

The *Contender*

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The Candle Was Lit



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Turn with me to Revelation 2 where we shall endeavor to teach a subject concerning a certain influential church called Ephesus, which was founded in the first Gentile age on Paul's third missionary journey. Here it was that God lit Himself a spiritual candle which shined throughout all Asia for three years. However, by the time this church (at Ephesus) was forty years old God has sternly

rebuked it and threatened to remove its candle!

Our study will cover this great influential church at Ephesus of which God chose to name the first age of Ephesus displayed to the gentile world, especially throughout Asia, its beauty of spirituality, morality and character, her revelatory capacity, love and unity as it displayed the grace of God within their lives. And we see its location in Asia Minor will explain why God chose such a city to beam out His powerful revelation of truth from the mouth of His chosen Apostle, the apostle to the gentiles, unto all Asia. Thus founding the most important church in the first church age only to have received a severe rebuke forty years later and a warning if they did not repent their very CANDLE FROM WHICH THE LIGHT HAD GONE FORTH AND INFLUENCED ALL ASIA IN THE TRUE REVELATION OF CHRIST WOULD BE REMOVED. (Revelation 2:5)

EPHESUS became so great it shook the very foundation of the religion worshipping the goddess Diana, whose headquarters was at Ephesus, as people everywhere were being converted to the true way of life, turning from paganism. God even wrought special

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miracles from that place by the hands of Paul, the like of which he never did in any other place throughout all gentile churches. In this article we shall learn the sad reality that for God's purpose, the usefulness of any outstanding church is approximately forty years, and we shall see how it applies to our own age as well.

OUR GENERATION AND ITS USEFULNESS

Therefore, after some forty years the Lord Jesus is demanding repentance from this great church and says if they do not repent He will remove their candlestick out of its place! As already stated, forty years appears from scripture to be the life span of usefulness to God in His true original program and purpose within a local church! Forty years also seems to get the usefulness of a man as well as a church irregardless to how long either may exist. His great drive seems to burn out in those first forty years of service, the same is true with a church!

ONLY 40 YEARS

Revelation 2:1-6, as we see this church some forty years after its birth as Christ returns to earth (on the Isle of Patmos) and instructs His only original apostle still living to write a letter to this Ephesian Church, which He has chosen to use as a model and the characteristics found within that church during those early hours signifies and displays the qualities found in the gentile churches during the first age!

JOHN ON PATMOS

Banished to the Isle of Patmos (for the testimony he held) only a short distance off the coast of Ephesus, John had been exiled to this barren, snake infested island in the year 95 A.D. when the church to whom he is

writing called Ephesus is now forty years old and is no longer the great spiritual, dynamic, Holy Ghost led church it was in its originality under Paul's ministry! Here is an urgent message to Ephesus from the Lord Himself to repent of what they were doing there which also was affecting all the other gentile churches in the same revelation! I WANT YOU TO GET THIS, Ephesus was the kind of church which was so influential upon all other churches within the true message that the other churches were greatly swayed and followed closely in whatever example Ephesus set before them (such as, what had only been a deed of action in Ephesus, because of their influence that same thing had already by 95 A.D. become a doctrine over in Pergamos. (Revelation 2:15)

LETTER FROM DISAPPOINTED GOD

We want to read this short letter which is straight to the point, and written by a disappointed God to Ephesus, who is now some 40 years old and is the very church He was chosen to exemplify the spirit of the first age, seeing that He also named this first age after this church. (1) "Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus write these things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: (2) I know thy works, and thy labor and thy patience." These three words carry great weight as to what Ephesus has gone through during her forty years, as we shall later see. "And how thou canst not bear them that are evil: and hast tried them who say they are apostles, and are not, and hath found them liars. (3) And hath borne, and hath patience, and hath not fainted. (4) Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thy hast left thy first love! (5) Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works over; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will

remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thy repent.”

From this statement you can see why we have entitled our message, **THE CANDLE WAS LIT!** Where? **AT EPHEBUS!** However, we want to discover what happened to this candle of revelation which was lit at Ephesus some forty years prior, who is now being told to repent and do their first works over. What were their first works? Who had tampered with this revealed light which was so influential upon all the other churches that whatever Ephesus did, caused the other churches in the message to follow? For instance, when Ephesus blazed with glory and was so Holy Ghost led it caused an influence upon the other churches of that truth to do likewise. When it did something unwise it caused others to stumble! **WHY?** Because at Ephesus the messenger of the first church age ministered and pastored here, and as already stated what eventually happened at Ephesus, which at first was nothing more than a deed or action had shortly become a doctrine within the church at Pergamos a short distance away who followed the influence of Ephesus, as did all the local churches of Asia and Europe. Somewhere something happened at Ephesus that affected that great spiritual light in its original power and effectiveness, hence causing another condition to not only begin there, but also develop within the other churches among the gentiles, and we shall see later what that condition was! After forty years Ephesus' testimony is not as influential in pushing the mainstream of God's purpose for her, as it was when her revival fires burned brightly. And if this church is getting such a severe rebuke from the Lord it is important we discover why He is so displeased with His **MODEL GENTILE CHURCH**, which is still affecting the worship and leadership of the Spirit within the other churches influenced by her action!

Continued on we read, (6) “And this thou hast, (there in Ephesus) that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes which I also hate. (7) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Now remember this letter is being written unto the guilty church. Before you can apply any of this letter to the age itself, it must first be applied to Ephesus, the guilty church). We will also learn, by the grace of God, what it was she was guilty of because if the same thing happens to us who at the end of the age have now returned to the true original faith once delivered unto the saints, then we also are in trouble! “He that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” The reward for overcoming what hinders this church and all other assemblies will be Eternal Life (especially for those within the first age)! Therefore, whatever condition arose in Ephesus could easily be a matter of life or death, could it not?

THE NICOLAITANE SPIRIT

We have heard much concerning what Nicolaitanes are which is first spoken of in the church of Ephesus. Biblical scholars and historians of whom you read, all seem to agree with Nicolaitanes mentioned in Revelation 2:6, which the Lord saw in the Ephesus Church and furthermore saw was prevailing their influence over, not only that church, but the other churches of the message as well for even before 95 A.D. was not actually an individual group of people in Ephesus called by that name, Nicolaitanes, instead they teach it was a spirit which was being harbored by some there at Ephesus in that influential church, and their influence was beginning to create quite a problem throughout all the latter part of the first age! Let me say, this Nicolaitane spirit is blocking and hindering the definite move of the Holy Ghost in his leadership among his people in the congregation of the churches, and I want

to emphasize something, I have yet to read one scholar or historian who has ever stated what promoted or what caused this spirit to take hold and ever gain foothold at Ephesus and their influence in turn caused other churches to take the same step or action inasmuch that Christ himself stated Pergamos had made a doctrine out of this thing and was teaching as a doctrine the thing Ephesus was doing which to them was only a deed or action taken on the part of the ministry.

Yes, the scripture gives enough clues we can easily determine what happened that caused a Holy Ghost led church with an open fellowship such as Ephesus, to suddenly change from one mode of worship into something else which became known by the Lord himself as Nicolaitane deeds, which He said He hated, and furthermore the true saints in that congregation also hated!

I want to re-emphasize that this spirit which God hated ruling over His people in 95 A.D. was not present and could by no means ever be present in Paul's day, nor was it present in 64 A.D., when Paul wrote his beautiful letter to the model church of that first age called Ephesus. Whatever transpired causing that spirit to show itself happened after Paul died, and later we shall read in Acts 20, when Paul gave his final address to the Ephesian elders, whom he was leaving in charge of the work at Ephesus, that this thing was going to come!

In order to understand more clearly what this FIRST WORKS of this church were to which they are commanded to return or else He will come and remove their candlestick, we must go back more than forty years to study what led to the founding of this great church.

PART 2 - PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO

EPHESUS Time is drawing near once again for another Jewish feast in Jerusalem and

Paul wanted to be present. No doubt it gave him great opportunity to witness to many Jews. Therefore, we note Paul leaving Corinth after having ministered 1½ years and takes with him Aquilla and Priscilla, crosses the Dardanelles Straits and comes directly into the capitol city of Asia Minor, the very headquarters of the Diana religion. Perhaps as no other city in Asia Minor this was the most influential. What was its name? EPHESUS! It is Paul's first visit to Ephesus. On this missionary journey there will be no church founded however, as usual when Paul arrived in this beautiful, gentile city steeped in idolatry, where does he go first, straight to the local Jewish synagogue and is permitted to bear testimony of his wonderful, glorious revelation of Jesus Christ; not giving them too much during the first visit, nevertheless it has been enough to excite the curiosity of the Jews as they flock around him desiring that he stay and tell them more of this wonderful story. To this he explained he could not because he had to be at Jerusalem in time for the feast, nevertheless he promised faithfully he would return to Ephesus as he had been extended a hearty invitation by the Jews to return. Note, he does not take Aquilla and Priscilla with him to Jerusalem, instead, leaves them at Ephesus and journeys on alone.

WHY PAUL WENT TO JEW FIRST

Here is something interesting, have you ever noticed or wondered why in each gentile city between Acts 13 and Acts 19 Paul would always seek out the Jew first? Yes, beloved, within each gentile city Paul visited scattered throughout the Roman Empire there was always found a Jewish colony. The history or origination of Jewish colonies in gentile territory can reach as far back as 600 B.C. in the Babylonian dispersion. Jewish synagogues were established in each town,

however, for the main seven feasts of which all Israel observed, the Jews would always go to Jerusalem to the temple. If Paul was an apostle to the gentiles, as he most certainly was, why did he continually seek out the Jew first? There are two main reasons.

BRIDGING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

(1) The gospel was to go to the Jew first, (2) The Jew of that certain locality who had been reared in that area, knowing the customs and traditions and the tongue of these gentiles - these converted Jews could bridge the gap for the Apostle Paul to work his way into the heart or main flow of the gentile society in that area! As these Jews all spoke the original mother tongue, Hebrew, which Paul also spoke, they also were familiar with the language of the gentiles of their particular locality. Thus, God had bridged the language gap or barrier of all gentiles by permitting these Jewish colonies to be located in each of these cities, even long before he was ready to send his Jewish Apostle among the gentiles to preach the gospel in their language!

