

# *Lesson 10*

## **The Church of Laodicea - the Apostate Church**

### **Review**

Let's do a review of the things for which Christ commends and condemns each Church.

### **Ephesus**

Jesus commends those from the Church of Ephesus for their deeds, their toil, their perseverance, that they cannot tolerate evil men, that they put to the test those who call themselves apostles and they are not and they have found them to be false. Perseverance is used twice so this must have been a strong deed. He also commends them for their endurance for His Name's sake and for not growing weary. But He has this against them: they have been so busy doing, doing, doing, they have forgotten who their first love is. That first love is Jesus Christ who wants them much more than He wants their deeds.

### **Smyrna**

Jesus tells them that He knows their tribulation and their poverty. He knows they have endured the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, but are not. He has no condemnation for those of the congregation of the church in Smyrna. He knows that they will be martyred for their faith. He tells them to be faithful unto death and He promises to give them the crown of life and also keep them from the second death.

### **Pergamum**

Jesus knows where the Church of Pergamum dwells, in the same place as Satan's throne. He commends them for holding fast His name and not denying the faith. However, He has a few things against them. Some of them hold to the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitans, causing some to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.

### **Thyatira**

He tells the church of Thyatira that he knows their deeds, their love, their faith, their service, their perseverance, and that their deeds of late are greater than the deeds they did at first. However, they tolerate the woman in their church, who was a type of Jezebel of the Old Testament. Jezebel of the Old Testament was married to Ahab, king of the northern kingdom of Israel. Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbal, king of the Sidonians, and Ahab served and worshiped Jezebel's gods. This type of Jezebel in the Church of Thyatira, taught Christ's bondservants to go astray and eat things sacrificed to idols and commit acts of immorality.

### **Sardis**

Christ knew their deeds in Sardis, but He did not see their deeds completed in the sight of His God. The Church of Sardis took pride in being known as a church that was alive,

but Jesus called them a dead church. Jesus has no praise for this church. This church is representative of the church age when the Protestant Reformation occurred. What a shame that when salvation by faith not works had been righted, and applied to the faith correctly, those in this time frame did not finish the works that they had been given to do.

### **Philadelphia**

Philadelphia was known as the missionary church. Have you ever known missionaries who love their work and their calling and the people to whom they have been assigned? They risk it all, their careers, their marriages, their families, and sometimes even their lives. The Church of Philadelphia's was a pure faith, a complete devotion, all for the sake of bringing the Good News of the Gospel to those who had not yet heard. My friend Pam has that kind of devotion for the people group who live in the small African country of Benin. I love to hear her pray audibly. Her worship and praise, her concern for others, her love for all the saints, just elevates me into the presence of Christ. Her faith is pure, her heart clean, her devotion complete. When I grow up, I want to be like Pam. But, will I be willing to pay the price? And is that my calling? Will the Lord open up doors for me if that is where He wants me? The Lord Jesus knew the deeds of this Church in Philadelphia, and He had placed an open door for them in their missionary pursuits. Even if they had to endure persecution, that open door provided by persecution, historically, would cause the church to grow. No one could shut that door which Christ opened for this church. Christ had no condemnation for this church. Because this church had kept Christ's perseverance, He would keep them from the hour of testing which was coming upon the earth.

### **Laodicea**

We come to the final church of the seven churches of Revelation, the Church of Laodicea. In the title of this lesson, I have called the Church of Laodicea the Apostate Church. What does the word "apostate," mean and why would I use it to identify this church? The first question above can be answered rather easily, but the second question we will come back to after we have looked at the rest of this lesson.

