savior because of his healing power.
- There was an altar built to Zeus the chief of all gods in Pergamum

### Asklepios

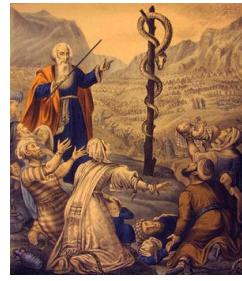


Asklepios, Greek god of healing



Hermes, Greek god of intercessor between the mortals and divine

### The Bronze Serpent

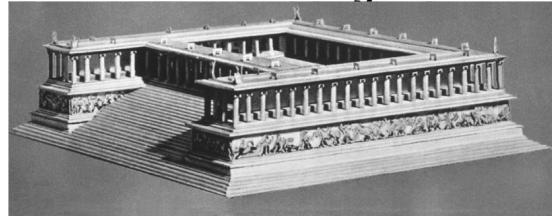


"So Moses made a bronze serpent , and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent , he lived."- Num 21:9

### Worship Of The Bronze Serpent

- "He [Josiah] removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan."- 2 Kings 18:4

### The Altar Of Pergamum



- A German archaeologist, Carl Humann, began excavating the altar on Sept.9, 1878. The altar was then moved back to Germany and reconstructed. In 1934 Hitler became dictator and ordered construction of the altar at Zeppelin Field in Nuremberg for his Nazi rallies. [\[www.formerthings.com\]](http://www.formerthings.com)

## Why Did Hitler's Architect Copy The Altar

"Berlin's Museum Island is for those who love the past. But the past can be a dangerous thing in the hands of those who use it in the cause of evil. And that is especially true of an ancient artifact that was unearthed in 1865 by a German archeologist in the ruins of an ancient Greek city called Pergamon. It is known as the Pergamon Altar.

The altar was moved to Berlin into a building constructed especially for it. It fills a hall six stories high with the area of a football field. Today, to climb its stairs and look down at people far below gives one a feeling of power. In about 1930, a Nazi climbed the stairs, looked down, and got the same feeling. His name was Albert Speer. He was in charge of architecture in the Third Reich. Without knowing the original meaning and purpose of the altar, he adapted it into a new Nazi monument that would aid Hitler's rise to absolute power." [History Channel]



- The Zeppelintribüne during its heyday in the late 1930s. The design was influenced by the Pergamon Altar, a classical Greek structure from ancient Turkey, on display in a Berlin museum. ( 1938-dated postcard [thirdreichruins.com])

## Antipas

- A faithful saint, unknown to history, but not to Jesus.
- Antipas is one of the great anonymous heroes of the Bible
- Antipas is called by Jesus: "My faithful martyr"- Rev 2:13
- According to tradition Antipas was burned to death in the bronze bull which was on the Pergamum altar.
- "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." -Psalm 116:15

### **Revelation 2:14-16**

"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth."

### **The Doctrine Of Balaam**

- Here Jesus once again holds believers accountable to know the Old Testament
- Balaam's name means "destroyer of the people"
- His account is found in Numbers 22-25
- Balaam combined the sins of immorality and idolatry to please Balak, the king of Moab, because he could not curse Israel directly.

- Balaam goes to Moab and encounters the Angel of the Lord and his donkey speaks to him after seeing the Angel of the Lord.
- Balaam schemes a plan and tells Balak to entice the Israelite Men to engage with the Moabite woman which eventually leads to the worship of idols and demonic powers
- The death of Balaam [comes by the sword](#) in Joshua 13:22
- According to Jude 11 Balaam was preaching false doctrine for profit
- "Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, [have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit...](#)"- Jude 11

## A Stumbling Block

- The word for "stumbling" is "Skandalon" which literally means a snare or a trap.
- "My son, if sinful men entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for innocent blood, let's ambush some harmless soul; let's swallow them alive, like the grave, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; cast lots with us; we will all share the loot"—

my son, do not go along with them, **do not set foot on their paths**; for their feet rush into evil, they are swift to shed blood. **How useless to spread a net where every bird can see it!**

These men lie in wait for their own blood; they ambush only themselves! **Such are the paths of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the life of those who get it.** -Proverbs 1:10-19

## Defeat By Assimilation

- The Christians of Pergamos were like the Christians of Corinth as Paul wrote: "Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?"-1Cor. 5:6
- Satan couldn't accomplish his goal by persecution early on with the age of persecution because many did **hold fast** like Antipas.
- Therefore Satan attempted to accomplish his goals by using **deception through assimilation** resulting in the acceptance of false doctrines and conforming to the world.

## Revelation 2:17

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

### **Hidden Manna**

- The manna is set in direct contrast to the things sacrificed to idols. The church was eating earthly pagan food, but the overcomer is promised heavenly food from above.
- Jesus is the true manna which gives eternal life. The manna in the wilderness sustained the Israelites for a time but they still died in the wilderness

### **John 6:48-51**

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

### **A White Stone With A New Name**

- In the city of Pergamos if you received a white stone with a new name it signified "acquittal and healing"
- People with sickness were sent to the hospital in Pergamos and white stone meant that they were healed and could enter back into society
- It also represented a person being acquitted
- The person healed or acquitted would wear the stone around their neck as a statement to all the people of healing or innocence

### **New Name**

- There are two Greek words for new: "Neos" and "Kainos"
- "Neos" which means new in point of time, i.e. a new day
- "Kainos" which means new in point of time and quality, i.e. a new and better car
- Here it is "kainos" believers will become new in time and quality
- Name is always associated with identity and one day we will have healing and shed this old body for a new and better one.

CHURCH	NAME	DATES (A.D.)	COMMENDATION	CRITICISM
EPHESUS	"MAIDEN OF CHOICE, DARLING"	< 100 EARLY CHURCH	REJECT FALSE APOSTLES	LEFT FIRST LOVE
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PERGAMOS	"MIXED MARRIAGE"	313–500 FALSE DOCTRINES CREEP INTO THE CHURCH	FAITHFULNESS	TOLERATE TEACHERS WHO TEACH FALSE DOCTRINES
THYATIRA	<b>"CONTINUAL SACRIFICE"</b>	590—TRIBULATION FALSE DOCTRINES RULE THE CHURCH	LOVE, SERVICE, FAITH PATIENCE, GROWING	TOLERATED EVIL DOCTRINES TO SPREAD
SARDIS	"REMANENT"	1517—TRIBULATION REFORMATION	REMANENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES PURE	ALIVE IN NAME ONLY
PHILADELPHIA	"BROTHERLY LOVE"	1730—RAPTURE MISSIONARY CHURCH	KEPT GOD'S WORD AND DID NOT DENY HIS NAME	<b>NONE!</b>
LAODICEA	"RULE OF THE PEOPLE"	1900—TRIBULATION MODERNISM, DOCTRINES OF MAN	NONE	CHRIST ON THE OUTSIDE

## The Church Of Thyatira

- Thyatira is Located about 40 miles East of Pergamos
- It now is known as Akhisar in modern Turkey
- The most outstanding feature in Thyatiran life was probably the institution of trade-guilds.
- In Thyatira there were guilds of bakers, potters, workers in brass, tanners, leather-cutters, workers in wool and flax, clothiers, dyers
- Thyatira was famous for its dyes particularly purple
- Lydia was a wealthy dealer of these dyes and was converted by Paul (Acts 16:14,15)



## Revelation 2:18

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:

### **"TO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH IN THYATIRA WRITE:"**

- Thyatira's name means: "Continual Sacrifice" or "Sacrifice of Labor"
- By perverting the Christian practice of the Lord's Supper (Mat. 26:26-28; I Cor. 11:23-27), the Catholic Church has created the Mass, which they believe to be a continual sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- "Christ...commanded that his bloody sacrifice on the Cross should be daily renewed by an unbloody sacrifice of his body and blood in the Mass under the simple elements of bread and wine." (The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, Pg. 13, Article: "Mass, Sacrifice of")

- Rome teaches that the Mass is a continual "sacrifice" of Jesus Christ, but God's word states that Jesus made the FINAL sacrifice on Calvary! This is made perfectly clear in Hebrews 10:10-12:

"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**. Christ's Death Perfects the Sanctified and every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered **one sacrifice for sins forever**, sat down at the right hand of God..."

"The Roman Emperor Constantine established himself as the head of the church around 313 A.D., which made this new "Christianity" the official religion of the Roman Empire. The first actual Pope in Rome was probably Leo I (440-461 A.D.), although some claim that Gregory I was the first (590-604 A.D.). This ungodly system eventually ushered in the darkest period of history known to man, properly known as the "Dark Ages" (500-1500 A.D.). Through popes, bishops, and priests, Satan ruled Europe, and **Biblical Christianity became illegal**. [www.biblebelievers.com](http://www.biblebelievers.com)

### **The Dark Ages Of The Church**

- "In the 5th century, the Roman empire began to crumble. Germanic tribes (barbarians) conquered the city of Rome. This event started the period in history referred to as the Dark Ages. The period of the Dark Ages saw the growth in the power of the Christian Church which was then referred to as the Catholic religion."
- "With its own laws, lands and taxes The Catholic church was a very powerful institution which had its own laws and lands. The Catholic Church also imposed taxes.