GENTILE LANGUAGES AND HEBREW BOTH AT PENTECOST

In Acts 2, we see how both the Hebrew and the national tongues wherein those Jews who visited Pentecost when the Holy Ghost came into the life of the believer played such an important role. The Jews from various nationalities who were visiting Jerusalem on this particular feast day testified how they had heard the praises of God coming from these Jewish Galileans in the tongue in which they were born! Acts 2 shows some 16 nationalities on the day of Pentecost. However, when Peter personally addressed all these Jews present, he spoke in the old mother tongue, Hebrew, the language in

which all Jews regardless to which country they were from were familiar with.

CLEARING UP TONGUE CONFUSION

Therefore, I would like to clear up something that has been taught denominational circles - that the tongues in apostolic days were inspired languages in which these Jewish missionaries would speak under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit while they witnessed in these foreign countries! Furthermore, they say tongues ceased after the evangelism of the early church throughout the Roman Empire. To this teaching after the empire was evangelized in the first century, there was no more need for these tongues. However, this is not the purpose of the unknown tongue or language spoken of by Paul to the Corinthians which it appears many of them did speak. These are not tongues in which God permitted missionaries to speak while in foreign countries. The only time you find such a setting and this time was to preach the gospel, but to catch the attention of the Jew at Pentecost when God permitted those believers there to be speaking in some 16 foreign languages. Therefore, the tongues spoken there according to the Jews were their own native tongue wherein they were born and this is what aroused the interest of the Jews of these nations who were visiting Pentecost. However, when Peter preached the sermon, he spoke in the old mother tongue, Hebrew, which all Jews everywhere understand. No, tongues were not given for the purpose of evangelism in foreign countries, because as already stated, whenever Paul visited in each city he first visited the Jewish synagogue where after some Jews were converted through these contacts he was able to venture into the flow of the gentile society of whatever area he was in because it was these converted Jews who

could speak these different dialects and were a great assistant to Paul. In short, by placing these Jewish colonies throughout the world of that day, God had already bridged the language barrier of that hour when the hour arrived He would send his Jewish apostle throughout the gentile nations of Asia and Europe to preach the gospel of Christ in their own language.

UNLOCKING THE CHURCH **AGE**

Watch closely the events now coming up surrounding Ephesus and the birth of the church which had great influence throughout the gentile church world for no less than 8 years. Aquilla and Priscilla, having been left in the city of Ephesus with these hungry Jews while Paul journeyed on to Jerusalem, did not seize the opportunity of doing a great deal of witnessing in this most susceptible field! There is definitely a reason why! Watch these events unfold as we near the birth of the church at Ephesus.

ONE ACT OF WITNESSING

Meanwhile, an eloquent speaker and lawyer named Apollos, had somewhere in the past come in contact with the revelation of Jesus Christ as had been taught by John the Baptist some years prior. John, you recall, came in the spirit and power of Elijah to forerun Christ's first coming, baptized disciples telling them to believe on him who should come after him - that is on Christ Jesus. Apollos had come to this Jewish synagogue at Ephesus where Aquilla and Priscilla had an opportunity to hear him speak. He was powerful in the scriptures as far as his revelation had led him and he was more than faithful with what revelation he had, convincing the Jew that Christ was the Lord God in the flesh. Some of these Jews believed in his teaching as far as he was able to teach

them, however, Aquilla and Priscilla, having been with Paul 1½ years or more, knew Apollos' revelation was not up to date as Paul taught it. Note what they did! They were not like people of today, by no means. Aquilla and Priscilla took only Apollos aside (not his converts) and explained to him the way of God more perfectly (Acts 18:26). No they never did touch his converts; they never explained one thing to them! Out side this one act there is not one mention of anything these two did, yet truly there was a great opportunity in this area though Aquilla and Priscilla never touched it! Bringing Apollos' revelation up to date, which would include the true name of Jesus, water baptism and receiving the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, Acts 2:38 was all they did, they in turn sent letters of recommendation by Apollos over to Corinth where Paul had converts and had pastored there for 1½ years. Apollos leaves and goes to Corinth where evidently from the letter Paul wrote later to the church at Corinth Apollos was very successful in his ministry there, (I Corinthians 3:4-8). Aquilla and Priscilla apparently discussed this revelation with no others, instead waited for the return to Paul to teach the revelation to those hungry Jews.

EPHESUS LEFT STRICTLY TO **PAUL'S MINISTRY**

We are now approaching Chapter 19 of Acts, the most important chapter of our study where we see Paul's first convert in Ephesus which shall lead into one of the greatest influential churches in all Asia. Paul returns from the feast at Jerusalem, Acts 19:1, "And it came to pass while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coast of Asia Minor came down to Ephesus." Paul is now back in Ephesus, but not at the Jewish synagogue, and I want you to watch every minute detail in this chapter for some of the most important developments as we shall

now see some of the works unto which this church in 95 A.D. was commanded to return to in that first love. "Finding certain disciples.." (Whose disciples were they, not Paul's, he didn't have any new disciples in Ephesus). These men no doubt have fallen under Apollos' influence . Although they were (Apollos') disciples they will make a statement which proves Aquilla and Priscilla had not been witnessing to the Jews about this revelation, for these twelve say to Paul they had not so much as heard where there be a Holy Ghost! Apollos did not know that either until he met Aquilla and Priscilla. This shows the Holy Ghost would not permit Apollos to remain in Ephesus to preach the true way, because as you shall see, Paul must be the founder of this special work!

PAUL'S FIRST CONVERT

Knowing they were believers or disciples he asked under what were they baptized and they replied, "Unto John's baptism". Note, Paul knew all about John's ministry. You see, the prophet John, even though he was the forerunner for the first coming of Christ, coming in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) was not continually preached upon throughout the early church. You can be assured that early church knew the role and ministry which John had played in the scriptures! Imagine Paul saying to those men after being told they were baptized unto John, WHO IS JOHN, I NEVER HEARD OF HIM!! No, beloved, Paul knew exactly John's position in the scripture and he recognized that position although John was recognized in no more than he was called to do - ANNOUNCE THE FIRST COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Remember, we are approaching the birth of the Ephesus Church which is in approximately 54 A.D., and it is in this period God is opening up what He calls the first gentile dispensation or age called Ephesus,

and furthermore it is these twelve men who are Paul's first converts in Ephesus that constitutes the birth of the church! Therefore, the Ephesus Church Age has opened with this church at Ephesus being in the center spotlight!

Reading Acts 19:4, we are told Paul explained to these twelve men John had truly baptized with water, declaring to all his disciples they should believe on him that should come after him, that is on Jesus Christ. Watch these events as they unfold as they are most important seeing the church come into its infancy. We are now about to witness something pertaining to the Holy Ghost which is only recorded three times in scripture!

GENTILES TO HAVE SAME HOLY GHOST POWER

God is preparing to unlock something pertaining to this thing of how people say you must receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost in a certain special way, watch this closely! Out of all the churches Paul has founded, whether it be Corinth, Thessalonica, churches in Derbe, Lystra or throughout Asia or Europe, not one of them expressed how a single disciple received the baptism of the Holy Ghost or what experience they went through! However, here in Chapter 19, Paul comes straight into Ephesus, meets twelve disciples and the first thing he asks is about the Holy Ghost. And notice, we are told how they received the Holy Ghost. There is definitely a reason it had to be in this manner because it is with this church God is officially doing something for the third time, opening His gentile dispensational church period in its first stage and the church will pass through seven stages before the end, according to Revelation 2 and 3. Here is the initial opening of the gentile church age as twelve men receive Christ in His fulness and become the

first twelve candidates of the new church at Ephesus! The official opening of this church can not be just any old way, it must be exactly according to the true pattern, else how could it ever be the model and influential church that shall rise to such prominence under the ministry of the Apostle Paul within the next three years that all Asia and the gentile church world shall be influenced by it. No wonder Christ demands this church to repent and return to its first works in 95 A.D. It is because of that great influence and sway it held over the other churches of the age! Were she to repent, she would be influential in leading the others to follow her example!

EPHESUS AND THE 3RD OPENING

Thus, as we watch the gospel in action upon these twelve men, we are seeing the working of the Holy Spirit within that first gentile church age. That is why the Holy Ghost is so precise in every detail concerning Acts 19, especially those first six verses. And as Paul officially opens this gentile church age at Ephesus with these twelve disciples, it explains why Aquilla and Priscilla never started a church or fellowship through their personal witnessing before Paul returned. No, by no means, shall this be an ordinary church, for we shall see things transpire in this church that transpired in no other gentile church under Paul's ministry, and furthermore we shall see WHY they transpired.

SOMETHING HAPPENS FOR 3RD TIME

The fact we see the messenger to the age, the Apostle Paul, take these twelve men and although they have been baptized once, they must be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus and come into this thing correctly and receive the Holy Ghost, speak in tongues, and prophesy in order to illustrate there is

absolutely no less happening here or being received as this gentile church age is officially opening, as did appear in the other two official openings found in Acts 2 and Acts 10 on these other two great occasions found in scripture, though many years apart! (1) When the Holy Ghost officially came on the day of Pentecost, infilled those 120 Jews in the upper room and the scripture declares, they spoke with tongues. I AM TEACHING SOME TONGUE EVIDENCE DOCTRINE, that must be clearly understood. I am merely showing you how on these three special occasions (only), some 10 years apart in each case He initiated the opening with the same power and presence of that same Spirit (His).

Although from Pentecost up to this hour it must be remembered tens of thousands had all received the same Holy Ghost, yet there is not one mention as to how any of them received the Holy Ghost only on these three special occasions is it shown, some 10 to 20 years apart! The purpose, as stated, is to show God is giving the same measure of grace to the gentile church and she will have the same Holy Ghost, the same revelation, and the same gifts as when it officially opened with the Jews.