The word, "apostate," can be used either as an adjective or a noun. Used as an adjective, the apostate church is a group of Believers who have renounced a religious or political belief or principle formerly held to as truth by this same group.<sup>53</sup> The Merriam Webster Dictionary online makes this word more specific to the individual "apostate," by saying "an apostate," is one whose beliefs have changed and who no longer belongs to a religious or political group.<sup>54</sup> We know from both of these definitions that we are going to be looking at a church in Revelation that has a member or has members who will be pulling away from the pure doctrine of the Gospel message to another teaching(s). This is similar to the churches of Pergamum and Ephesus, who fought the teachings of the Nicolaitans and of Balaam. However, theirs were outside influences trying to come into

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<sup>53</sup> Online dictionary, "Apostate"

<sup>54</sup> Merriam Webster Dictionary online, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apostate](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apostate), November 2016.

the churches. The threat to the Church of Laodicea was coming from a different source, from within the church. These threats were self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and how physically wealthy they believed themselves to be. The word Laodicea, actually means, the “people ruling,” as contrasted to God ruling the church. <sup>55</sup>Those who are or will be in the apostate church in history will see things as gradations of gray, not black and white. Sir William Ramsay calls Laodicea “the city of compromise.”

## History

When Alexander the Great died, he had no heirs. His four generals split up the territory he had conquered. Antiochus of the Seleucids was one of those four generals and he ruled Syria. One of the other generals, Lysimachus, originally ruled Asia including this city of Laodicea. However, Seleucid of Syria managed to take this city from Lysimachus.

Laodicea was 40 miles east and also inland from Ephesus. This city is located at the “Gate of Phrygia.” This gate was open to trade routes from the Oriental East. A major trade route from Ephesus to the East of Syria went through the city of Laodicea. The city lay in a spectacular valley. The city was named “Laodicea,” after Antiochus’ wife, Laodice. It was originally built to be a fortress although its water supply could be easily compromised by the enemy cutting it off from the water coming into the city from 2 miles away. The name, “Laodicea,” means “justice of the people” (the rule of the people vs. God).<sup>56</sup> Isn’t that interesting? There is a great Anatolian temple to the primitive Phrygian god, “Men Karou,” in between the Phrygian Mountains and Laodicea. There was a market place where there were all kinds of goods for sale or trade from all over the world. This temple was the very center of all things social, administrative, commerce, and religious. The people of Laodicea were of Greek culture and they were wealthy. During Roman times, the city was prosperous, probably because of the Pax Romana.

Laodicea had a medical school. Famous Phrygian “eye and ear salve,” was developed there and sent all over the world. It was made from an odd colored clay from the nearby hills where you can see the cities of Colosse and Hierapolis. Chemical analysis of the clay today reveals that there was nothing in the dirt that had any medicinal value. Laodicea was also a center of industry with extensive banking operations and a wool clothing industry. Zeus or Jupiter, was the main deity worshipped. However, there was no temple to Zeus in the city. The city had at least two Roman theaters and a large stadium. The city of Laodicea was eventually abandoned because of earthquake activity. The Laodiceans seemed to be a bit smarter than the Philadelphians, who insisted on staying in their city plagued by aftershocks. The ruins of Laodicea per se have not been

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<sup>55</sup> Arnold Fructenbaum, Manuscript 33: *The Seven Churches of Revelation*, (Ariel Ministries, 1983 and 2005), pp. 20.

<sup>56</sup> Chuck Missler, *Supplemental Notes: The Book of Revelation* (Koinonia House, Inc., 1995), p. 52.

excavated, but the ruins of three Christian churches have been unearthed there.<sup>57</sup>

There were two rivers that furnished water into the city of Laodicea. Cold waters came from Colosse and hot water came from the hot springs of Hierapolis. By the time the hot steamy water from Hierapolis got to Laodicea, it was at best lukewarm. The cold, cold water from Colosse picked up heat on its pathway down from the snow pack of the Phrygian Mountains and it, too, became lukewarm by the time it reached the city of Laodicea. Unfortunately, sulfur was also mixed into the water that came from Hierapolis (probably from the hot springs) that gave it an unpleasant smell and taste.

### **The Title used for Christ**

“And to the angel of the Church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:”

Where do you find this description for Christ in **Revelation 1**?

Revelation 1:5 “and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.”

Revelation 1:7 “Behold He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. **Amen.**”

How is the Messiah described in **Revelation 3:14**?

“The **Amen**, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this.”