- In addition to collecting taxes, the Church also accepted gifts of all kinds from individuals who wanted special favors or wanted to be certain of a place in heaven. The power of the Catholic Church grew with its wealth. The Catholic Church was then able to influence the kings and rulers of Europe. Opposition to the Catholic Church would result in excommunication. This meant that the person who was excommunicated could not attend any church services, receive the sacraments and would go straight to hell when they died." [Middle ages Religion](#)

- In the Middle Ages, religion played a major role in driving antisemitism. Though not part of Roman Catholic doctrine, many Christians, including members of the clergy, have held the Jewish people collectively responsible for killing Jesus, i.e. Saint Augustine
- As stated in the Boston College Guide to Passion Plays, "Over the course of time, Christians began to accept... that the Jewish people as a whole were responsible for killing Jesus.

- According to this interpretation, both the Jews present at Jesus' death and the Jewish people collectively and for all time, have committed the sin of God-killing. For 1900 years of Christian-Jewish history, the charge of killing God has led to hatred, violence against and murder of Jews in Europe and America."
- This accusation was repudiated in 1964, when the Catholic Church under Pope Paul VI issued the document "Nostra Aetate" Or The Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions as a part of Vatican II

### **"These things says the Son of God..."**

- The phrase "Son of God" is only used here in the Book of Revelation
- Remember the titles of Jesus are from Rev. 1:12-16 but here adds "Son of God"
- Jesus is beginning to assert his authority as Judge
- In Revelation 1:14 the description of the Ancient of Days had "eyes of blazing fire... and feet of bronze...."
- "Eyes" represent introspection "Brass" and "fire" are symbols of judgment

- The imagery of both eyes and feet is that of impending judgment upon Jezebel and her children (Rev. 2:22-23). The judgment will serve as a witness of His omniscience:
- “I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”-Rev 2:23

### Colossians 1:19-23

“For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him, and through him to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death...

in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”--Nasb

### We As Believers Are Complete In Him

- "...and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."- Col 2:10
- ""Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."- John 6:28-29
- ""And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.""- John 6:40

- **"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory** with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.-Jude 24-25

### **Revelation 2:19**

"I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first."

### **Commendation For Thyatira**

- Jesus always knows what his church is doing
- The Christian walk is a growing experience
- Jesus commends the Church of Thyatira for growing in their "...love, faith, service, and patience."
- "your works, **the last are more than the first.**"- Vs. 19
- This is the opposite of what was happening in the Church of Ephesus-Rev. 2:5

- The Christian life is a relational experience.
- We are called to a person and that person knows us intimately.
- In contrast to religions of the world which offer mankind "ten steps to spiritual enlightenment" or "the nine fold path to enlightenment"
- Jesus offered himself and we are to offer ourselves to Him.
- The Christian life is not a subject to be learned but a life to be lived!
- The Christian life is a moment by moment journey with Jesus through the ups and downs, failures and victories

### **Revelation 2:20-23**

"Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death,

and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works."

### **Criticism Of The Church Of Thyatira**

- Thyatira was allowing a Jezebel form of Christianity
- "...because you allow that woman Jezebel..."
- Jezebel claims to speak for God she "calls herself a prophetess"
- Toleration or acceptance of false teaching is what Jesus criticizes the Church of Thyatira
- It is a failure of the modern day Church to not confront those who do not teach Biblical Christianity

### **...That Woman..."**

- Jesus places emphasis on "that woman"
- Jesus quotes a parable describing what the woman does in Matt. 13:33
- "Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."- Matt 13:33
- The woman works the leaven which is sin into the dough

- "Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? **Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened.** For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."- 1 Cor 5:6-8

- In Revelation 17 the woman is riding the beast
- "**I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy..."**- Rev 17:3
- The woman is destroyed by Jesus in Revelation 19
- "**"After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! 2 For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."**-Rev 19:1-2

### **The Woman And Babylon**

- "**"For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth...For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."**-Rev. 17:17-18; 18:5

### **Babylon A Place For Wickedness And A Religious Center**

- Some view this woman in Revelation 17, as Rome, but to small, she affects all the earth
- Rome was simply a product of the original apostasy
- The Roman church was certainly affected by the original apostasy but was not the source.
- The original false system entered the church at Rome but not the fountain head.
- This woman/Babylon is the fountain-head of all idolatry (Rev. 17:5)

- Idolatry is a mighty system by which Satan intends to use to lead people to worship him
- Gen. 10: Nimrod was the original founder of this scheme of Satan; Located in Babylon
- Babylon was founded in rebellion against God
- Rome is not responsible for all idolatries Babylon is the source

- Joseph Seiss: "this wine was already bottled and labeled before the first dispersion. It went with that dispersion into every country and nation under heaven. As a matter of fact we find it to this day among all nations of the earth; affecting, if not controlling their thinking, their politics, their faith, and their worship." [Voices in Babylon](#)
- Roger Oakland: "....archeology, the study of the facts left to us by the ancient people from the past, supports the fact that Babylon was the mother of all spiritual harlotry." [New Wine and the Babylonian Vine](#)

### **Zechariah 5:5-11**

Zechariah has a vision that suggests there will be a time when the commercial and religious center will be moved from Jerusalem to the plains of Shinar. Planet earth will once again migrate back to its original starting place of civilization. Like a salmon returning to spawn and die, civilization returns to Babylon to spawn and be judged.

### **Who Is Jezebel And What Did She Do?**

- Jezebel was the daughter of Eth-Baal King of Sidon
- She married King Ahab to form a trade alliance with Israel
- The result of the trade alliance resulted in the assimilation of false religions into the house of Israel
- Jezebel worshipped Baal and Astarte

- Jezebel killed the prophets of God (1 Kings 18:13)
- She turned the temple of God into a house of prostitution
- The Temple was cleansed during the reforms of Josiah ( 2 kings 23:3,6,7)
- She gained land through inquisition
- " And she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who *were* dwelling in the city with Naboth. She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people; and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, You have blasphemed God and the king. Then take him out, and stone him, that he may die." -1 Kings 21:8-10

- She taught the servants in Thyatira to live in sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols which was warned against at the first council in Jerusalem
- "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well." - Acts 15:28-29
- The marriage with Ahab was simply for political interests and commercial gain
- Jezebel is more concerned with success in the world than following the claims of Jesus Christ

### **The Queen of Heaven**

- The "Queen of Heaven" is a Babylonian ritual
- "The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for *the queen of heaven*; and *they* pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. Do they provoke Me to anger?" says the Lord. "Do they not provoke themselves, to the shame of their own faces?" - Jer. 7:18-19

- “As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen to you! But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to **the queen of heaven** and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For *then* we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. But since we stopped burning incense to **the queen of heaven** and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine.” -Jer. 44:16-18

- Queen of Heaven was a title given to a number of ancient sky goddesses in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East, in particular Anat, Isis, Innana, Astarte, Hera. Elsewhere, Nordic **Frigg** also bore this title. In Greco-Roman times Hera, and her Roman aspect Juno bore this title. Forms and content of worship varied. The title Queen of Heaven is used by Catholics and Orthodox Christians for Mary.



Isis and son

### The Crowned Queen and Baby



### The Queen Of Heaven And The Serpent



## **Daughter Of Babylon**

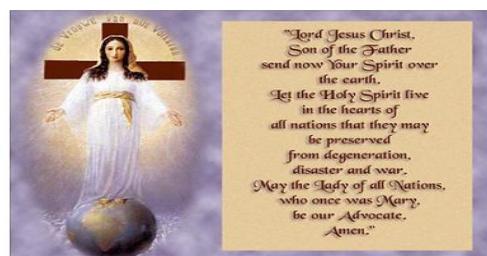
- "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate. Your nakedness shall be uncovered, yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, and I will not arbitrate with a man." As for our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel. **"Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for you shall no longer be called the Lady of Kingdoms."** Isaiah 47:1,3-5

## **Revelation 18:4-8**

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.