LOCATION OF EPHESUS

Ephesus, where God lit His candle to light all Asia, was the capitol city of Asia Minor and in Paul's day was a contemporary city to Athens, Greece, as well as Rome. As a matter of fact, the road from Ephesus which led around the Mediterranean Sea went straight to Rome. Thus came the slogan, all roads lead to Rome! This beautiful seaport city lay on the coast of Asia Minor facing the Aegean Sea next to the country of Greece and protruded down into the Mediterranean Sea, thus separating two areas of land by a large body of water coming from the Straits, draining into the Black Sea. Probably the most important factor of this city was

religiously, seeing it was the headquarters of the Diana religion with its temple location there. This religion had spread its influence across all Asia from the city of Ephesus. Perhaps this more than any other reason is why God chose Ephesus to establish His church to bear such influence over all Asia as had the Diana worship from their headquarters in Ephesus. From here God would spread His true light of revelation throughout all Asia by His first church age messenger.

TEMPLE OF DIANA

Ephesus not only was the center of the Diana religion, but was also the location of the great temple of the goddess Diana, which had influenced all Asia religiously for centuries. This rich industrial city being one of great culture perhaps is why the headquarters of the Diana religion was established here and her worshipers spread throughout Asia Minor (and the world). Just as Athens, Greece, which lay across the Aegean Sea had those great Acropolis buildings dating back to 1600 B.C. and still further on many miles west stood that great ancient city of Rome with her many pagan shrines and temples being used to worship pagan deities, both male and female, likewise was Ephesus the third city being the headquarters of the Diana religion.

Undoubtedly this goddess has been greatly responsible for the tremendous growth of Ephesus due to the fact that the Diana temple was located within the city. This temple in its magnificent beauty required 200 years to complete, its dimensions reached 425 ft. long, 220 ft. wide, 60 ft. tall and was supported by 127 pillars. Yes, it was through this pagan temple that the worshipers of Diana of the Ephesians were successful in spreading their influence and worship throughout all Asia Minor. Therefore, can't you see why the God of heaven would choose this very city to light His candle of true

revelation and beam that light across Asia where in less than 3 years He had rocked the very foundation of this ancient (woman) religion! Perhaps more so than Martin Luther when he shook the Catholic Church in 1517, thus beginning the Protestant Reformation!

WORKING OF HOLY GHOST - SAME

Already we have been in Acts 19:1-6, step by step Paul's conversation with the twelve men who knew only John the Baptist's revelation of Jesus Christ. Taking these men, re-baptizing them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, laying hands upon them and seeing these 12 Ephesians disciples speaking in tongues and prophesying proves one thing; God is giving unto the gentile church age that same full measure of grace with nothing watered down nor diluted in the way of the Spirit, but giving exactly the same full measure of grace issued to the Jews on the day of Pentecost some 20 years prior, and also to the household of the Roman Centurion Cornelius as the gentile age itself was opened in Acts 10, as his household received the Holy Ghost in the Holy Land ten years earlier at Caesarea as that second phase was opened within the grace age.

EPHESUS - 2 OUTSTANDING EVENTS

Furthermore, to show you as God is opening in Acts 19 the gentile church age at Ephesus there were two outstanding events which stand out through the ministry of the Apostle Peter as Jerusalem, 20 years prior, that are similar to the two miraculous events which happened at Ephesus under Paul's ministry demonstrating the power of the Holy Ghost given to the gentile church is exactly the same as that when the Holy Spirit lay strictly in the hands of the Jewish disciples at Jerusalem some years before Israel declared herself

completely unworthy to receive any part of the gospel, remaining strictly with the Law of Moses and the temple worship.

Now to examine these two things which happened in Paul's ministry at Ephesus which was very similar to two things which happened in Jerusalem. (1) At Jerusalem the very shadow of Peter healed the sick. At Ephesus came forth aprons, cloths, handkerchiefs, etc., from Paul's body that was carried throughout Asia, and as that material was placed upon the body of the sick and afflicted, they were instantly healed of whatever disease they possessed, including demon possession. (Acts 19:10-12). (2) The slaying of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 as they lied to the Holy Ghost concerning certain property which had been sold. The Bible declares fear fell upon everyone around and no man durst join himself to them for fear. Now at Ephesus we are told Paul's great meeting held within this school building drew such crowds, coming from all over Asia (converts of the Diana religion) who repented and were saved, filled with the Holy Ghost and healed, and the name of Jesus Christ grew so strong and powerful, it is recorded a Jewish priest named Sieva had seven sons of which the scripture calls vagabond Jews (exorcists, fortune tellers, zodiac studiers). No doubt these seven son were most ambitious and would enjoy having a following of their own, had watched Paul casting out devils and observed the name of Jesus which he used was powerful against demons. These seven sons find a demon possessed man upon whom they use the name of Jesus to cast out these demons. Bravely they say, come out of the man in the name of Jesus of whom Paul preaches. To this the demon responded, Paul I know and Jesus I know, BUT WHO ARE YOU? With that the demon possessed man attacked the seven men, whipped, beat and stripped these insomuch they ran from the house, wounded and naked, (Acts 19:16)! Such an event was

noised about among all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus and (note this just as in Jerusalem) fear fell on them and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. (Acts 19:17)

CONTINUAL 2 YEAR REVIVAL **(ACTS 19:10)**

Following the conversion of the first 12 in Ephesus, Paul returns to the Jewish synagogue where he ministers 3 months and leaving there took over a school building of one Tyrannus where he ministers daily for two years, wherein all which dwelt in Asia heard the Word. (Acts 19:9-10)

BOOK BURNING

The true disciples of Christ began to multiply out of this idolatrous pagan woman religion as Paul was kept busy for a full three years, preaching day and night, teaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. Sins were confessed, heathen converts straightened out their ways of living and the Bible says those which used curious arts, a common thing in the Diana religion, gave up these things, brought their books before Paul who built a bonfire and burned them in the streets of the city and the price of the books was over 50,000 pieces of silver! Naturally this was shaking the very foundation of this religion of Diana insomuch that near the end of Paul's third year at Ephesus he had almost crippled the craftsmen's trade who made the little (woman) Diana trinkets, statues, things to be kept in the home of which the priest would bless. (Reminds you of another religion which has statues, images, prayer beads, etc., and the blessing by priests, does it not? Which is also nothing but a hand-me-down tradition). People throughout Asia were not buying these things from the craftsmen who had in the past had a tremendous business in Ephesus before Paul came.

SILVERSMITH TROUBLE

Demetrius, a silversmith, who made shrines of Diana, along with the other craftsmen who also had grown wealthy, now see their business almost shattered! Things have become so desperate by the time the people burn their books the craftsmen call a meeting to see what steps can be taken to stop Paul before he turns all Asia away from the worship of the goddess Diana.

Reading from Acts 19:21-41, we pick up the story showing Paul's remaining days in Ephesus are limited. After the burning of the books Demetrius calls a meeting of the craftsmen of his trade telling them how the goddess of Diana has been made to be despised and if something isn't done soon, her magnificence would be destroyed whom all the world worshiped (by Paul's teachings). In one form or another this woman religion is worshiped throughout the world, one place she may be called Diana, in another Mary, and another something else. Verse 28 states when they heard this they were filled with wrath and cried, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Verse 29 discloses the entire city was filled with confusion and taking hold of two of Paul's traveling companions, men of Macedonia, Gaius and Aristarchus, the crowd rushed with one accord into the theater, and when Paul would have entered in before this mad, confused multitude the disciples begged him to refrain. This great amphitheater now became a mass of confusion as one group of the Diana worshipers cried one thing and another group cried something else, while the majority were not even aware why they were there!

SHOUTING FOR 2 HOURS

For two solid hours they cried GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS! The uproar was of such magnitude the town clerk who

tried to quieten the confused, violent mob, assured them if Demetrius and the craftsmen had a quarrel against any man to take it before law for they were in danger, said he, of being called into question (by the Romans) for this day uproar. With this demonstration of Diana worshipers it seems Paul's ministry in Ephesus after three years is finished. However, study carefully the entire 19th chapter of Acts for that great three year ministry where his time was spent as God lit this candle at Ephesus spreading His revelation light throughout Asia from this one lighthouse from Ephesus.

PAUL LEAVES EPHESUS

Paul left in Ephesus a church which was influential over all the other churches of the same revelation. Just as the great Goddess Diana supposing to have been an image fallen from Jupiter and worshiped throughout Asia with their strategic spot, temple etc., located in Ephesus, likewise did God place His beacon light in Ephesus not only spreading the light all over Asia from that one candle, lighting many fires, but was so influential it became the symbol of all churches of the first age. Therefore, is there any wonder Satan would especially attack this one church after Paul's departure.

We note in verse 21, even before this great uproar brought about by Demetrius and the craftsmen against Paul, already Paul was feeling in his spirit his time was about up in Ephesus as he had a desire to visit Rome. However, before this could be accomplished he must first pass through Macedonia, Corinth, Achaia and other places before returning to Jerusalem and later visit Rome.

MESSAGE TO ELDERS

While at Corinth Paul decides to return to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, which

by the way, will be his final trip, for here he will be captured and eventually, upon his request, be sent to Rome to appeal his case before Caesar. However, watch especially what he does here! Remember, he has left the church at Ephesus where he pastored for three years and that church became a light of inspiration to the gentile age during that period. Now Paul is so moved in the Spirit that he must deliver a final message unto the Ephesian elders themselves (not to the congregation). Elders are men who hold certain offices within the five-fold ministry. However, Paul does not return to the church itself in Ephesus to deliver this urgent message. Instead, on his return to Jerusalem he passes through Miletus, a town a short distance from Ephesus, and sends word to the Ephesian elders to meet him there. Here at Miletus Paul warns these men of certain things (Acts 20) and conditions which will arise at Ephesus in the church after his departure.

WARNED OF 2 THINGS COMING

He begins by saying to these men left in charge of the church and made overseers by the Holy Ghost - "You will see my face no more." Naturally such a statement grieved the elders who dearly loved Paul. Nevertheless, Paul knew his personal ministry in Asia was completed and he would never return! The church at Ephesus had now been turned over to others, however, the three years Paul labored there he had withheld nothing in his teaching concerning this faith and revelation of truth that they should know. For the final time addressing the saddened Ephesian elders at Miletus who see the seriousness of this meeting, Paul continues by saying he must be at Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. I go bound in the spirit but I know bonds and afflictions abide me in Jerusalem. How did he know that? The Holy Ghost was constantly

witnessing this one thing to him in every city he visited. Such a continual witness could come only through the nine gifts of the Spirit which many, I am sorry to say, do not believe in today, nevertheless, were most prevalent and in operation in the assemblies of the early gentile church day! Paul told these serious minded Ephesian elders, **AFTER MY DEPARTURE GRIEVOUS WOLVES SHALL DECEITFULLY ENTER INTO THE FLOCK AT EPHEBUS, RIPPING AND TEARING THE POOR SHEEP TO SHREDS WITH THEIR FALSE REVELATIONS AND THEORIES** (which were prevalent in that hour, mainly over the godhead).