The *Amen* used here is a title for Christ. This is the only place in the Bible where this word is used in this fashion. J. Vernon McGee says a reference to “Amen” in **Isaiah 65:16** should read, “the God of the **Amen**,” instead of “the God of truth.” This is how **2 Corinthians 1:20** reads in the KJV, “For all the promises of God in him are yea and in him **Amen**, unto the glory of God by us.” Who is the “**Amen**,” here?  
**Christ**

We have looked at the following verses before in conjunction with *Rishon Va-Acharon* and *Emet Elohim Emet*, but it will not hurt us to go through these again.

Deuteronomy 7:9-10 “Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments”

**Isaiah 44:6** “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of

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<sup>57</sup> J. Vernon McGee *Thru the Bible*, Volume 5, (Thru the Bible Radio, 1983), pp. 920-921.

hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.'”

**Isaiah 48:12** “Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.”

**Revelation 21:5,6** “And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” Then He said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the One who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.”

What does “*the Beginning of the Creation of God,*” mean in the letter to the Laodiceans? Does this verse imply that Jesus is a created being?

How do we know this does not refer to Jesus as a created being? See **John 1:1-5**. Record it below. Set these verses to memory this week. You will be glad that you have them in your memory when you meet those who do not believe that Jesus was, is, and always will be God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being, In His was life, and the life was the Light of Men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”

**Colossians 1:15-20** “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

**Colossians 2:9-10** “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority”

So, what does the “*Beginning of the Creation of God*” mean? Again, J. Vernon McGee says this, “‘The beginning of the creation of God’ means that Jesus is the Creator.”<sup>58</sup>

What does “*the faithful and true witness*” imply about the Lord Jesus Christ? Again, Dr. McGee says this, This, reveals that the Lord Jesus Christ alone is the One who will reveal all and tell all.”<sup>59</sup>

What is your source of truth every day? Do you find truth on the radio station you listen to on the way to your job? Do you find truth in the movies that you either go to on the big screen or watch on your own television? Do you find truth as you meander through

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<sup>58</sup> Thru the Bible with, J. Vernon McGee, Volume 5, p. 921, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee, 1983.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

your email every morning? Or how about truth from the latest updated news' stories on the Internet? How about from the pulpit? How about those science books your kids are reading or not reading while in High School? How about truth from Uncle Sam? Now, there is surely one for you. Write your thoughts below:

We probably do find some truth in all of these places. However, how do you know whether it is truth or error? This is what Jesus said:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life....” **John 14:6**, and what John said “we are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error...” **1 John 4:6** and what is our message that we hold up as our plumb line of Truth?

There is only One Truth who is the faithful and true witness today and also in the days of the apostasy.

### *Day 2-3* Commendation, Condemnation, Exhortation, the Overcomer

What is the commendation to the Church of Laodicea?

I don't believe there is commendation to the Church of Laodicea.

What is the difference between “I know your deeds,” for the churches of Ephesus, Thyatira, and Philadelphia, and the “I know your deeds,” for this church of Laodicea?

Both “I know your deeds” for the Church of Laodicea and the Church of Sardis are negative. He is not pleased with their deeds.

### **Condemnation**

Jesus' message to Laodicea was mostly critical.

Write **Revelation 3:15-16** below:

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot: I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.”

In spite of the city's wealth, the water quality was not good. There was no fresh water coming into the city. Jesus said that because they were neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm, He was going to spit them out of His mouth.

Do you sense an “attitude” in God's criticism of this Church as neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm?

Oh, yes. The Laodiceans thought they were rich, wealthy, had need of nothing, and totally dependent on themselves, Remember, the Church of Sardis was known as the

church who was alive, but He called them a dead church.

Wealth, health, and being good at business comes with self-reliance. Were these the reasons they were lukewarm? There was plenty of opportunity for the Christians in the church of Laodicea to have one foot in God's camp and one foot in the other pagan gods' camps? Or were they sitting on the fence? God was calling them to make a decision. "You say 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have no need of anything,'" and you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. (3:17) Were they not rich, did they not have doctors to prescribe eye salve, and did they not have woolen clothes to wear? Things are not always as they appear to be.

There is a barrier to seeing the real truth when we make the assumption that we already have the real truth.