In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, **'I sit as queen,** and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' Therefore her plagues will come in one day — death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

## **Lady Of Nations**



## **Spiritual Motherhood Of Mary**

"Mary had only one Son, Jesus, but in him her spiritual motherhood extends to all whom he came to save. Obediently standing at the side of the new Adam, Jesus Christ, the Virgin is the new Eve, the true mother of all the living, who with a mother's love cooperates in their birth and their formation in the order of grace. Virgin and Mother, Mary is the figure of the Church, its most perfect realization." Catholic Catechism, Paragraph 100

- The title Queen of Heaven has long been a Catholic traditional name for Mary
- According to Catholic doctrine, Mary was assumed into heaven and is with Jesus, her divine Son.
- She is represented in the Book of Revelation chapter 12 as the woman clothed with the sun who gives birth to Christ.
- Mary should be called Queen, not only because of her divine motherhood of Jesus Christ, her only Son, but also because God the father has willed her to have an exceptional role in the work of the eternal salvation of humanity.
- The Catholic doctrine believes that as Christ redeemed humankind, and is Lord and king by special title, so the Blessed Virgin Mary is Queen on account of the unique manner in which she assisted in the redemption of humanity by giving of her own substance for human salvation, i.e. Co-Redemptrix

## **Islam And The Queen Of Heaven**

- "How could "Mary" have any influence on the millions of Muslims who follow Allah? Those who have studied the Muslim's holy book, known as the Koran, may be aware of the answer. First, the Koran portrays Jesus Christ as a prophet, unique in His preincarnate nature, miraculous birth, miracles and moral stature. Muslims revere Jesus Christ. As the Koran states:

- The angels said to Mary: "God [Allah] bids you rejoice in a Word from Him. His name is the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He shall be noble in this world and in the world to come, and shall be one of those who are favored. He shall preach to men in his cradle and in the prime of manhood, and shall lead a righteous life."

- It is interesting to note that in the Koran, Jesus is almost exclusively referred to as “Jesus son of Mary,” rather than “Son of God.” The Koran vehemently denies that Jesus is the Son of God, yet it holds both Jesus and Mary in high esteem. More important to our context, is the fact that Mary is arguably more highly honored than Jesus in the Koran and in the Muslim world. **The Muslims, like the Catholics, refer to her as “Our Lady.” She is also venerated as a pure and holy saint in the Islamic world.**

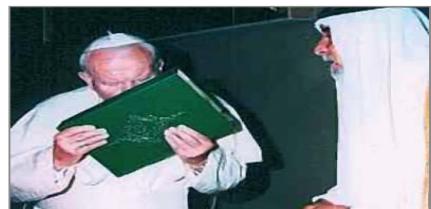
- Furthermore, Mary is mentioned no less than 34 times in the Koran. In addition, the 19th surah (chapter) of the Koran is named after Mary. Based on these facts alone, it is apparent that “Our Lady” is surely seen as blessed above all women by orthodox Muslims. In addition, consider the following three quotes taken directly from the Koran: And remember the angels’ words to Mary. They said: “God has chosen you. He has made you pure and exalted you above womankind.” **The Messiah, the son of Mary, was no more than an apostle: other apostles passed away before him. His mother was a saintly woman.**

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### God And Allah

- "The Church's relationship with the Muslims. "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, **in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God,** mankind's judge on the last day" **Catholic Catechism, Paragraph 841**

### Kissing the Koran



Pope John Paul II kissing the Koran,  
May 14, 1999.

### **Jezebel's Destruction**

- She was given time to repent but refused
- “Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.” - Vs. 22
- This is the first mention of the “great tribulation”
- The promise is that those who “repent” will escape the great tribulation
- This presupposes that only the unrepentant church will go through the Great Tribulation

### **God's Longsuffering**

- God is patient, kind, and compassionate
- He is not wanting anyone to suffer or be lost but desires everyone to come to repentance even in a world full of evil and suffering caused by man against each other
- “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.” -2 Peter 3:9-10

### **Friendship With World**

- “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” -James 4:1-4
- Psalm 73: Envy of the world's pleasures

### **Revelation 2:24-29**

“Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. But hold fast what you have till I come.

And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations — 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' — as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

### **The Rest Of The Believers In Thyatira**

- These are the remnant of true believers who have not bought into the doctrines of Jezebel
- They are encouraged to "hold fast" until Jesus comes back
- It is only when Jesus comes back and reigns from Jerusalem will the battles and war be completed
- This is a reference to the Second Coming, not the rapture, when Jesus will come and establish His kingdom

### **The Kingdom Come**

- "He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels"-vs 27
- As compared to those who the Father had given to Jesus
- "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me." - John 17:6-8

### **The Depths of Satan**

- This is a trademark of all mystery religions who claim that true things dwell only with the enlightened few
- This allows the enlightened to have control over the followers
- This always results in bondage not freedom
- The "deep mysteries" in this context is the teachings of Jezebel
- These "deep mysteries" are in contrast to the simple teachings of Jesus and the message of the gospel.

- "At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes."-Matt 11:25"
- For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

• For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."-1 Cor. 1:18-25

## The Morning Star

- Those who overcome will have the greatest gift of all: Jesus
- Jesus is the Bright and Morning Star
- "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."-Rev 22:16
- "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel..."-Num 24:17

CHURCH	NAME	DATES (A.D.)	COMMENDATION	CRITICISM
EPHESUS	"MAIDEN OF CHOICE:DARLING"	< 100 EARLY CHURCH	REJECT FALSE APOSTLES	LEFT FIRST LOVE
SMYRNA	"MYRRH, BITTER, AFFLCTION"	100–313 PERSECUTION	FAITHFUL IN PERSECUTION	<b>NONE!</b>
PERGAMOS	"MIXED MARRIAGE"	313–590 FALSE DOCTRINES CREEP INTO THE CHURCH	FAITHFULNESS	TOLERATE TEACHERS WHO TEACH FALSE DOCTRINES
THYATIRA	"CONTINUAL SACRIFICE"	590–TRIBULATION FALSE DOCTRINES RULE THE CHURCH	LOVE, SERVICE, FAITH PATIENCE, GROWING	TOLERATE EVIL DOCTRINES TO SPREAD
SARDIS	<b>"REMENTANT"</b>	1517–TRIBULATION REFORMATION	REMENTANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES PURE	<b>ALIVE IN NAME ONLY</b>
PHILADELPHIA	"BROTHERLY LOVE"	1730—RAPTURE MISSIONARY CHURCH	KEPT GOD'S WORD AND DID NOT DENY HIS NAME	<b>NONE!</b>
LAODICEA	"RULE OF THE PEOPLE"	1900—TRIBULATION MODERNISM, DOCTRINES OF MAN	NONE	CHRIST ON THE OUTSIDE

## **The Church Of Sardis**

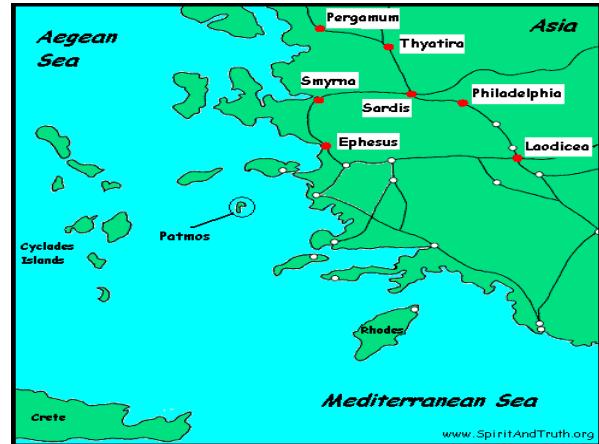
- Sardis was a city that had seen its best days and was beginning a period of decline.
- It was a wealthy city but it was living on the glories of its past
- Sardis was situated on a hill 1000 feet above a valley which made it a military fortress and very difficult to capture by invading armies
- The people of Sardis developed a false sense of confidence thinking to be invulnerable to attack

- However, the city's cliff fortress was made of clay and would develop big cracks which armies could then exploit.
- The Church of Sardis had an appearance of being strong but its outward appearance of strength was betrayed by their lack of watchfulness and diligence.
- "One of Cyrus' soldiers had noticed a Sardian soldier climbing down this slope to retrieve a helmet he had dropped, and so concluded that the slopes were negotiable in that particular spot.

- So that night he led a party of Persian troops up to the citadel by following the fault in the rock. When they reached the battlements they found them unguarded, for the Sardians considered themselves too safe to need a guard."-Mills
- The meaning of the name Sardis is "remnant" or possibly an "escaped few".

- "Sardis, the once proud capital of Lydia, and the residence of its opulent monarchs, is now reduced to a wretched Turkish village called Sart, the habitation of herdsmen, buffaloes, and oxen, situated at the foot of mount Tmolus, on the banks of the Pactolus, between 30 and 40 miles east from Smyrna. The ruins of Sardis are peculiarly grand, and lift up their heads, as if to assert their ancient glory; but it now contains not a single Christian family."-Smith, Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

### Ancient Sardis



### Revelation 3:1-2

And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you dead

### The Seven Spirits Of God

- The seven Spirits of God as we studied in Chapter 1:4, is the active work of the Spirit in His fullness
- Isaiah provides a list of qualities of the Spirit which shall rest upon the Messiah who shall come from the stem of Jesse (David's father): "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:2).