Not only did he warn them to beware of the false apostles etc., who would come but **GET THIS**, men within their own ranks within the church would rise up at Ephesus and begin to lead away souls after their wild, fanatical teachings which, no doubt, they would declare to the local assembly to be revelations from God! It seemed the devil was going to turn loose with everything he had in the way of false teachers and bombard the very gate of this influential church after the departure of this great apostle. Paul warned them to watch for this for it would come, watch those two things especially!

PAUL IN ROME

Leaving the Ephesian elders at Miletus, he journeyed on to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost where, no doubt, he desires to witness unto the multitudes of Jews. After all, it was at the Feast of Pentecost Peter won 3,000 souls...remember? Paul arrives at Jerusalem and, as the Spirit had warned him, ran straight into trouble as he was confronted by an angry mob who had cooked up quite a story against him. For his safety he is arrested by the Romans and placed in jail. The angry Jewish mob threatens to kill him, however, the Lord spoke to him in a vision saying, as

you have witnessed of me in Jerusalem so also will you bear witness of me in Rome. Recall, he told the Ephesian elders he had a desire to see Rome! All these things have great importance because it was sometime after Paul reached Rome, around 64 A.D., approximately eight years after he had established the church at Ephesus he wrote his immortal letter praising that great church for the influential way they were known throughout Asia as a church of great love and influence. (Ephesians 1:15)

EPHESIAN LETTER WRITTEN FROM ROME

It seems in those first few chapters of that letter Paul touched upon so many of the great doctrines of Christ; GODHEAD, PREDESTINATION, SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER, oh yes, in Ephesians 4:30, we find him telling this church, Grieve not the Holy Spirit whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption! This was a later warning unto them for, according to his own prophecy to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, Paul knew the time would come if they were not very careful they would grieve the Spirit. Roughly 30 years later we see the Spirit is grieved (95 A.D.) as he is rebuking the church saying He has somewhat against them and demands their repentance. Notice, in that great Ephesian letter Paul does not go into lengthy detail concerning these church doctrines. Why should he, he did that during those three years teaching them night and day warning all men to repent and flee the wrath of God! He had already taught these great doctrines to that church, withholding nothing! The thing I want you to notice in the Ephesian letter - there is not the slightest indication this spirit spoken of in Revelation 2 as deeds of Nicolaitanes had even begun to work in the hour of 64 A.D., in this great church which at that hour still remained with an open Holy Ghost led fellowship! It is evident in all of

Paul's gentile churches or fellowships as he is the messenger to the age, he promoted an open fellowship in the assemblies among the saints, yet everything was run decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:26 & 40). Paul's anointed ministry and manner of life, and his zeal so inspired this church that their love, devotion, doctrinal teachings, zeal and missionary efforts became known throughout all Asia. Churches throughout Asia were formed, although not personally founded by the Apostle Paul, instead various people came and lit their fires of revelation off the gospel candlelight that burned at Ephesus, the capitol city of Asia Minor, which still remained that model church who influenced all the other gentile churches of that hour in the revelation of Christ in their manner of following the leadership of the Holy Ghost.

Thank God Paul never lived to see this dreadful condition in his beloved church at Ephesus which had developed in 95-96 A.D. Paul lived only approximately one year after writing the Ephesian letter before he was beheaded at Rome on Nero's chop-block. Therefore, the Apostle Paul had been dead roughly 30 years when John received word to write to the seven local churches of Asia, Ephesus being first and received a rebuke that none of the others received because Ephesus was responsible for what happened-which affected that age and the other 6 ages as well!

ROME NEVER ACCEPTS PAUL AS CHURCH AGE MESSENGER

As we previously stated, Paul had left Ephesus for several years before he ever saw Rome. However, eventually he finally went to Rome where in 64 A.D. he wrote that great Ephesian letter, and at that hour the church was much like he left it. It is believed that while Paul visited Corinth after leaving Ephesus, he writes a letter to the Roman church expressing his desire to come their

way that he might impart unto them some spiritual gift, (Romans 1:11-15), informing the church he was ready to preach the gospel at Rome also. It should be noted the church at Rome to which Paul writes from Corinth was already presently established in Rome, being neither founded nor influenced by the Apostle Paul, as were the churches throughout Asia Minor and some sections of Europe. AND GET THIS, it was the churches throughout Asia whereupon hundreds of years later who eventually became known as the Greek Orthodox Church or the churches of the East who after 800 A.D., severed all relations with the Roman Catholic Church whose headquarters was in Rome and who held sway mainly over the western churches. It appears the eastern churches could never accept a gentile pope that dwelt at Rome claiming to be from the line of bishops of whom they claim the Apostle Peter to be first Bishop of Rome, while all Asia still accepted Paul as having been the gentile church messenger to the gentile church (and not Peter), as it had been mainly Paul's ministry from Ephesus pastoring that great work for three years wherein multitudes throughout Asia came to Ephesus and were converted. Therefore, the church at Rome which later influenced most of the European churches, particularly with that idea that whatever they did was correct especially in teaching the bishop of Rome to have been the successor to the Apostle Peter and not Paul who all Asia still was accepting as the church age messenger, and this conflict between the East and West grew stronger as it always presented a problem until this final break.

ROMAN CHURCH NOT ESTABLISHED BY PAUL

It appears from Acts 2 that orthodox Jews, and perhaps some gentile proselytes converted to the Jewish faith, were present in that great audience in Jerusalem on the day of

Pentecost when those disciples came out of the upper room, drunk on the spirit (Acts 2), and one of these languages the Holy Ghost was allowing to be uttered in the street of Jerusalem by Galilean Jews was that of a Roman tongue which caught the attention of some of the Jews from that area, and they were converted off the revelation of the Apostle Peter to whom Christ had given the keys to the kingdom and these had obeyed Acts 2:38 and returned to Rome where they established a fellowship of worship around this revelation. At first the fellowship consisted mainly of a nucleus of Jewish Christians until later it became a mixed congregation once gentile began to be added to the fellowship. Such a fellowship of Jews and gentiles had created a friction which Paul had heard about, and from Corinth he writes an inspiring letter to the Roman Church wherein he spares no punches as he knew his office saying, thou who sayest thou art a Jew, thou makest a boast of the law etc. (Romans 2:17-29). Certain things had leaked out from the church at Rome and had reached the ears of Paul. Paul, being the apostle to the gentiles, wrote a letter to straighten them out on certain things and informed them of his coming to Rome. However, it must be noted after Paul's death at Rome he was never accepted as the gentile messenger to the age as he was in Asia. Furthermore, it was this European Roman church sometime after Paul's death which began drifting into domineering ideas of Catholicism and never once lifted up nor recognized Paul to have been the gentile church age messenger of that period. Instead contrary to Galatians 3:9, they adopted the Apostle Peter as their messenger and further pretended he was first bishop of Rome. Peter was not the gentile messenger nor was he ever in Rome, and it was that lingering influence of Paul's throughout Asia Minor and Greece as him being the true gentile messenger which was so strong it, among other things, finally caused the Eastern Greek Orthodox Churches

to sever fellowship with the Roman Catholic Church in the 8th Century! Paul's missionary work throughout his three journeys had been mainly influential through all Asia and the eastern part of Europe called Macedonia, today know as Bulgaria and Greece.

EPHESUS, A GREAT LIGHT

How many can see God lighting His candle at Ephesus and the other churches of Asia Minor, (Revelations 2 & 3) coming to Ephesus to light their revelation from the one fire at Ephesus instead of Paul making personal visits into these various places and personally establishing the local works himself throughout Asia? Yes, they were all lit in the three years Paul, the church age messenger, was at Ephesus.

Remember, Paul, in warning those Ephesian elders in Acts 20, had stressed these two extreme problems or conditions which would arise sometime after his departure (apparently meaning after death). Grievous wolves would come into the congregation at Ephesus to deceive many, and he warned further that some of their own men in Ephesus would rise up and draw away disciples! Leaving the Ephesian elders whom he would never see again, Paul departs for Jerusalem and is captured, moved to Caesarea where he spent some two years, and during this time wrote many of his epistles back to his gentile churches. From there he was placed aboard ship and taken to Rome where in 64 A.D., he wrote that beautiful and inspiring epistle to the Ephesian Church which we note at that time was still a great church, walking in its first love and still in tune with God! Had not something happened somewhere after Paul's death that swayed this church onto a different pattern of devotion, she would never have received the rebuked she did in Revelation 2, some thirty years later. Ephesus, that beloved church pastored by Paul the church age messenger to

the gentiles, had set the stage and was Christ's model church of the age. However, what prompted Christ to write certain things to rebuke to this church who had exemplified the spirit of love, unity and doctrinal stand of which Paul taught, happened somewhere roughly between 67-95 A.D., less than 30 years. What she stood for and exemplified, as Ephesus lit the age, could not be seen in the church 40 years after her birth!

A CHURCH AFTER 40 YEARS

Much can happen to a church in forty years which plays such an important role as did Ephesus. Conditions and events can develop to such a point within a church such as Ephesus, in 40 years which will determine her course and destiny as to the direction the church will travel in unity, doctrine, etc. Recall, any church such as Ephesus which plays a major role in God's program, irregardless of how great it is to the age, if it steps out of line of God's program He too will rebuke it! I hate to say this, nevertheless bring this over into our present age. After God has been gracious enough to re-establish us in the true revealed, apostolic truth as taught by those original apostles, let any church playing such a major role of influence as did Ephesus to her age and see where such a church in our age is after 40 years - WILL IT GO THE SAME ROUTE?