What do you think God meant when He said He would rather have them "cold?" What do you think a "cold," church would look like? **a church that was not eager to welcome people, one where arguments start over minor issues like the color of the carpeting.**

What do you think God meant when He said He would rather have them "hot?" Give an example of one of the seven churches of Revelation that is "hot." That they would "be on fire for the LORD." **The Church of Philadelphia, and the Church of Smyrna.**

What attracts you to a certain church? What are your criteria for worshiping at one church over another? My main reason for going to a church has always been, does the church explain the Gospel message often and offer people the opportunity to receive Christ? Secondly, I look at their discipleship program, and thirdly, I look at the main pastor's stance on Israel. When my kids were young and in the care of youth pastors, my understanding of where these pastors stood on the above issues was critical. Both of my children were very leery of a youth pastor's friend who came to speak to their youth group who preached that they only had to ask forgiveness for their sins from God one time when they accepted Christ. They never had to do it again. The guy was not invited back to speak to them again, probably because my kids spoke up being very aware that the visitor was not speaking "Truth."

### **Instructions and Warnings**

The exhortation to the Laodicean church is found in Revelation 3:18-20. What is this exhortation a call, too? Go with your gut feeling on this one.

I believe this exhortation to the Laodicean church is a call to salvation. Yes, there are many today who sit in the church pews every Sunday who do not know the Lord as Savior nor as Lord. I grew up in the Brethren church. The Brethren Church merged with the Methodist Church before I was out of high school. They became known as the United Methodist Church. The men and women of the church my parents went to and I went to during my time under my parents' roof, were all university professors, smug, sure of themselves and their teachings. The head of my parents Sunday school class was

at best a Deist. Do you know what a Deist is?

Deism in Wikipedia:

“Deism gained prominence among intellectuals during the Age of Enlightenment – especially in Britain, France, Germany and the United States – who, raised as Christians, believed in one God but became disenchanted with organized religion and notions such as the Trinity, Biblical inerrancy and the supernatural interpretation of events such as miracles...”

I made certain both of my parents knew Him before they passed from this earth. I actually think my mom knew Him as a young girl, but her faith shifted after World War II and marriage and working in the wonderful world of science. My dad was 87 before he knelt down at the side of his bed and asked Jesus to be his Savior. There was a confirmation of his decision during his last three weeks of life.

Back to the exhortation in **Revelation 3:18-20**

What does The Messiah encourage the Church of Laodicea to seek?

God calls the Laodiceans spiritually naked. What are they urged to seek from God? What do these white garments represent? Righteousness.

What do you find out about those who were clothed in these white garments according to **Revelation 3:4-5**? They will walk with Him in white, for they are worthy. Those that overcome will be clothed in white garments, also. God will not erase the one who has overcome from the book of life, and Jesus will confess his name before His Father and before His angels.

Look ahead to **Revelation 6:11**. How do you see these garments? These were the garments of those who had been martyred on the earth for Christ’s sake.

What color are the garments in **Revelation 7:9, 13-14**?

Why are the garments above white? These are the ones who came out of the GT and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God.

Could the problem be that the Laodicean church is blind and naked? Does this church lack salvation?

This church is urged to use the Messiah’s eye salve so that they can begin to see spiritually and to buy gold from Him that has been refined by fire, so that they might be truly rich.

## **The Overcomer**

What is the promise to the overcomer in Revelation 3:21-22? He who overcomes, Jesus will grant to him to sit down with Him on His throne, as He also overcame and sat down with His Father on His throne.

Look, at the following verses and comment on them below.

**2 John 7-11** “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not give him a greeting: for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.”

**Galatians 1:8-9** “But even if we or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!”

**2 Timothy 3:5** “...holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.”

**2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1** “Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, “I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord, “and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you, And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” says the Lord Almighty. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Please look at this passage of Scripture as the church worshipping, not necessarily as marriage, although it can be both.