### **Reasons For The Title To Sardis**

- In the church of Thyatira evil had reached a climax with “that woman” who taught the servants of Jesus to follow false doctrines
- In this letter Jesus is reasserting his authority over the church by the effecting work of the Holy Spirit
- The Holy Spirit makes known to the Church the truth about Jesus and His teaching (John 16:12-15)
- The Holy Spirit will speak but only a few will hear.

### **John 16:12-15**

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

### **You Have A Name**

- The word for "name" is “*onoma*” which is the act labeling for the identification of someone or something
- Catholicism means "universal" which was the only church until 1517 A.D.
- On Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the Wittenburg door thus beginning the reformation by proclaiming “the just shall live by faith”
- In do so Luther protested against the Catholic Church and their false doctrines and teachings that were used to control the people

- The Reformation swept across Europe and was subsequently exported to the U.S.
- Protestantism eventually became denominations like Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists and so on.
- Denomination according Webster is “the act of naming”; “a class, society, or collection of individuals, called by the same name”.
- The Reformation is being reversed today and denominations are once again being unified through the teachings of the emergent doctrine

### **Alive In Name Only**

- There are two distinct words in Greek for "alive" "zao" and "bios"
- "Bios" which refers to the external life that we see around us
- "Zao" which is the word used here refers to the inner life that we can't see
- Jesus is emphasizing the wide gap between how the church of Sardis appears to men and how it appears to Him.
- They look good on the outside but in fact they are dead

- The church of Sardis had made for themselves a name.
- Name is here used to represent fame, reputation, or character.
- The Sardians were following in the same sin of Babel. "And they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; **let us make a name for ourselves**, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth' " (Gen. 11:4).

### **The Walking Dead**

- Despite their name/reputation Jesus sees them for what they really are: Dead
- A good reputation in religious things is no guarantee of true spiritual character
- Jesus saw them for what they really were despite their good appearance
- The reformation eventually lost its steam and believers were now more concerned with their church identity rather than their spiritual identity in Jesus

### **Spirituality Without Substance**

- "So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ." -Col 2:16-17
- The life of a movement can look alive with "religion" but dead to the substance of Christ
- It is a form of godliness but denying the power (2 Tim 3:5)
- The power is in the Cross (Cor. 1:18)
- Changed lives give way to compromise and complacency

### **No Persecution For Sardis**

- There is no evidence of the threat of persecution or heresy in the church at Sardis
- The church in Sardis presented no significant threat to Satan's kingdom therefore it wasn't worth attacking
- The church of Sardis was already serving Satan's purposes by posing as the truth without the One Who is the Truth directing their church

- The church in Sardis is "A perfect model of inoffensive Christianity" (Caird)
- Another commentator says, "It was not scandalous wickedness, but decent death; the form retained, the heart gone"
- "The church of Sardis was at peace - but it was the peace of the dead." (Barclay)

### **Revelation 3:2**

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.

### **Be Watchful**

- Jesus exhorts the church of Sardis to be watchful
- Jesus exhorts them to examine and protect strengthening what they have.
- The city of Sardis had been easily conquered twice before because overconfidence **had led to a lack of watchfulness**
- The phrase "be watchful" in the original language is in the present tense imperative.
- It is literally interpreted as a command: "You be continuously watching"

## Watchfulness In Scripture

- "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."- 1 Cor 16:13
- "And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed."-Rom 13:11
- "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."- 1 Peter 5:8

- "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."- Matt 26:41
- "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming."-Matt 24:42
- "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming — in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning — lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"- Mark 13:35-37

- "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears."- Acts 20:29-31

## The Importance Of Watching

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."-Luke 21:34-36

### **Watch For The Day Of The Lord**

"But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." 1Thess. 5:1-11

### **Strengthen What Remains**

- The foundational truths of the Reformation are being lost today
- Justification by faith alone
- The inerrant word of God
- Sovereignty of God
- The depravity of man

### **Stand Strong In The Faith**

"Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul." - Heb 10:35-39

### **Imperfect Works Before God**

- The word "perfect" in the original language is in the perfect tense indicating works previously prepared and appointed but having been unfulfilled.
- The works that they had were done to please or impress men and thus their motivation was misdirected therefore God did not accept them as pleasing to Him
- In doing so the Sardian church was following in the footsteps of the religious leaders of Jesus' day:

**"But all their works they do to be seen by men.**

They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments" (Mat. 23:5). "Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Mat. 23:28).

- I have not found your works perfect before God shows that their works haven't measured up to God's standard; **He requires a particular intent and purpose in all of our works**

### **What is it that Jesus is looking for in us?**

- Jesus is looking for us to believe in Him
- "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."- Heb 11:6
- "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."- Eph 2:8-10

### **Eph 2:10**

**"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."**

### **Phil 2:13**

**"for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."**

## **Jesus Is The Source Of All Our Fruit**

- "being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."-Php. 1:11
- "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."-Gal 6:14

### **TRUE SERVICE**

IT COMES OUT OF A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS, AND IS A LIFESTYLE GENERATED AND EMPOWERED BY GOD'S LOVE.— BREEDS HUMILITY

### **FALSE SERVICE**

IT COMES OUT OF THE FLESH AND IS LOOKING FOR A REWARD, SO THAT IT CAN BOAST AND EXALT ITSELF.— BREEDS PRIDE

### **Revelation 3:3**

Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

### **Received And Heard**

- Jesus exhorts the Sardian church to remember how they received and heard
- "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain?"- Gal 3:1-4

**"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard..." Hebrews 2:1**

- **The reason that we should take extreme care and sit up and notice is because it is the biggest revelation in the history of mankind!**
- The message that we should hear is that the very person of God became man and dwelt among us!
- Jesus has come and taught man the understanding of the character and nature of God

- God in Jesus has died for our sins and brought the perfect sacrifice once and for all
- Therefore this message has life-changing application for the history mankind
- Believers need to be careful not to be **desensitized** to this wonderful message and forget what they have heard
- Non believers need to be careful not to have a **hardening** of heart towards the message that they are hearing
- Otherwise Jesus will come upon the desensitized and hardened as a "thief"

**Holdfast And Repent**

- "Hold Fast" : to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing to run after and make it your own"
- Like a football player who not only wants to catch his man but pull him down
- Jesus pursues us with a passion.
- Jesus is faithful to see us through to the end
- "Repent" is the Greek word "*metanoeo*" which means to "change the way you think"
- Repentance includes a recognition of wrong-doing together with a decision to move in a different direction

**The Final Hour**

- Jesus tells the Sardian church to "watch" or they would not "know" the "hour" when He will come back
- The word for "know" is "ginosko" which means "to know based on information or facts"
- "Hour" when it is not qualified with a time means "day" or "season" or "appointed time period"
- "Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners." - Matt 26:45

## Does The Bible Contradict Itself?

- Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 24:36: "But of **that day and hour no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."
- Yet Jesus also says in Matthew 24:15: "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' **spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place**" (whoever reads, let him understand),

- Daniel 12:11,13 gives additional insight: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."
- When this sign is set up, the end may be determined - there will be three and one-half years to go until the consummation of all things.

- This is a dilemma. How can the day of Jesus' coming be both completely unknown, and at the same time be known to the day according to Daniel 12:11?
- Jesus tells the church of Sardis that, "...**if you will not watch**, I will come upon you as a thief, and **you will not know what hour I will come upon you**."
- How can that "hour" not be known by anyone but only the Father and yet Jesus tells the church of Sardis to watch for the hour

## The Dilemma Resolved

- The dilemma is resolved by seeing that there are actually "two" second comings.
- **The first phase of the Lord's coming is the rapture:** "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

**Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."-1 Thess. 4:15-18

- This is the "unexpected hour" that know one knows but only the Father in heaven
- The second phase of the Lord's coming is to the world and this is what is commonly known as the "Second Coming" of Jesus. The "contradictions" in Matthew 24 (and the much of the rest of prophecy) are often solved by seeing there are really references to "two" returns of Jesus.