Sorry, but the 40 years span I particularly have in mind concerning this age is from 1933-1973, when something was accomplished within the state of Indiana which greatly affected the Laodicean gentile world! I am aware some of my statements could hurt, however, I am only interested in one thing - IS GOD'S WILL BEING ACCOMPLISHED? God never permitted Paul to live long enough to see what would occur in these local assemblies which were influenced by his beloved Ephesus, the model church to the age. If he had lived to see it,

undoubtedly it would have broken his heart. Perhaps none of the other six messengers lived to see the way their church went after 40 years either! To think the aged Apostle John had to be inspired around 95 A.D., to write such a letter of rebuke to what was once one of the finest gentile churches in all Asia Minor! As a matter of fact if you will notice there was something wrong within each of the other six churches as well in which Christ addressed in Revelations 2 & 3. Although by no means were these seven churches all the churches in Asia Minor, why are only these particular seven chosen from the great number of churches? Nothing is said concerning the church at Lycaonia, Derbe, Lystra, Galatia, Corinth, etc., only these particular seven in Asia Minor. God has found fault with all seven and what happened certainly was not Paul's fault. The blame lay with other people at Ephesus after Paul's death. Although we have traveled 1900 years since Paul's day no matter how greatly God may have used a man or his church, let that church choose to go another direction contrary to the true plan and purpose of God and it too shall be rebuked as was Ephesus the model church one it finds displeasure in the eyes of God!

PART 3 - LETTER OF REBUKE

Bear in mind, the birth of the church came around 54 A.D., and forty years later the aged Apostle John, on a barren, snake infested island called Patmos, is inspired of the Holy Ghost to write the most stern rebuking letter this church ever received! No, the condition present in 95 A.D., was not there when Paul pastored for three years and pushed that church into the very spotlight for all Asia to see as an example and follow.

John, forty years after the birth of the Ephesus Church is compelled by the Spirit to write certain things to Ephesus in Revelation 2, saying, "Unto the angel of the church at

Ephesus write, saith he that holdeth the seven stars (7 messengers to the 7 church ages) in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." These seven golden candlesticks stood first of all for the revealed light of the seven local Asiatic churches who lit their testimonial light from the one light at Ephesus. However, we see this hold a two-fold meaning! These seven local gentile churches wherein the light was shining which had been lit from Ephesus, this light was the revealed light of Christ. Furthermore, each of these seven local churches exemplifies the Spirit of Christ which should be portrayed or projected and would shine throughout the seven gentile ages.

EXAMINING EPHEBUS' 40 YEARS WORK

To Ephesus, the Lord is saying, I KNOW THY WORKS. Works in this sense represents the deeds accomplished throughout the church's ministry for the Lord over the past 40 years serving in the dispensation of the kingdom of God. However recall, as Christ observes that which He considered works that being accomplished for His name, He further notes what spirit their labor is accomplished in! Believe me, Christ is far more concerned over the human vitality or enthusiasm and devotion displayed toward the work which is done as they (or we) carry out our labor of love for Him in his service. In this Ephesus Church after 40 years, the devotion has become merely a thing of routine and not in the fervency, zeal and love it displayed in the beginning. Of this God was not well pleased!

Christ sees whether their labor (as well as ours) springs from a heart of pure love, zeal and devotion or whether it is merely something that has become a drudgery and constant struggle. Whichever, it will register

on the countenance of the heart or spirit of the fellowship of the church. Ephesus, I know thy works and thy labor. Remember, before you can apply any part of this letter to the first gentile age as a whole, it must first be applied to that local church in Ephesus whose fellowship exemplifies that which is going on in the age at this hour! I know the effort and enthusiasm you have in time past put into the work to accomplish something for my name. I know thy works and thy labor or the strain under which you have performed your work. Why is it worded in such manner, because God examines the heart or spirit (of the church) which registers that strain or joy and enthusiasm in which the work is performed. Your effort and patience, see, all these words such as work, labor, effort and patience all link together in what they are doing because the moment you begin doing something for God that exerts action on your part, either you will face the works for Him with love and patience or it will become impatient, discouraged, desiring to give up and quit. And he says, I know thy works, the things you have accomplished. I know your labor and your effort you have put forth or the patience and the attitude how you faced up to the responsibility. Recall, he has reference to the effect these grievous wolves and the many within their own fellowship who have over the years rose up, teaching perverse things leading away disciples as Paul spoke of in Acts 20, who had left the fellowship. Constantly trying them who claimed to be apostles and finding them to be liars became quite a strain after awhile. The strain of such activity couples with the gradual loss of their first love and devotion was beginning to tell on this model church and it was affecting the spirit of the age among the other gentile churches also!

EVIL WAS HATED

Christ continues by saying, you cannot bear them who are evil. Still after 40 years they

despised sin, corruption, evil of any nature, desiring to live clean and holy lives and hear the wonderful truth from God's true servants. The Anti-Nicean fathers books cover that closing period of the first age as it goes into the second gentile church age. And beloved, in those early days, those men such as Ireneaus, Polycarp and others were strict. Today we really don't know what being strict in Christian living is compared to how they taught it. This is a day when you speak concerning men and women appearances they take it so lightly. However, in that day you wouldn't be fellowshiped or spoken to if you did not live and dress properly. One who didn't live and dress according to the Christian testimony of that day was treated as an unbeliever! Because from your conduct and personal appearance, to them that revealed what you had on the inside and after 40 years we note Ephesus still possessed that loyal, fervent spirit within the church of standing against evil.

TRYING FALSE APOSTLES

Now we approach that part of Christ's letter which closes in on the very purpose of John writing, the purpose which led to their dilemma as it spread its influence across Asia. After, he said, you cannot bear them that are evil, he continues by saying, you have tried those who claim to be apostles and found them to be liars. I wonder, beloved, just how many of these false apostles with wild revelations had come through Ephesus, falsely claiming to be apostles? Recall, Paul in Acts 20 informed the Ephesian elders they would be coming. Paul at that hour of informing the elders this, had been the only apostle to have ever been to Ephesus. However, sometime after Paul's Ephesian letter had been written in 64 A.D., and he passes off the scene, many have come through pretending to be apostles with great revelations. Paul said grievous wolves and men among yourselves will rise up, not

spring the flock, therefore, Paul was charging these Ephesian elders to guard that flock from such sheep killing wolves and dogs in disguise! (Acts 20:29)

Paul's three year ministry at Ephesus, as he was the messenger to the gentile church age and through all God accomplished as he labored night and day, no doubt witnessed that Ephesian church to grow into a considerable size and influential work consisting of perhaps many hundreds of believers. Many had come through this church area in the latter part of these 40 years pretending to be apostles, for after all Paul had been an apostle with great revelation and these characters to be able to sway any weight upon such a revealed church as Ephesus would certainly have to pose as an apostle with perhaps deeper revelation to even interest such a congregation. To think what prestige it would be to these characters who wanted to make a name for themselves among christianity to be able to say: I PREACHED AT EPHESUS WHERE PAUL (THE MESSENGER TO THE AGE) PREACHED!

The first age was certainly the age of going forth of apostles as God spoke great revelation through them. There were the twelve who ministered to the circumcision and even throughout the region of the Roman Empire during that day. Furthermore, it was a day when a man spoke freely what his calling in Jesus Christ was. It was also an hour a man's calling could be recognized by the evidence of the things which either went before him or after him that bore testimony whether he was such or not. It was an hour that Peter, Jude, Paul and the others could truly say, I am an apostle of Jesus Christ because surely Christ had sent each of them. Furthermore, it was an hour when it was established and written that such men as Judas, Agabus, Titus and Silas were prophets. Yes, it was an hour when man, called of God

and set forth in the gentile church age in this five-fold ministry was not ashamed of his calling nor would back up from his office! Whatever the man's calling, prophet, apostle, evangelist, teacher or pastor, the Spirit of God bore witness to it!

Recall further, it was a day when very little of the Word (New Testament) going forth had been written. Instead it was given out in an oral manner, spoken from the mouth of anointed men. Not until sometime later did the various letters of the New Testament begin to be written. Yes, beloved, this was an age of apostles when men went forth declaring a revealed Bible message and having authority from God to set things straight or set something in motion within the kingdom of God. Ephesus was that church of great influence wherein the candle was first lit for gentile churches throughout all Asian cities as they came to Ephesus during those three years of Paul's ministry, and lit their candle thus returning to their own cities to begin their own fellowships. With Ephesus holding that influential position it is no wonder these false apostles and prophets after Paul's death, would want to first go to Ephesus to make a name or stake a claim, much like in the gold rush days of 1849, when everyone wanted to go to California! Well, everyone who wanted some kind of recognition as someone outstanding couldn't pass up the opportunity of going to Ephesus! These false apostles, of which Paul warned the elders, would come by and bombard the congregation with their revelations and over a period of time split and divide believers as they stood in the open assembly slipping in these wild revelations through their testimony because Ephesus, as well as all the churches at the time, did have an open fellowship in the assembly. An open assembly worship naturally presented a greater opportunity for these false apostles and those who wanted to have the opportunity to say something deceptive.

However, remember it was also just as great an opportunity for the true anointed servants to say something uplifting as it was for the others to tear down! The true servants could manifest tongues, prophecies, etc., to edify the assembly. It must not be believed that every man who testified at Ephesus bore false revelation, by no means! God used this open fellowship of assembly worship to bless his saints as his Spirit could work among them, permitting a true uplifting testimony of revelation and blessing to be shared by all the congregations of that day, especially Ephesus. These false apostles felt if they will let me in Ephesus to say something they will allow me in almost anywhere to witness, especially after they hear I have been to Ephesus, AFTER ALL, THIS IS WHERE PAUL WAS! My, I have been to Ephesus where the messenger to the age stood and preached... What a boost to their prestige!

That is somewhat like it is in our day. An evangelist would come by certain churches and say, I know Bro. Branham; I was in a meeting with him; I have been in his tabernacle, leaving an impression on the believers as he desires to worm his way into their confidence with such smooth speech, thinking this gives him some prestige or some great anointing when perhaps if the truth was known they may have been in the meeting, however sat 40 rows from the platform! It reminds me of an evangelist who came through our area once declaring he had come from great meetings in Alaska and Bro. Branham had told him my church probably needed a good evangelist. However, later conferring with Bro. Branham I found out he said no such thing, he was only using Bro. Branham's influence to get his feet in our door (oh, they still do it across this land). The first sermon was THE FOURTH MAN, an Oral Roberts speciality. How perfectly he had it memorized as I later saw this sermon typed written word for word in his Bible. It seemed, after the first night, according to him, our

little building wouldn't hold the congregation he would draw. Therefore, off he went a few miles away to Louisville to rent a larger building where he lasted only a few nights. Sure, he like so many others who sought Bro. Branham's reputation and influence for their own advantage, was a good speaker. These characters worming their way into Ephesus were also good speakers, but that didn't make them true preachers of the Word! Concerning this evangelist who came our way, we later found out he left town owing a bill for gasoline and the rent on the building in Louisville. I only use this one incident to illustrate how these characters travel around professing themselves to be great deliverance evangelists, using Bro. Branham's reputation to further their end. Such characters should have joined Al Capone and John Dillinger, seeing they are crooks also!