## *Day 4* **The Church of Laodicea - the Apostate Church**

In day one I asked you why I would identify the Apostate Church with this particular church in Laodicea. Dr. Fructenbaum says that apostasy is “the departure from the truth that one professed to have.” He goes on to say that this does not mean that those who are

apostate ever did have the truth.<sup>60</sup> In my own dealings with people who have left mainstream Christianity for a cult or the occult, they have been lured away by a charismatic leader who possesses some bit of “Christian” truth. Once those who start down this pathway are hurled headlong into the cult, it’s almost impossible to get them away from the cult ever again. A former colleague of mine went after his two children who had been lured into the Moonies. Remember them? He took them with him after a shoot-out at the Moonies’ compound. I can think of a certain dietician with a popular weight loss program in the churches across America, who had a “bit of the truth.” When she posted on her website that she did not believe that Jesus was God, many of the churches closed her off, but some of those who knew her program worked for losing weight joined her following, which later became her own splinter church cult off of mainline Christianity. One thing for sure, if a group of people do not preach Christ crucified and Christ, an equal part of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), that He is God, and has always been God, and always will be God, then you can know they are a cult. This is what Dr. Fructenbaum says about the apostasy teachings.<sup>61</sup>

“The content of apostate teaching involves the denial of the Person and work of Yeshua, the Messiah.” See **1 John 2:22-23**. Write this passage down and don’t forget it. Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”

“Secondly, **1 John 4:2-3** comments on the denial of the incarnation.”

“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming and now it is already in the world.

“Thirdly, the denial of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of the Messiah is the concern of **2 Peter 3:3-4**.” Please read the following two passages and record your insight(s) in the space provided.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4**

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of Lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

## **1 Timothy 4:1**

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<sup>60</sup> Arnold Fructenbaum, Manuscript 33: *The Seven Churches of Revelation*, (Ariel Ministries, 1983 and 2005), pp. 21-23

<sup>61</sup> Arnold Fructenbaum, Manuscript 33: *The Seven Churches of Revelation*, (Ariel Ministries, 1983 and 2005), pp. 22-23

But the Spirit explicitly says that in the later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons...

In the above two addresses, we see that an apostasy will occur in “the day of the Lord.” “The day of the Lord,” is symbolic of the latter days. You saw this term used in the above passage of Scripture in **2 Peter 3:3-4**. It was used as predictive of the end times’ scenario all through the Old Testament. We also have clear prediction of the apostasy of the church in the latter days in the New Testament as well. In the above **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4** reference, we see the “day of the Lord,” used to mean the Tribulation period. What has to occur before the Tribulation can begin according to these verses?

1. the apostasy or the falling away will come first
2. The man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction

The Church of Laodicea is a picture of the church in “the day of the Lord,” or the latter times.

In the **1 Timothy 4:2** passage, of what do these seducing spirits speak? “by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

They preach a system of doctrine. Whose doctrine? The doctrine of demons.

How do these spirits speak lies? By means of the hypocrisy of liars

In **1 Timothy 4:3**, how do these lies or the doctrine of demons play out? What are the demons forbidding and advocating?

Forbidding marriage and advocating to abstain from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth

This next passage of Scripture is quite lengthy, but please don’t skip it. As you are looking at this Scripture, answer the following questions:

**2 Peter 2:1-22** “But false prophets also arose among the people just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.”

Many will follow their sensuality. they will exploit you with false words.”

“The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment...”

Do you see anything significant in this passage of Scripture that is like our culture today? Please elaborate.

When I see the Biden administration so set on abortion and encouraging women to abort their babies, I just see evil.

In Peter's sermon, do you notice any tolerance toward apostasy? How should we view tolerance? What does the apostasy say in our day about tolerance? What does the apostasy say in our day about Christians? They are too narrow minded. They are not tolerant of the "rights" of others, and therefore they have branded us hypocrites, unloving, anti-woke.

How should we show this (intolerance) to the apostasy or what should we (this) look like to the apostate? These are all valid and certainly timely questions that we need to ask of ourselves, and other Believers. Firstly, we must show our love to our God and also to each other who are in the faith by word and deed. We should be resolute to live as Christ has shown us to live. We should be waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord JC to eternal life. We are to have mercy on some, who are just doubting. We are to continue with our evangelizing, saving some others, snatching them out of the fire, we are to contend earnestly for the faith. Basically, we are to keep on keeping on.