- This "final hour" is a reference to His second coming when He will return at the end of the seven year tribulation period
- Coming as a "thief" always denotes an unexpected coming in judgment because a thief comes to rob and destroy. Christ is never said to come for His church as a "thief". "The first phase of the Lord's coming is as a bridegroom and the second phase is as a thief. He does not come upon His bride as a thief and He does not come upon the apostates and unregenerate world as a bridegroom."- Barnhouse

### **The Days Of Noah An Example**

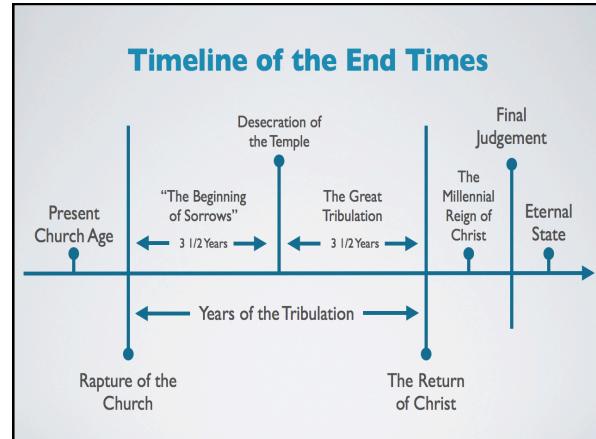
"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- The conditions of the world in Noah's day will be like the conditions at the return of Jesus.
- Conditions of that world:
- Enoch was raptured....By faith
- Hebrews 11:5 tells us the foundation of Enoch's walk with God: *By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* You cannot walk with God, or please God, apart from faith

- Noah preached but no one listened not one repented, "...and [God] did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;" - 2 Peter 2:5
- Jesus tells us in Matthew that people in Noah's time were going about business as usual not paying attention and listening to the coming judgment and then all of sudden Noah entered the ark and it was all over
- We should also remember that the days of Noah were also marked by violence and demonic oppression (Genesis 6:1-5).

**Noah was a preacher of righteousness for approximately 100 years as he built the ark. During that time Noah was proclaiming the word of God to the people to repent and enter into obedience to God's word, but they rejected God's word, thus rejecting God Himself**

- Enoch who was raptured prophesied about the flood through his son
- Methuselah's name means "his death shall bring judgment"
- Methuselah's long life of 969 years was no accident.
- Methuselah lived 782 years after he had Lamech
- Lamech was 182 years old when he had Noah
- Noah was 600 yrs old when the flood came (Gen 7:6)
- $600 + 182 = 782$ , the year Methuselah died



### **Revelation 3:4-6**

You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life;

but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

### **A Few Names**

- **"Even in Sardis..."** among the dead Christians there is a faithful remnant;
- In Pergamos and Thyatira there were a **few bad among the good**; in Sardis there are a **few good** among the bad
- The churches have become progressively worse over time
- God is absolutely faithful and always has a remnant of people who continue in the truth

### **Undefiled Garments**

- Before believing in Jesus these few were wearing "filthy rags" in comparison to the righteousness required by God (Isa. 64:6)
- When a person comes to Christ and believes in Him Jesus balances the account once and for all time in the life of the believer
- Abraham believed God, "and therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness ."- Rom 4:22

- Ignorance to our righteous position in Christ has through the centuries caused people to try to earn their righteousness through works
- "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God."- Rom 10:3
- However it is so simple: "For Christ **is the end** of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."- Rom 10:4
- These few believers in Sardis sought their righteousness in Christ and not anything else

### **Worthy To Walk With Jesus**

- The garments Jesus gives us are white. This was a color of triumph to the Romans and it has a universal association with purity or cleanliness
- Jesus promises that these pure ones will walk with Me; this picture of close fellowship and friendship is reminiscent of Enoch, who walked with God; and he was not, for God took him (Genesis 5:24)

### **They Will Be Dressed In White**

- Those who will be dressed in white is speaking of those who have "overcome" until that final "hour" the martyred
- "When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed."-Rev. 6:9-11

- A multitude will "come out" of the Great Tribulation clothed in white: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues,

standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands...then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."-Rev 7:9.13-14

## **Names Blotted From The Book**

- Jesus makes it clear that those who believe in Him will not have their names erased from the "Book of Life"
- Every body's name is written into the "Book of Life" when they are born and are erased when they refuse to believe in Jesus
- This is an Old Testament concept found in Exodus 32:32-33, where Moses is interceding on behalf of Israel who has sinned against God at Mount Sinai.

- "Yet now, if You will forgive their sin — but if not, I pray, **blot me out of Your book** which You have written." And the LORD said to Moses, "**Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book** ."-Ex 32:32-33
- God at the end will judge those names not found written in the Book of Life at the Great White Throne judgment
- "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."- Rev 20:15

- Many people believe that as you believe in Jesus then your name is written into the Book of Life. However the Book of Life we are told has been written from the beginning of time.
- "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, **whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world**, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."- Rev 17:8

## Jesus Will Confess Names

- Jesus tells the church of Sardis that those who trust in Him will have their name confessed to the Father and the angels
- This is in direct contrast to the erasing that has occurred in the previous statement of Jesus
- Jesus taught His disciples the same thing: "Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God."- Luke12:8
- Paul taught us in Romans: "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."-Rom 10:9

CHURCH	NAME	DATES (A.D.)	COMMENDATION	CRITICISM
EPHESUS	"MAIDEN OF CHOICE:DARLING"	< 100 EARLY CHURCH	REJECT FALSE APOSTLES	LEFT FIRST LOVE
SMYRNA	"MYRRH, BITTER, AFFLCTION"	100–313 PERSECUTION	FAITHFUL IN PERSECUTION	<b>NONE!</b>
PERGAMOS	"MIXED MARRIAGE"	313–500 FALSE DOCTRINES CREEP INTO THE CHURCH	FAITHFULNESS	TOLERATE TEACHERS WHO TEACH FALSE DOCTRINES
THYATIRA	"CONTINUAL SACRIFICE"	590—TRIBULATION FALSE DOCTRINES RULE THE CHURCH	LOVE, SERVICE, FAITH PATIENCE, GROWING	TOLERATED EVIL DOCTRINES TO SPREAD
SARDIS	"REMANENT"	1517—TRIBULATION REFORMATION	REMANENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE WHO HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES PURE	ALIVE IN NAME ONLY
PHILADELPHIA	<b>"BROTHERLY LOVE"</b>	1730—RAPTURE MISSIONARY CHURCH	KEPT GOD'S WORD AND DID NOT DENY HIS NAME	<b>NONE!</b>
LAODICEA	"RULE OF THE PEOPLE"	1900—TRIBULATION MODERNISM, DOCTRINES OF MAN	NONE	CHRIST ON THE OUTSIDE



## The Church Of Philadelphia

- The name Philadelphia in the original language means "brotherly love"
- Philadelphia is twenty-seven miles from Sardis
- Philadelphia was named by its founder king Attalus of Pergamum in honor of his brother
- Philadelphia's location made it a gateway to the high central plateau of Asia Minor and thus became a missionary center for spreading the Greek language into the eastern parts of the region

- This missionary focus seems to be the central message of the letter to the church
- It still survives today as the town of "Alasehir" in modern Turkey
- With the exception of Smyrna the other churches are in ruins but Philadelphia still holds the banner of the Christian faith.
- The only two churches without a criticism still survive today.

- "Philadelphia, so called from its founder, Attalus Philadelphus, still exists in the town called Allah-shear, "the city of God." . . . The number of houses is said to be about 3000, of which 250 are Greek, the rest Turkish; and the Christians have twenty-five places of worship, five of them large and regular churches, a resident bishop, and twenty inferior clergy."- Smith, The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

### **Present Church In Philadelphia**



### **The Age Of Enlightenment**

- The Enlightenment was a time when man believed himself to be illuminated/enlightened in his own reasoning abilities beyond the need for religious revelation. Its influence is still present today and it continues to challenge religion in general but Christianity is attacked at its core, i.e. Genesis, the resurrection, the miracles in the Bible
- The Enlightenment expressed supreme confidence in science and completely challenged the remnants of medieval doctrine which ascribed all phenomena to God alone.

## **The Enlightenment's Assault On Christianity**

- The Age of Enlightenment has attacked the character and attributes of Jesus like no other time in the history of mankind.
- The authority of Christ has come under scrutiny with a vengeance.
- Jesus is simply reduced to a good man with enlightened teachings
- It still continues even within the church.

- “What we need is a new fiction...a new narrative of Jesus, a new gospel...that places Jesus differently in the grand scheme. Not any fiction will do...we require a new, liberating fiction, one that squares with the best knowledge we can accumulate. The old fiction of Jesus as the son of god and savior of the world, simply does not work any longer.”

The Jesus Seminar, quoting Robert Funk, chairman of Jesus Seminar

- “While Jesus may have been a carpenter...he did not preach salvation from sin...he probably never delivered the sermon on the mount....He never cured any diseases. As for the other miracles? No loaves and fishes, no water into wine, no raising of Lazarus. And certainly no resurrection”

“Time Magazine” January 10, 1994

## **Thomas Jefferson's Bible**

- Thomas Jefferson, who was influenced by the enlightenment while living in France, took a pair of scissors to the New Testament and removed all the miracles and any reference to supernatural events and then glued his bible back together again. He renamed the bible, “The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth”.