When did these false apostles begin to come to Ephesus? AFTER PAUL'S DEATH? No, they wouldn't dare come around while Paul was alive and try to foul up the lives of true believers, they knew better. This was an hour when men who wanted to be recognized spent much time studying the great doctrine of the godhead which Paul had taught to the gentiles. Nevertheless, it wouldn't be long before some of these men, as Paul stated in Acts 20, would begin to get the idea this doctrine (along with others) needed to be dressed up somewhat.

Therefore, the absence of the original apostles from the field, as many were being martyred or imprisoned, left the field open for these evil characters or sheep killing dogs who desire recognition! It left the way open for these wolves to run rampant, tearing the flock of God to pieces. And where did it happen more than any place else - EPHESUS! She was overrun with these new off colored revelations concerning the godhead as these revelations would be flowered up and twisted many ways. I repeat,

in those days within the gentile churches it was definitely God's intention for these churches to worship with an open fellowship! As a matter of fact, it seemed within the Jewish synagogues there also had been somewhat of an open fellowship where a man had the opportunity to testify. Look how Paul testified in them! On various occasions the leaders of the synagogue would ask Paul if he had something to say. No doubt it was probably true also in the early church. These certain characters also had opportunity to say something as they pretended to be in some part of this fivefold ministry. However, they were seeking to take away from this revelation which had been delivered by Paul by placing a new twist here and there. Like Paul said they would draw away disciples after their way of teaching. Oh, but praise God, there were always those loyal saints who could still say, that isn't according to Paul's revelation when he stood here! There were those who would guard that precious revelation with much fervency although as stated not much had been written at that hour. Nevertheless, they knew it was not as Paul had taught it and they would say, you are not teaching it that way, so that makes you false! Be gone you false apostles, we don't need your newfangled revelations!

Ephesus was definitely that drawing card of which these false ones needed to work their way into other gentile congregations across Asia, etc. If ever one place had received more than their share of false teachers in that hour it was Ephesus. Likewise did Jeffersonville, Indiana, receive more than their fair share when the prophet messenger was alive! It too, became a drawing card for every kind of religious card shark and quack (religiously speaking) who, like those false ones in the day of Ephesus, here in our day would also attach themselves to this message who wanted recognition. Merely let be noised abroad that Bro. Branham would be present at Jeffersonville for a few services and these

would also be present in the Jeffersonville meetings (in the early days) distributing their little tracts which mostly supported their own particular idea or theory.

Later we will cover in this message how it was just such things as this which was directly responsible for **BRO. BRANHAM MAKING A CERTAIN ORDER IN HIS CHURCH WHICH WOULD AFFECT THE SERVICES OF THE BRANHAM TABERNACLE ONLY, AND FURTHERMORE, HOW CERTAIN UNSPIRITUAL CHARACTERS WHO HAD ATTACHED THEMSELVES TO THIS MESSAGE, HAVING NO MORE LOVE FOR GOD OR HIS PRECIOUS TRUTH THAN THEY DID FOR HIS MARVELOUS NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS (AND FRUITS), WHICH OUR LORD PLACED WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST, USED SUCH AN EVENT TO THEIR ADVANTAGE WHICH IN TURN AFTER NINE YEARS HAS SPLIT AND HINDERED THE WORK OF GOD AS DID EPHESUS SUFFER AS WELL AS THOSE EARLY GENTILE CHURCHES TAKE A BEATING FROM SUCH CHARACTERS IN THEIR DAY!** That spirit is still here among the gentiles in an hour when God has restored his truth to the Bride of the Lord!

You have tried them who say they are apostles and are not and have found them liars and have borne and have patience for my namesake. Meaning, yes Ephesus, for my namesake you certainly have put up with much from these characters who seek to invade your open fellowship which I gave you and try to trouble you.

These false teachers coming mainly to Ephesus were working on the theory that Jesus was not the **MIGHTY GOD** in flesh nor as John declared him to be (Revelations 1:8) **THE FIRST AND LAST OR ALPHA AND OMEGA!** Instead, later it was from these

forerunning false apostles or anti-christ spirit revelations that Christ was declared to be the second person of the trinity, a doctrine finally adopted in Nicea 325 A.D.! However, while the true fivefold ministry was on the scene they taught no doctrine! John declared they who confessed Jesus Christ was the anointed one and had come in the flesh were of God, in short meant this - he, the anointed one, was the very Old Testament God come in the flesh and any other teaching short of this revelation was anti-christ! Furthermore, when John stated they have gone out from us because they were not of us simply verified Paul's address to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20! Paul, as did all the apostles, taught Jesus Christ was God manifested in flesh, II Corinthians 5:19, I Timothy 3:16, Ephesians 1 and Isaiah 9:6, to mention only a few. Every true convert baptized throughout Asia which came to that revealed light at Ephesus accepting Jesus Christ was baptized according to how Paul taught these first 12 at Ephesus, in the name of Jesus Christ. Paul taught the church whatsoever you do in word or deed, do in the name of the Lord Jesus to the glory of God the Father. (Col. 3:17)

ANTI-CHRIST SPIRIT RIDES

Apostle John's writing in 90 A.D. (I John 4:1) verifies this as John teaches the church to believe not every spirit but try the spirits to see whether they be of God because many false prophets (teachers) are gone out into the world! Yes, by 90 A.D., they had already gone out. In this letter John tells the churches how they may recognize the true ones sent of God, opposed to the false ones who are nothing more than the anti-christ spirit which was already going forth mightily in that first age. John, in his letter, revealed how the people of the assemblies are being affected by men of whom he terms anti-christ agents, running about loosely teaching every kind of doctrine and revelation contrary to that of the apostles. John calls them false christians as he

says, there are many anti-christs and they have gone out from us because they were not of us. Truly the devil was permitted to ride in that hour and come against Ephesus just as he has been permitted to ride in years past against Jerusalem when Judaism harassed the church there. However, here he is riding against Ephesus and he will continue to ride until he gets a chance to accomplish his work.

1ST SEAL - WHAT WAS IT?

Turn again to Revelations 5, where John, writing in symbols showed a white horse rider coming forth in the first age, under the first seal. Many within the church world believed the white horse rider to be the Holy Ghost riding in the first age, however, when the real meaning came forth in 1963, by the prophet to the age, it was revealed to be none other than the spirit of anti-christ riding in the first church age! How was he riding? He was riding parallel to the Holy Ghost in order to do his satanic work! If the Holy Ghost through men had already been accomplishing the work of God then the anti-christ will ride parallel to do the work of the devil. What else did the first seal say? The white horse rider went forth to conquer! And that beloved is exactly what he did by first sending out those false teachers to harass and frighten the already weakened church as they were losing their first love, causing the elders to remove certain congregational liberties of their open assembly to block these men from entering - this was only the first step! Satan knew once these men had taken this step, they believed it to be a good step in the right direction as they shut the door on these false teachers. The Holy Spirit was grieved, as Satan knew he would be, and slowly but surely through this first step of removing certain congregational liberties in Ephesus, the Holy Spirit was slowly pushed out of the fellowship as he became more and more grieved.

Nevertheless, five years later in 95 A.D., God could still see at Ephesus there were many who had remained loyal to the name of Jesus revelation as taught by Paul, for in this respect they had bore the brunt and had shown much patience with those characters and for his namesake had labored. Nevertheless, all this harassing by these false teachers had left its effect and begun to show the strain upon this church's spirituality as it was undergoing such an exertion of strength struggling to remain faithful and loyal to that great revealed light Paul had left with them. Even as late as 95-96 A.D., God could see they were still remaining loyal, true and faithful to that one name of the Lord Jesus Christ who was the Christ (but not some second person). "And thus had not fainted..." No, they certainly had not given up. Their patience had been greatly tried and taxed to the very breaking point with these characters but they had not given up! Although they had fought long and hard to remain true to certain doctrinal truths and because they were slowly losing their first love which was really going against them no in the battle, they were reaching a point of exhaustion, fright and discouragement over what these false teachers from the outside were planting, as well as those whom Paul spoke of would be working from within the fellowship to raise up from among them and cause people to believe their line of thought! Some of those over-ambitious characters, who, like some in our day feeling they have a call in their life from God, simply couldn't control themselves until they had fully come into their ministry (as Paul taught the Corinthians) thus leaving themselves open to be invaded by anti-christ spirits helping to lead the church astray!

REMOVING CERTAIN CONGREGATIONAL LIBERTIES

The officials left in charge in the Ephesus church, had reached a breaking point dealing with these characters. They thought for the benefit of the church and the spirituality of the church it would be far better if they would make certain rules in order to keep out all this false and no longer have this open fellowship as it was through this, these false teachers were getting through to the people. However, remember by what they did, it not only shut out the false teachers it also shut out the true ministers, true gifts as well!

This was what Satan wanted, to get the order of the service changed because, as things were, he could never bring in a priesthood to domineer over the saints! These men, no doubt, thought the wisest thing to do was make AN ORDER AFFECTING THE SERVICES! An order or rule which would affect the worship of the local assembly. More on this later when we touch on the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which Christ said he hated as well as did many in the church. Recall dearer ones, that which was done t Ephesus as this order was made, led not only to them receiving the rebuke, 40 years later but the age as well! Because what had only been a deed of action at Ephesus had become now a doctrine in other churches who looked to Ephesus and had followed their example, such as the church at Pergamos!