Please read the tiny book of Jude versus 17-19. This Book of Jude is located right in front of the Book of Revelation in your Bible.

What will the apostates be doing in the "last time?" But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, 'In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.' These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

I have in my Bible the theme of Jude as being: Instructions on how to build up the church and recognizing the ungodly. Please read the entire one chapter of the Book of Jude and answer the questions below:

From the book of Jude, can you give me a comprehensive description of "the ungodly?" They creep in unnoticed, they are ungodly, they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay, they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. They, defile the flesh, and reject authority and revile angelic majesties. They revile the things which they do not understand. They are destroyed by the things that they do understand by instinct. They will sit down with you for a meal, They, are doubly dead. The black darkness has been reserved for them forever. These are the grumblers, those who find fault following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, and they speak as to flatter people for the sake of gaining an advantage. They will mock you, cause divisions, follow their own lusts. They are devoid of the Spirit.

What are Jude's instructions for the Beloved? Build yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord JC to eternal life. And have mercy on some who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

What are God's promises to the Beloved in the Book of Jude? He is able to keep you

from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.

What are the deeds done by the apostates in Jude 17-19 during “the last time?” I am looking for you to find two deeds.

1. They will cause division

What are the fundamentals of the faith? Keep yourselves in the love of God, praying in the HS, being built up, waiting anxiously for His return.

What are the fundamentals of the faith written down for us in the Apostle’s Creed? If you do not know or you have never experienced reciting the Apostles Creed, then “google” ‘Apostle’s Creed,’ on the Internet. I did just “google” ‘Apostle’s Creed,’ and this is what I found. This is terribly upsetting. I found the Apostle’s Creed for the traditional, Anglican, the Catholic, the Methodist, the Lutheran, the Christian Reformed, and the Presbyterian on just the first 13 of 1,430,000 hits. Does this give you an idea that we are truly in the days of the apostate church?

I have noticed that many of the individual churches of mainstream denominations are pulling away from the denominations, legally taking themselves out of the denomination in order to secure their investments in their buildings in case of default on property loans, and renaming their churches with a Community Church attachment, i.e., the church I came from in Aurora, CO, has gone from New Life Evangelical Free church to New Life Community Church. When my family first attended Crossroads, it was not called Crossroads Community Church; it was called Parker First Baptist. In fact, the congregation voted on the move to rename the church the first Sunday in 1988 we attended. I remember my husband saying, “I’m not sure I want to attend a “Baptist” church again,” as we drove up and parked. He saw the renaming as a sign, very Pentecostal of him! This, pulling away from the mainstream denominations in and of itself, is not necessarily a bad thing; however, it is definitely a sign of division and it can take a definite dive away from the true Gospel if not checked.

Let me get back to the Apostles’ Creed: I believe this is the closest I will come to the traditional Apostles’ Creed from the Book of Common Prayer in the year 1662.

I believe in God the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth:  
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,  
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
Born of the Virgin Mary,  
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
Was crucified, dead, and buried:  
He descended into hell;  
The third day he rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven,

And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;  
The holy Catholic Church;  
The Communion of Saints;  
The Forgiveness of sins;  
The Resurrection of the body,  
And the Life everlasting. Amen.

Remember I am looking for 2 deeds here that characterize the Apostate church during the last days according to the book of Jude 17-19. The second one is below:

## 2. They will mock

Because of the above mocking of the fundamentals of the faith, those who do such deeds will convince some but not others causing divisions. How many denominations are there today? This is what came up first when I “googled” “number of denominations in Christianity.” “‘Denomination’ is defined as ‘an organized Christian group within a country.’ The Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary estimated **34,000 denominations** in 2000, rising to an estimated 43,000 in 2012. These numbers have exploded from 1,600 in the year 1900.” How many of these divisions have occurred because the “apostate church” has denied such important and crucial doctrines of the faith, like the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Second Coming of Christ?