### **Revelation 3:7**

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens":'

### **He Who Is Holy**

- The first five churches had titles descriptive of the risen lord in Rev. 1:14-18
- All are more or less referring to judgment:
- Jesus holds the Seven Churches in His right hand of authority
- The One Who has risen to take that authority
- The One Who has the two-edged sword
- The One Who has the eyes as a flame of fire
- The One Who has the Seven Spirits

- But, to the church at Philadelphia Jesus draws his title from another reference in the Bible
- The title He chooses represents His attributes and character as well as His authority
- The holiness of Jesus is a reflection of his identification with the Father in the Godhood. "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30)
- "*Hagios* characterizes Jesus, not so much as the sinless one, but as one especially set apart, belonging exclusively to God." -Thomas

- The holiness of God is the subject of great angelic praise throughout Scripture (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8)
- However man in his infinite wisdom sadly thinks and mistakenly so that he can destroy the deity and holiness of Jesus
- Central to the Christian faith is the belief in the deity of Jesus Christ. This is inescapable, and few things pose such an affront to Christianity as those who attempt to deny our Savior's deity.

	God or Man?	Who Jesus Was	Jesus' Purpose	Resurrection Happened?
Traditional (Nicene) Christianity	Both: "fully God and fully man."	Second person of the Trinity, Incarnation of God, Son of God, Savior	Die for the sins of humanity.	Yes
Arianism	A created divine being.	A divine being, but created by God and inferior to Father, Son of God, Savior	To save humanity from sin.	Yes
Baha'i Faith	Man	A manifestation of God and prophet. Source superseded by Muhammad and Bahaullah.	To reveal God's will as part of progressive revelation to humanity.	Only spiritually.
Buddhism	Man	Wise and enlightened man who taught similar things to the Buddha.	To teach humanity wisdom and the way to enlightenment.	Not addressed
Christian Science	Man	Wise man especially attuned to the divine Christ.	To teach humanity, heal, and overcome death.	Yes
Christadelphians	Man (or half-man, half-God).	Son of God but human, because mother was human Mary. Lived a sinless life and died sacrifice death.	To show God's love for humanity and redeem humanity from sin.	Yes
Gnosticism	God	Divine being sent from the supreme God.	To rescue humanity from the material world bringing true knowledge.	Most Gnostics reject that Christ died at all. They believe Jesus was ordinary and did not resurrect.
Hinduism	Various very	Incarnation of God akin to Krishna, or wise man.	Not addressed	Not addressed
Islam	Man	True prophet sent by God, but superseded by Muhammad.	To reveal God's will in a progressive revelation that ended with Muhammad.	No
Jehovah's Witnesses	An archangel	Son of God, Word of God, God's first creation, Archangel Michael.	Teach about God, provide a model for living, die sacrifice for sin.	Yes
Mormonism (LDS)	Man	Son of God, Savior, originally one of the spirit beings that all humans used to be. Had a physical body.	To teach about God, provide a model for living, die sacrifice for sin.	Yes
Theosophy	Man	Great teacher	Not addressed	No
Unitarian Universalism	Man	Great teacher, faith healer, "incarnation of God's love."	To demonstrate God's love for humanity.	No official teaching: most do not believe physical resurrection.

## Jesus Is True

- There are two Greek words for "true" in the original language:
- "*Alethinos*" which means true as opposed to false
- "*Aletheia*" which means real as opposed to unreal
- This is the word Jesus uses to describe Himself to the church of Philadelphia
- Jesus is saying the He is the true source of reality (John 17:3; 1 John 5:20)
- "I am the way, the truth , and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." - John 14:6

- The course of this present age is presented in 2 Thessalonians under the symbols of lawlessness and delusion.
- It is our vision of Jesus as the Holy and True that will keep us when the whole world is falling into a strong delusion and is laughing at the believer because we will not believe the lie.
- ..because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2:10-12

## God Does Not Change

- "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them." -Heb 13:8-9
- "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons..." - 1 Tim 4:1

### **God's Word Is Forever**

- God is omniscient. He knows everything, every fact, every detail
- **"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. " (Acts 15:18)**
- **His Word does not need to be updated like an encyclopedia or dictionary**
- Because it is "settled in heaven", it will not change on earth.
- "Forever, O LORD, **Your word is settled in heaven.**"- Ps 119:89

### **The Key Of David**

- Jesus holds the "key of David" and what He opens no one shut and what He shuts no can open
- The "key of David" symbolizes that He has ultimate authority as the rightful King from the lineage of David
- "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:- Matt 1:1
- "...Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."-Rom 1:3-4

- In Isaiah 22:20-22 the same words were used to address of Eliakim
- Represented the authority of government to make decisions about the empire
- The key of David was laid on the shoulder of Eliakim who acted as prime minister and who determined who would be allowed to see King Hezekiah.
- He also would make decisions only the king could overthrow. His was a position of great authority and trust.

- Then it shall be in that Day, that I will call My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah; I will clothe him with your robe and strengthen him with your belt; I will commit your responsibility into his hand. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. **The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; so he shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut, and no one shall open.** I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, and he will become a glorious throne to his father's house. (Isa. 22:20-23)

### **The Key Of David Will Rest On Jesus' Shoulder**

- For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; **And the government will be upon His shoulder.** And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of **His** government and peace There will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time **(Millennium)** forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isa. 9:6-7)

### **The Open And Shut Door**

- In the original text the word for "open" is in the present tense meaning "the one presently opening and no one shall shut". He is actively holding open the door so that no one else can shut it.
- Men must respond while the door is held open by God for once it is shut there is no other option for entry.

- "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut." (Mat. 25:10)
- When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where are you from.' (Luke 13:25)

### **Revelation 3:8**

"I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

## An Open Door For The Gospel

- The church in Philadelphia has an open door set before them by Jesus
- An "open door" is used in scripture to indicate an evangelistic opportunity
- A wide door for effective ministry was opened for Paul- (1 Cor. 16:9)
- When Paul came to Troas a door was opened by the Lord for the preaching the gospel(2 Cor. 2:12)
- Paul asks the Colossian church to pray for an open door (Col 4:3)
- Paul tells how the Lord had opened a door to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27)

## The Door Of Missions

- Jesus tells the church of Philadelphia that He has "set before you an open door"
- In the original text the words "set before" are in the perfect tense which indicates the condition of a past event that is influencing the present.
- Jesus Who has opened the door to missions will keep it that way until the fulfillment of the gentiles who are to believe has come to completion

## The Fullness Of The Gentiles

- "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."-Rom 11:25
- Paul's desire is that we not be misinformed about: "...this mystery."
- The word for "mystery" has at its root "*muo*" which means "to shut your mouth" meaning that the Lord is silent at the present time "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in".

- The word for "fullness" means "to be filled up as a container is filled or a period is completed"
- The Lord has a time table
- 2 Peter 3:1-9, tells us that people willfully forget that the Lord has a time table when the door will be closed
- The Lord, however is patient, "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

### **The Door Will Be Shut One Day**

- The "fullness of the Gentiles" will end with the rapture of the church.
- With that event Jewish history will be resumed again.
- This begins what is known as "the time of Jacob's trouble"
- God is not finished with Israel as a nation or a distinct ethnic group. Though God has turned the focus of His saving mercies away from Israel on to the Gentiles, He will turn it back again.

### **Romans 11:26-29**

"And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins." Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers."

### **The Great Tribulation**

- Known in The Scriptures as The Time of Jacob's Trouble
- The tribulation concern's itself primarily with Israel before Jesus will set up His Millennial Reign
- It's main feature is the out pouring of God's wrath upon the **whole** world
- Luke 4:18-19 ; Is 61:1-2
- Jeremiah. 30:4-7
- Daniel 12:1
- Matthew. 24:19-22; Isaiah 45:4;Romans. 11:25-29

### **A Little Strength**

- The term a little strength does not imply weakness but real strength.
- It is not a matter of great strength, not great ability but great dependability. Samson had great ability but poor dependability. A little strength faithfully used means more than much strength flashily and fitfully used." (Havner)
- Since the church of Philadelphia had "a little strength" it relied and gained strength from the Word of God

### **They Kept God's Word**

- This is what should be our goal as believers
- "We are asked today to abandon Genesis for science, salvation by redemption to salvation by works, the life in the Spirit to psychology, the inspiration of the word to higher criticism"- Barnhouse
- Our strength is in keeping His word and teaching our children to keep it

### **Joshua 1:8-9**

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

### **They Did Not Deny His Name**

- The name of God refers to the character of Who God is
- When a person reads the word of God we get an understanding of Who God is and His desire for all to come to repentance
- The believers in the church of Philadelphia were commended for not only keeping the word of God but also for living in relationship to the One Who is True and Holy

### **Another Name During The Tribulation**

- During the Tribulation many will deny His name by taking the name of another.
- "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive." - John 5:43
- "He [the beast] causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." - Rev 13:16-17

### Commendations

- Evangelistic opportunity (**I have set before you an open door**)
- Reliance on God (**You have a little strength**)
- Faithfulness to Jesus (**have kept My word, and have not denied My name**)
- These are the characteristics of a church that has its "mind set on things above, not on things on the earth."-Col 3:2

### Revelation 3:9

Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie — indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

### Those who are not Jews

- We encountered this group people in the church of Smyrna who claim to be Jews but are not. Jesus calls them "liars"
- "But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."