LOST FIRST LOVE

However, watch Christ now touch on that part which broke his heart concerning this model church. Nevertheless, I find fault against thee (remember Ephesus typifies the age) because thou hast left thy first love. What beloved had caused such an influential church to leave or loose their first love in less

than 40 years? This church we know had fought evil, tried false apostles, etc., although when Paul wrote his Ephesian letter in 64 A.D., none of this which was not present in 95 A.D., had transpired.

As Paul, in his Ephesian letter used the illustration of the love of a man and woman for each other to illustrate the love of Christ and his church, allow me to use man and woman briefly to illustrate what Christ meant when he said Ephesus, you have left your first love (ME)! When a young couple falls deeply in love, throughout their courtship it is evident they only have each other in their sight. Their continual topic of conversation is concerning each other. Something inside their heart has drawn them closely together in so much they can now see nothing but each other. Following months of courtship comes marriage and after their honeymoon they must now begin to face up to those responsibilities which marriage has placed upon them. The first few weeks breakfast is wonderful. No matter if the food is slightly burned, their thoughts are still only upon each other. After work he is met at the door with hugs and kisses. However, as the weeks turn into months and months into years, with the constant strain of financial and other pressures, watch what happens! She begins to stop greeting him at the door in the evenings and that continues until finally for them life has merely become a routine, cooking is no more a joy - I will just fix anything, he will accept it! Recall, we are only using such an illustration to show how that Ephesus Church under Paul's ministry 40 years before had such a fervency and such magnificent zeal and love for God it was still known in 64 A.D. throughout Asia as Paul commended her for the zeal and faith and her devout reputation to her spiritual husband. However, from the continual harassment, persecutions, ridicule and those things she endured from false ones, which at first when she walked in that first love and devotion did not bother them at all;

they did not mind the things they had to suffer for his namesake as they were walking closely by his side, as time passed the continual drudgery of these men who invaded their precious open fellowship in the assembly with false testimonies began to have an affect on them, especially after they began to lose their first love as the illustration showed of the young couple when after a time of this continual harassment of obligations, their first love simply dwindled into a life of routine!

Where was that stamina, that first love, that devotion? Sure, Ephesus was probably doing about as much as she always had, that wasn't the point - **THE POINT WAS, HOW SHE WAS DOING IT!** Now things were being done merely through routine **AND GOD HATES A ROUTINE!**

Yes, Ephesus you are probably doing about as much as ever only now it has become routine, return to doing those things for me in the manner you once did, full of zeal, enthusiasm, full of love for my Word, etc., don't feel that you must do it, feel that you want to do it! Remember from when you are fallen and repent and repent and do the first works over, else I come unto thee quickly and remove thy candlestick out of its place! Be sorry for your present attitude of complacency; you are now doing things from routine and taking things for granted; I see no deep love and devotion in what you are doing. Oh, yes they still loved clean living, and they hated evil, but their love and devotion was burning low. They no longer receive that personal enjoyment that once they did when they could say, Lord, I thank you. That was all gone now, God isn't receiving that anymore and that beloved, is what He wants! Remember He loved us when we didn't love Him. Repent, Ephesus and go back to your first love, that original enthusiasm you once showed in your service toward me. Do what you do with joy and

gladness, I know you have endured much: you have had every kind of teacher to come along; I know you have been torn to pieces but don't let that destroy your love!

Poor Ephesus, the model church to the gentiles portraying the age did not repent and today Ephesus is no more! Earthquakes and invading armies ravished that capitol city and its inhabitants. History records how the Moslem world conquered all Asia, including Ephesus. One Moslem leader from Egypt came to Ephesus with his armies and massacred its inhabitants. Such things caused this city of Ephesus to be laying waste and in desolate ruins, and today only a few illiterate tribes dwell in this area who can only reminisce of Ephesus and her former day of great culture and learning. No longer is Ephesus that city of which you could hear the shouts of joy of these early Christians during the first age under Paul's influence when the books of idolatry were burned in the streets! No longer is she that city which had a stout, stalwart church whose gospel light caused all Asia to walk in truth. Instead today she is nothing but ruins of her former glory. Sad but true, the candlestick remained no longer lit, nor did it continue to shine a true revelation for Ephesus.

NICOLAITANES DEEDS

(1) WHAT WERE THE NICOLAITANES? Something else after 40 years was seen in Ephesus by the Lord of which He said He hates as well as did many of the people. But this thou hast there that thou hatest, the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. As we previously stated, the Nicolaitanes were not a group of people or a sect of people called by this name within the Ephesian Church. Bible scholars and historians alike teach by breaking the word apart that Christ used - NICO means to conquer, LAITANE, the laity - therefore Nicolaitanes means CONQUER THE LAITY or congregation. YES, it is one thing

to know that this Nicolaitane spirit was a conquering spirit from the ministry ruling over that church which also affected the age, and furthermore affected everyone of the next six ages, including our present age until the very end. We further know, this spirit that came upon the elders (ministers) later led the church away from the fivefold ministry as God had set it in the church and led it into a domineering priesthood who carried the church into Nicea 325 A.D., and on into the Dark Ages under a Trinitarian doctrine! Yes, we know what eventually happened because this spirit got into the church. The important question I ask each reader as we read together between the lines: WHY WAS IT EVER THOUGHT BY SOME PEOPLE AT EPHESUS THAT SUCH A SPIRIT OVER THE CONGREGATION WAS DEEMED NECESSARY? WERE THEY NOT HAPPY IN THEIR OPEN FELLOWSHIP, SHARING THE GREAT BLESSING OF GOD TOGETHER IN TESTIMONY, ETC.? Then why was such action deemed necessary? Nevertheless, what happened played right into the hands of Satan as some 400 years later, through a priesthood, he carried the church into the darkest ages known to church history! Christ is rebuking this church whose influence is affecting the age because He didn't want the church to go this route and demands the church repent and return to its first works - of which it did not!

For a period of time let us examine more in detail what actually caused this conquering spirit in the first place to ever take hold of the ministry. Why did the ministry deem it necessary to take such action which involved the removing of certain congregational freedom of the people? Recall, these deeds, hated by Christ, were caused from the action of someone. No, it wasn't the janitor nor from the congregation!

At first no doubt that conquering spirit was only upon a certain portion of ministry at

Ephesus, and recall what was done was not accomplished over night. I am sure those men's idea to do this thing was not on the spur of the moment. There was a condition developing in the church of which the ministry thought necessary action on their part should be taken to curb this serious problem.

Whatever these deeds were in their accomplishment had greatly hindered and displeased God, and furthermore will bring the church into a spiritual decline of which Christ will find no pleasure.

Ephesus, that influential church, having now that domineering spirit of the ministry ruling over the laity, had all eyes of the other gentile churches walking in the same message or revelation throughout Asia Minor looking upon her in such a way they too according to scripture had been influenced to follow the same procedure or take the same precaution though curtailing certain congregational liberties with their churches. However, what is so pathetic, the deeds which occurred here at Ephesus (though not a doctrine) were something that would spread everywhere, especially as we see the Pergamos Church before 95 A.D., which, by the way, would be the gentile church in Asia Minor to exemplify in spiritual type what the 3rd church age would be like as it closed out, going into the 4th church age, Thyatira. Pergamos, as we are told, wasn't just doing deeds, they had already taken the deed of action at Ephesus and made a doctrine of it! They were teaching it, they were putting it into practice and other churches would be following their example!

(2) DEEDS OR FIRST STEP OF THIS CONQUERING SPIRIT - What is the definition of a deed? Webster Dictionary defines a deed as: a thing done, or the act of doing something, or it is action expressed. Through Paul's lifetime there was no such thing as the deed of the Nicolaitanes,

therefore, this conquering spirit only appears sometime after the death of the first church age messenger and somewhere before 95 A.D. Therefore, it is here we must read between the lines using what scriptural knowledge we already have to determine what took place in less than 30 years. We are sure something definitely happened at Ephesus which necessitated action on the part of the elders of whom Paul declared the Holy Ghost had made overseers of the flock to guard them, Acts 20:25-31. Why had this conquering spirit gotten upon the ministry who were already weakened by the continual harassing of the false apostles, false revelations, etc. What promoted this spirit to act? These are the things which hold the secret to the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. No, it is not simply enough to know that Nicolaitanes was a ruling, domineering spirit over the congregation by why was it ever deemed necessary by this church ministry that a spirit of this nature act or perform the thing called a deed? No doubt as the continual harassment of these false teachers who needed Ephesus as a launching pad into influential prestige among the other churches following in the message whereby they might be looked up to as some great person, and the fact Paul spoke of such teachers as heretics of which he said, after the first and second admonition reject. Titus 3:10, could be the very things which prompted the elders to take this first step they did in removing certain congregational freedoms and liberties. Yes, it is true Paul said reject such characters as this, however, no where did he teach to change the order of the church or remove certain congregational liberties by which the people were being so greatly blessed in order to stop the appearance or shut the door on these anti-christ spirits parading through the gentile church world!

SEARCHING FOR SHORTEST
EFFECTIVE ROUTE

Get this, the leadership of the church has grown tired, become exhausted and weakened over this continual bombardment of false ideas and testimonies and with their first love being extinguished, there seems only one thing to do, that is shut the door on this stuff which has caused such heartache. Instead of these men at Ephesus relying upon the wisdom of God through His nine gifts of the spirit as they had done in the past to expose the thing as error, they now look only for the shortest and easiest route to eliminate all such things from the congregation.

Through their elimination process they not only shut the door on the false, they shut the door on everything that comes along. Their feeling is, there is so much false going on we will not allow anyone to preach here we personally do not know. Beloved, when they closed the doors no one was allowed to preach except the ministry already in there! Slowly but surely, the Holy Spirit is now beginning to be dampened and the precious 9 gifts of the Spirit which had edified, uplifted, instructed and revealed many things to the congregation, now begin to dwindle as the church is losing its first love and spiritual eyes! Yes, it all began as an action or deed on the part of the elders to curb a condition which had prevailed for some time and to curb this action, rather than brand these men as heretics, notify congregations they had left the faith, call them by name as Paul did, (I Timothy 1:19-20, II Timothy 2:17-18) they took the easy route and shut the door on everything which grieved the Spirit of God more and more until finally in 95 A.D., they received this letter from God himself demanding their repentance! No you can't blame this deed on the congregation, janitor or someone of that nature, the blame goes directly to the ministry who was looking for an easy way out of this dilemma, an act which at first seemed harmless. Correcting the problem was fine, that should have been done! What grieved God was the method

used in eliminating their problem. In the long run it had proven to be a trick of Satan for the long range program which would end in the Dark Ages! These elders could not see that at the time, seeing they had already lost that close fellowship and communion with Christ as He informed them they were leaving their first love. That with the fact they were running scared caused them to take away certain congregational liberties to curb their problem.