So why do you think the present day church is considered apostate? Why would I use the term apostate to identify this church? Have these 43,000+ splits resulted in the furtherance of the True Gospel? Or, have we allowed our differences to result in actually going further away from the fundamentals of the faith? Let’s get back to the important fundamentals of the faith that are written in the original Apostle’s Creed.

## *Day 5* Review of the 7 Churches of Revelation

This is our last study day together until next time when we will look at Heaven in Revelation 4 and 5. It has been wonderful spending time with all of you and time in our Savior’s written Word. Remember what the difference between the written Word and the incarnate Word is? We have been given the written Word to shed light on our relationship with the Incarnate Word that is the Lord Jesus Himself. He cares for us so much. I hope during these Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons, you will think back on our past 11 weeks together and will remember what we have learned about our Great and Awesome God who would send His Only Son to this earth in the form of a human baby to grow up as a man and to be our Redeemer from the penalty, the power, and the

presence of sin. He is our *Ga'el*, our Kinsman Redeemer. No one else could have paid for our sins, but He could, and He did. He loves you. He cares for you. He will accept you into His presence and you will be washed clean because His Son's blood was shed on the cross for you. You! My friends! Me, too! Hallelujah!!!

This last day is going to be very different from the way we have been studying so far. What I would like you to do is to write out in entirety Revelation 2 and 3 in their respective corresponding churches. When you have done so, I want you to write the most important thing you have learned about studying the different churches. If you cannot bring this to mind for one or more of them, go back and reread the corresponding lessons.

**The Church of Ephesus- Lesson 4** To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place – unless you repent. Yet this you do 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 grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

The most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Ephesus is to make sure I have that relationship with Him and spend time with Him in prayer and Scripture reading. I do need to toil and persevere and not tolerate evil men, put to the test (discern) those who call themselves apostles as to whether or not they are apostles. I do need to persevere and endure for His sake, and not grow weary, but I must keep the main thing, the main thing, and that is, I must have that relationship with Him.

**The Church of Smyrna- Lesson 5** And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: the first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for 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 will not be hurt by the second death.'

The most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Smyrna? When and if I have to be an overcomer like the church of Smyrna, it will not be me who overcomes, but it will be His Spirit who will overcome thru me.

**The Church of Pergamum- Lesson 6** And to the angel of the church in Pergamum

write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: ‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is: and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. So, you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.’

The most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Pergamum. The Nicolaitans gave themselves over to sensuality with the explanation that such sins did not touch the Spirit. I must be on guard for this teaching still remains. I must be ready to refute this teaching as I come upon it.

**The Church of Thyatira- Lesson 7** And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: ‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. But I have this against you that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, and she doesn’t want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them – I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless, what you have, hold fast until I come. He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority 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 most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Thyatira. To be aware and runaway when Satan tempts me in either physical or spiritual immorality.

**The Church of Sardis- Lesson 8** To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. So, remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore, if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know

at what hour I will come to you. But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and 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.

The most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Sardis. Even though the church of Sardis is supposed to represent the Protestant Reformation, there are those in the Protestant church who are completing the deeds given to them. When I committed my life to teaching back in 1996, God gave me this verse: Colossians 4:17 “Say to Archippus, see that you fulfill the ministry which you have received in the LORD.”

**The Church of Philadelphia- Lesson 9** And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie-I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and 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 My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

The most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Philadelphia. Those that bow down and know that the Lord has loved the Church of Philadelphia are the ones who became Believers in Christ from the Synagogue of Satan because of the open door.

**The Church of Laodicea- Lesson 10** To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed: and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; 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 will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The most important thing I have learned from studying the Church of Laodicea. I must never become complacent. I must keep on keeping on no matter what.

This is the last verse of the Sabbath Prayer lyrics from Fiddler on the Roof, the Broadway musical. I think it is fitting until we see each other again:

“May the Lord protect and defend you.  
May the Lord preserve you from pain.  
Favor them, Oh Lord, with happiness and peace.  
Oh, hear our Sabbath prayer. Amen.”<sup>62</sup>

Peggy Grinstead  
11/5/2024

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<sup>62</sup> Music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, book by Joseph Stein,  
<https://www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/fiddlerontheroof/sabbathprayer.htm>