That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son." And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."-Rom 9:6-13

### **The Children Of Esau**

- "Now this is the genealogy of Esau , who is Edom."-Gen 36:1
- Edom is known today as the Palestinians.
- "But I have made Esau bare; I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself. His descendants are plundered, his brethren and his neighbors, and he is no more."- Jer 49:10

### **Psalm 83**

"Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, And do not be still, O God! 2 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. 4 They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more." For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You: The tents of Edom...."

### **Forced Worship**

- This is the only place in Scripture where worship is forced upon a people group
- So many people during this "age of grace" have forgotten about the vengeance of God
- Jesus the man
- Jesus the good teacher
- Jesus the lover
- Jesus the vengeance of God?????
- Is. 61:2(VS Luke 4:18-20); 2 Thess. 1:5-8; Ph. 2:10,11
- The Revelation of Jesus as the Avenger

### **Revelation 3:10**

Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

### **Jesus' Command To Wait**

- Paul prayed for the church in Thessalonica that the, "...Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ."
- It is because of God's great love for mankind that He patiently waits for all to come to repentance.
- Most believers would like Jesus to come today, however, we must be patient out of our love for the people who do not know Him.
- We cannot **force** His coming but can only wait patiently and prepare for His coming

### **Keeping Jesus' Word**

- The word for "command" used here in the original Greek is "logos" which literally means "word"
- Because the Philadelphian church "kept" the word of God to wait patiently Jesus will "keep" them from the "...hour of trial that shall come upon the whole world..."
- What a great testimony the church of Philadelphia has. They are loved by Jesus because they believed His word to wait for Him to fulfill His purposes.

### **Mixing God's Word And Faith**

- Faith is **not a work** but is **the means** by which we receive the message of the gospel
- The ability to believe is a gift given by God to all people
- "...God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."- Rom 12:3
- Faith is given to man so that man can train his ear to listen to what God has said.
- There is no profit in faith if we do not listen to what God has said.
- "...but the word which they heard did not profit them..."- Heb 4:2

### **Mixing Faith and Hearing**

- We know faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.-Rom. 10:17
- The "word" used in Rom. 10:17 is "Rhema" and is the spoken word of God
- The Israelites could not enter the promise land because they did not believe what God had told them.
- "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word (Rhema) of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.- Heb 11:3
- It is a serious error by man not to believe what God Has spoken and revealed for man to know

### **Abraham Believed God**

- "... just as Abraham **"believed God**, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."- Gal 3:6
- This must be the experience of all believers to "believe God" and not man and his traditions.
- Jesus said, [the Jewish leaders were] "making the word of God of no effect through your tradition...".
- The question is not "what you believe? But "whom do you believe?"
- Do we believe God?

### **Kept From The Hour Of trial**

- There is a lot of discussion about this phrase within certain circles.
- The discussion centers on the word **"from"** (ek) and how it should be translated **"out of"** or **"through."**
- Is the promise to keep the church **"out of"** the trial or to preserve it **"through"** the trial?

### **Proponents Of The Kept Through**

- They use the following examples in Scripture:
- "On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark"- Gen 7:13
- "Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt."-Ex 12:13

- "Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past. For behold, the LORD comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth will also disclose her blood, and will no more cover her slain."- Isa 26:20-21
- ""Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."- Rev 7:3

### Proponents Of The Kept from

- "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."- Gen 5:24
- "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."- Luke 21:36
- The Greek word "ek" is used more than **800 times** in the New Testament. The only time "ek" is used other than "out of" is found in Galatians 3:8 where it is "through faith". And even there it should be translated "by faith."

### Examples Of Ek

- "...and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."- Matt 2:15
- "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."-Matt 15:19
- "...and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many."-Matt 27:53
- "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth."- Rev 3:16

### The Answer Is Two-fold

- Since God clearly uses both models of protection in Scripture the answer is a two-fold solution.
- The reward for the believers in the church of Philadelphia was that because they kept His word they would not have to endure the "hour" of trial that is to come upon the whole world.
- The promise is not to be kept from the trial, but from the hour of trial.

- "Christ promised to keep these church saints from the time period characterized by the testing Christ had in mind. If the Lord had meant that He would keep them from just the testing itself, He could have made that very clear by omitting the words 'the hour' and simply saying, 'I will keep you from the testing.'-Showers
- The Scripture teaches a two-fold answer. Some believers will be raptured out whereas others during the tribulation will be protected from the wrath that comes upon the whole earth.

### **Revelation 3:11-13**

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more.

I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

### **Jesus Exhorts His Church To Hang On**

- Jesus reminds us that He is coming back to take us home with Him.
- "And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself**; that where I am, there you may be also." -John 14:3
- "Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown." They already have their crown which is the opposite of Smyrna where Jesus said to them, "I will give you the crown"

### **The Promise**

- The believer will become a pillar in the temple of God
- The believer will get the name of God, the city of God and Jesus' new name written upon Him.
- This works together well with the image of a **pillar**. In the ancient world, having a special inscribed pillar added to one of the temples sometimes honored a faithful city servant or distinguished priest. "Philadelphia honored its illustrious sons by putting their names on the pillars of its temples, so that all who came to worship might see and remember." (Barclay)

### God's Love For Jerusalem

"Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there....for now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually....Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever"

----2 Chronicles 6:6;7:16;33:7

### The New Jerusalem

- Jerusalem will have a new name during the Millennium
- "The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name." (Isa. 62:2)
- At that time Jerusalem shall be called **The Throne of the LORD**, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. (Jer. 3:17)

- All the way around *shall be* eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from *that day shall be*: **THE LORD IS THERE.** (Eze. 48:35)
- The Lord will name the millennial city Jerusalem "The Throne of the LORD" and "THE LORD IS THERE" indicating the presence of the Messiah Jesus who will rule from the throne of David in the midst of the city fulfilling the promise He made to David.

### The Church Of Laodicea

- Grim distinction of being the only church that Jesus had nothing good to say
- The city was founded around 250 B.C. by Antiochus of Syria and he named it after his wife
- The city was originally a military fortress but all of its water was supplied from underground aqueducts six miles away which left it vulnerable to attack.
- The water source was always lukewarm when it arrived by traveling the distance

- Roman control made for peace and Laodicea became a great commercial city with great wealth
- It was a great banking and financial center making it one of the wealthiest cities in the world at that time
- An earthquake devastated the city in 61 A.D. and the city had so much wealth it could rebuild itself without any help from the Roman government
- It was a medical center with medical schools famous for its ointment for the ears and eyes

- The name "*Laodikeia*" is a compound word from "*Laos*" ("people") and "*dike*" ("judgment," "rule" or "rights").
- "Its name designates it as the Church of mob rule, *the democratic Church*, in which everything is swayed and decided by popular opinion, clamour and voting; and hence a self-righteousness and self-sufficient Church."-Siess
- Laodicea . . . means "people ruling." This is set in contrast to God's ruling in the church. It is a church entirely ruled by men, for the Holy Spirit is not present and doing His ministry of guiding.-Fruchtenbaum

- This ushers in the period when God pulls back His reigns (2 Thess. 2:7)
- This represents the self satisfied church or the indifferent church
- Philadelphia is removed before the tribulation; Laodicea represents the apostate church out of which the Lord will call some individuals but the main stream has no concern for the true God
- It is the age of anarchy powered by the people

### **2 Timothy 4:3-4**

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."

Bath house Arches



Aqueducts



### **Revelation 3:14**

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

### **The Great Amen**

- This phrase comes from Isaiah 65:16:  
“Whoever asks for a blessing in the land will be blessed by the God of Truth (Amen). Whoever swears an oath in the land will swear by the God of Truth (Amen). Past troubles are forgotten. They are hidden from my eyes.”
- “Amen” is a word that is put at the end of a statement to guarantee its truth, certainty, and firmness
- Jesus is asserting Himself as the one Who's promises can be relied upon

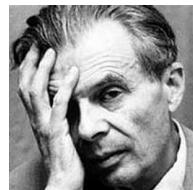
### **The Faithful And True Witness**

- But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and **faithfulness** the belt of His waist.”—Isaiah 11:4-5
- “O LORD, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, For You have done wonderful *things*; Your counsels of old are **faithfulness** and **truth**.”—Isaiah 25:1

### **“The Beginning of the creation of God”**

- This is indicating that Jesus is the source of all creation and was the cause of all creation itself
- An interesting address to an age that prides itself in **evolutionary theories**
- Do you prefer **speculation** or the **Revelation** from the one who actually did it?

**Aldous Huxley—“It is clear that the doctrine of evolution is directly antagonistic to that of creation....Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to believe in the bible.”**



### **What Does Creation Tell Us About The World?**

- "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."--Heb. 11:3
- "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible....All things were created by him and for him." --Col. 1:16

### **Jesus Was Involved In Creation**

**"In the beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." ---John 1:1

**"That which was from the beginning**, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life —

### **Jesus Brought Understanding**

- When Jesus came into the world He gave us the reason and understanding of our existence
- He brought real purpose and understanding for who we are and who we are created to be
- It is a different way of seeing the world and why we are here
- It is a world view based solely in the person Who is the “Faithful and True Witness”—Jesus Christ

## **The Certainty Of God's Witness**

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son." **1 John 5:9-10**

**"And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true;** and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."-- 1 John 5:20

"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom **we have redemption** through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.** For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him.** And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."-Col. 1:13-17

**Everything is here because of Jesus!**

## **Revelation 3:15-16**

"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."

### The Lukewarm Church

- The word in the original for “Cold” is “*psuchros*” which means “cold to the point of freezing”.
- The word in the original for “Hot” is “*zestos*” which means “hot to the point of boiling point”.
- Jesus wishes that they would be one or the other extreme but instead they are lukewarm
- The word in the original for “Lukewarm” is “*chliaros*” which means “nauseating”.
- Jesus is saying that the Laodicean church is distasteful and useless as a cup of bad water

### Inconsistency Of Conviction

- The people in Laodicea had become indifferent toward the things that God desires
- It is interesting that Jesus would rather have someone who is “cold” in their convictions.
- Lack of conviction is better to Jesus than indifference
- People need to make a clear choice one way or the other for God or against God.

### Joshua 24:15

“And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, **choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.””

### Zephaniah 1:4-6

**“I will stretch out My hand against** Judah, and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. I will cut off every trace of Baal from this place, the names of the idolatrous priests with the *pagan* priest. Those who worship the host of heaven on the housetops; those who worship and swear *oaths* by the LORD, but who *also* swear by Milcom; Those who have turned back from *following* the LORD, and have not sought the LORD, nor inquired of Him.”

### **Jesus Removes The Lukewarm**

- Jesus uses a graphic picture of vomit to describe what he is going to do to this lukewarm church
- He clarifies it by “out of My mouth”. This is where vomit comes from so why describe it this way?
- The Word of God judges and is the standard by which He rules the world.
- Again do you believe the Revelation that has been given to man in Scripture?

### **Revelation 19:11-15**

“I saw the heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it is called **Faithful and True**. In righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has names written and a name written which no one knows but he himself. He is clothed in a garment sprinkled with blood. **His name is called “The Word of God.”**

The armies which are in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in white, pure, fine linen. **Out of his mouth proceeds a sharp, double-edged sword, that with it he should strike the nations.** He will rule them with an iron rod. He treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty.”

### **Revelation 3:17**

“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.””

### **The Pride Of Indifference**

- The Laodicean church people were being influenced by the wealthy culture around them and had “become wealthy” themselves
- They claimed to be self-sufficient in “need of nothing”.
- Their pride blinded their eyes to the truth of their need for the Lord.
- The church in Smyrna was poor but Jesus counted them as rich. The church in Laodicea was rich but Jesus counted them as poor.

### **Wealth Is Not The Issue**

- The Lord is not criticizing the Laodiceans for being rich. He is criticizing them for boasting about it. “Because you say, “I am Rich, have become wealthy....”
- They had forgotten that the Lord is the giver of all good things.
- “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, **who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.** **1 Tim. 6:17**

### **Spiritual Blindness**

- Jesus told the Laodicean church that they didn’t know their true spiritual condition.
- **In their pride** they claimed that they had it all together and were in need of nothing.
- But in fact they were **wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.**
- There was a contrast between what they thought of themselves and what they really were
- There was a contrast between what they saw in their lives and what Jesus saw
- There was a contrast between their personal wealth and their spiritual bankruptcy

- "The Laodiceans are typical of the modern world, which revels in that which the natural eye can see but is untouched by the gospel and does not see beyond the veil of the material to the unseen and real eternal spiritual riches." (Walvoord)
- For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; He blesses the greedy and renounces the LORD. **The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.** His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; As for all his enemies, he sneers at them. He has said in his heart, “I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity.”-Psalm 10:3-6



## Proper View Of Ourselves

- "For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith." Romans 12:3
- "Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation." Romans 12:16

- "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus," Philippians 2:3-5
- "For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. "But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have *reason for* boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another." Galatians 6:3-4

- "Thus says the Lord, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23-24

### **Revelation 3:18**

“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.*”

### **Heavenly Counsel**

- Jesus could have commanded the Laodicean church to buy from Him but instead **He gently** advises them on what they should do.
- Come, let's consider your options,” says the Lord. “Though your sins have stained you like the color red, you can become white like snow; though they are as easy to see as the color scarlet, you can become white like wool.-Is. 1:18
- The change in the Laodiceans had to begin with understanding their spiritual poverty.

### **Buy From Me**

- How can a person “buy” from the Lord when all that comes from Him is through faith?
- “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, and your wages for *what does not* satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is* good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and **come to Me**. Hear, and your soul shall live...” Isaiah 55:1-3

### **What Is The Lord's Advise?**

- He tells them to buy gold that is refined by the fire.
- “....**your faith**, being much **more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire**, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ...”-1 Peter 1:7
- He tells them to buy white garments. The white garments are for clothing them in the righteousness of Jesus in order that their sin and shame would be covered. (Rev. 3:4-5;)

- He tells them to buy salve for their eyes that they would be able to see.
- Learn to value what the Lord values. Learn to see life as he sees it. Learn to care about the things that he cares about to become wise as he is wise so that we may see the world with the eyes of Christ rather than the wisdom of the world
- But as it is written, “Things which an eye didn’t see, and an ear didn’t hear, which didn’t enter into the heart of man, these God has prepared for those who love him.” But to us, God revealed them through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.-**1 Corinthians 2:9-10**

### **Revelation 3:19-20**

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

### **Love Of Jesus**

- God in His great love cannot leave even His wayward church silently to their own devices
- The word for love used here is “*phileo*” which is a brotherly love. It signifies a deep personal affection.
- Jesus is simply telling this church despite its terrible weakness and failure, “I love you, and it is because I love you deeply that I rebuke you and discipline you.”

### **Be Zealous**

- The word for “zealous” is the same root word as “hot” in verse 15.
- Be on fire enough for Christ that you value what He values and attempt to align your life with Him as His disciple.
- In an age of indifference the Lord is looking for those who are zealous for His word not just a church-goer but a God-chaser
- So many people today want Jesus on their own terms, but what does Jesus want from us?
- He wants people who strive, earnestly desire, and pursue Him with all their heart, soul mind and strength.

### **Who's Knocking?**

- The call is to the individual.
- If **anyone** hears and opens the door Jesus will come in and have supper with him.
- Unfortunately Jesus is on the outside asking to be invited back in.
- Stand is in the perfect tense and knock is in the present tense so it literally reads: "I stood continually knocking."
- He has been standing for a period of time and is *still* awaiting their response while continually knocking.

### **Blessed Communion**

- This is an invitation by Jesus to join Him in communion during the Millennium if the individual will open the door and let Him in.
- Jesus indicated that He would not partake of the Passover meal until he dines with believers in the Millennial Kingdom.
- He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I tell you, I will no longer by any means eat of it **until It is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.**"

### **Revelation 3:21**

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.

### **Seated On The Throne**

- This is an extension of the promise He made to His disciples
- "I confer on you a kingdom, even as my Father conferred on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom. You will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."-**Luke 22:29-30**

### **Dominion Yet To Come**

- One glorious day Jesus will claim His rightful position on His kingdom throne and reign from Jerusalem
- All things are not yet subjected to Jesus (Hebrews 2:8)
- And all creation groans for the revealing of the sons of God (Romans 8:18-22)
- During this age Jesus is seated on the right hand of His Father interceding for believers

### **The Last Mention Of The Church**

- The church is not mentioned again in the book of Revelation until chapter 22:16
- The grandest and crowning promise is placed at the end of all the seven addresses in order to form the link to the next part of the book where the Lamb is introduced seated on His Father's throne.
- Jesus is prepared in the book of Revelation and in time to claim David's everlasting throne and finish forever the redemption of this world and establish His kingdom.

### **Daniel 7:13-14**

"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom *the one* which shall not be destroyed."