SATAN AND HIS SCARECROWS

Recall, when Satan desires to catch the church in a plot or snare he will always throw out a few scarecrows to get the people's attention looking in another direction as he runs through the door and lays his trap, while all the time the thing or object the people have been watching was nothing other than Satan's scarecrow! Yes, the objective is to get you to look away while he runs past and leads you into the trap he has set for you. God had taken Paul and in three years practically crippled Satan's kingdom throughout Asia, beginning at Ephesus. This religion which highly exalted a woman called Diana lost untold converts to the new revelation of Jesus Christ. Satan would not take such a blow sitting down, instead he sought to return the people back into a false religion wherein within less than 600 years he had succeeded to bringing in a priesthood to replace the fivefold ministry God had set in the church, and slowly the people are turned down the revelation of Paul back to a pagan religion where the center of the religion is another woman whose name, this time is not Diana, but Mary! Such an act on the part of the elders had grieved the Spirit, (Ephesians 4:30) who could no longer work freely among His people through His nine gifts of the Spirit nor His gifted fivefold ministry outside this particular body of fellowship. Nevertheless, it was the feeling of the elders at Ephesus because the fellowship there was so open it

represented such free access for these false teachers, apostles, etc., and even those among themselves to rise up and do much harm to the body. Their manner of worship which Paul had left to them was making it too simple for these false teachers to gain access of standing in the congregation testifying to their false theories. What they were going to do was shut the door on all this.

OTHER CHURCHES FOLLOW EXAMPLESHIP

Satan could sacrifice the loss of the opportunity to invade the privacy of the church through the false teachers seeing that was nothing but a scarecrow anyway to drive these men into this excited state of action because Satan knew only too well, it would curb and eventually cause this God given leadership, of which route God had chosen to bless his people to leave the scene also. The eyes of all the church world was upon Ephesus (especially Asia) seeing the messenger to the age had pastored here and the feeling from the other churches was, if any church in the message knew the leadership of God for the hour, it must be the church at Ephesus. Naturally, the other churches facing somewhat the same problem, though not nearly the extent Ephesus was, thought it proper procedure to follow the EXAMPLESHIP of Ephesus. However, what was only a deed or act of doing something at Ephesus, certain other churches took this deed of action and went so far as to make a doctrine of it! That which was only a mere deed at Ephesus became a doctrine at Pergamos before 95 A.D.

HOW NICOLAITANE SPIRIT DREW STRENGTH

A moment ago we stated after the door was closed at Ephesus and other churches followed their example, and the Spirit of God could no longer have control of their services;

where once the great blessing of God had been present, soon became a vacuum. We know a vacuum does not stay empty, something will fill its place and to take its place or fill the vacuum came the necessity to place more and more emphasis upon the ministry, lifting it higher and higher.

Why was this? Recall, the people of Ephesus are mainly converts from that once powerful Diana religion and in their heathen ways before converted it was a normal procedure to allow a heathen priest to rule and domineer their life. Their pagan background of priesthood is responsible as they had been taught to place the priest of Diana upon a pedestal and highly exalt them. Thus the convert having turned to Christ after taking such an open beating from these false teachers, and seeing how the elders have now taken this step they feel will protect them as this deed became an act on their part to shut out this kind of spirit whereby it may no longer attack them or at least they wouldn't have to put up with it, now they began to exalt the ministry!

FROM HOLY GHOST LEADERSHIP TO MANMADE LEADERSHIP

As the nine gifts of the spirit fade from the assembly and the joy leaves as well, the program of the church slowly begins to change! Now instead of Holy Ghost leadership it becomes man's own carnal leadership and ceremonial rituals. No, it did not immediately become a priesthood, however, these men began to steer the course exactly like that of the priesthood until it became a form, day in and day out. Gifts began to vanish from the assembly, as well as true revelation which had fed their hearts. Slowly but surely this all created a vacuum. It creates a hunger in some but a satisfaction in others, because you always have that

element of people who wouldn't know a revelation from a theory. Revelation doesn't concern them, they are only interested in a short sermon in order to get out quickly, to go home! No, let it be understood they have not as yet taken the attitude or set themselves up as priests, however, they are taking on a priestly attitude in the way they handle things. Month after month this continues and that which first a few men did to correct a situation as the church came under attack by the anti-christ spirit, the church now begins to become more motivated and controlled by a certain party of men.

Ephesus reaches a standstill. That love which once they had - diminishes, as Ephesus is now controlled by this Nicolaitane spirit and the ministry which once came through those doors to take the great congregation onward into new heights of the Spirit is heard no more. Satan has set his trap which he will spring several hundred year later at Nicea Council 325 A.D.! This conquering spirit, or deeds of the Nicolaitanes, took hold of the congregation as they no longer were a congregation taught by the revelation of the Spirit. The Spirit now grieved can no longer move among them. Satan had now thrust his dart to the very heart of the church and spiritually killed it, which was his main objective. Now can you see the DEEDS OF THE NICOLAITANES and what caused it? It was caused by those minor anti-christ spirits continually harassing the church until it forced the church to do something, either to rely completely upon God and His inspiration or take the easier way and rely on carnality and the inspiration of the devil who had built a plot to bring the church to naught.

PERGAMOS MAKES DOCTRINE

No sooner had Ephesus done what she did and Pergamos heard about it. Pergamos now becoming more worldly minded each day, took this and made a doctrine out of it,

teaching it as a mandatory thing! Because of that spirit, beloved, the devil used Pergamos's doctrine because recall, Pergamos exemplifies the 3rd Church Age. It was that very spirit which sat at the Nicea Council, held a few miles from the coast of Pergamos in 325 A.D., when, of all people, Constantine the Roman Emperor gathered all the bishops together for a settlement on the doctrine of the Godhead! That spirit which was at Ephesus became a doctrine at Pergamos sowing the seeds and building the groundwork in that universal (priesthood) ministry whereby at Nicea the ministry which started in the first church age of apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists was not something of the past! Church rituals had been manufactured to fill the vacuum of true worship and freedom of the moving of the Spirit. And get this, that great revelation of the one God as taught by the Apostle Paul at Ephesus slowly is covered over by the theory of two other persons in the Godhead. That church which was a great light and where God lit his candle to shine across all Asia, before 155 A.D., had already accepted and begun to teach and baptize into the Trinitarian theory! HOW ART THE MIGHTY (CHURCH) FALLEN!

PART 4 - AFTER 1900 YEARS HAS HISTORY REPEATED ITSELF?

How well do I remember back before 1955, the Tabernacle in Jeffersonville, Indiana, a church and a lighthouse that I feel served in this age to the gentile Laodicean Church Age the same direction and purpose as did that of Ephesus where God lit his candle in the first age. A church that possessed great revelation due to the fact the messenger to the Laodicean Church Age, the final age, stood and taught the revelation of truth as did the Apostle Paul, fulfilling the office of Malachi 4:5-6, Revelation 10:7, as he was bringing a people back unto the true revelation of the Word.

EARLY DAYS AND OPEN FELLOWSHIP

How well do I recall those early years when one was permitted to shake hands within the church with his brother or sister, something that is of a scarcity among people of this message today. It was an hour when the service had finished, it was not thought strange to see the prophet himself standing in the middle of the church aisle, inside the house of God, perhaps with a dozen people standing around him as he told them of the goodness of God, many times until after 11 o'clock when finally everyone would go home. However, these are scenes that are witnessed no more at this great lighthouse to the gentile age. New rulings have long since gone into effect, however back in those early days, that is before the Tabernacle actually became a prominent drawing card and known around the world as that of Ephesus, and before all these off-color characters (spiritually speaking) began to crown into the picture who forced the Branham Tabernacle to make an order removing certain congregational liberties which affected everything from the back seat to the pulpit. WHY? Because certain things had gotten completely out of hand or completely out of scriptural order in the church.

AFTER 9 YEARS - LOOK!!

May I say the remarks I will make are not made because I am bitter or have some personal ax to grind with anyone. My only interest is, ARE WE OBEYING THE WORD OF GOD? Did you know after nine years of such an order that was produced in the Branham Tabernacle to eliminate many problems which had arisen within their own congregation as certain people were taking far too much liberty causing an extreme amount of confusion and resulting in an embarrassment upon the ministry and the

lighthouse itself and churches everywhere feeling, as did Pergamos in the first age, that they too must insert this order, not actually knowing why only that the prophet had placed it within his own church in Jeffersonville, such assemblies are dead having no more leadership of God than the Roman priesthood, who, in the beginning destroyed the original fivefold ministry set in by God and commanded to be left in force until this ministry had brought us all into the perfect unity of the faith, (which has never yet been accomplished) and secondly killed the gifts of the spirit which led and blessed and instructed those first assemblies. After nine long years these assemblies who took it upon themselves to copy or patten themselves after the Branham Tabernacle in respect to a CHURCH ORDER which was being used strictly for a punishment upon an unruly segment of the congregation has killed all movement of the Holy Spirit in their assemblies! For since then it has been difficult for the Spirit of God to find freedom in such congregations as these, to operate His gifts and being the Spirit He is, one easily grieved, (Ephesians 4;30) most of such assemblies have become strictly led only by certain individuals within the congregation. Today, it has reached the point that few in this message know the difference between CHURCH ORDER and SCRIPTURAL ORDER IN THE CHURCH.

SCRIPTURAL ORDER IN CHURCH, WHAT IS IT?

WHAT IS ORDER IN THE CHURCH? It is anything sanctioned by the Word of God! Anything the Word of God sanctions is perfectly in order in the church until certain individuals within the congregation oversteps those scriptural God given privileges within a fellowship and must undergo correction, as what happened in the Branham Tabernacle more than nine years ago. May I say, the

prophet was perfectly entitled to whip his unruly children of the church in any manner he saw necessary to discipline them, however, for someone else to take this deed of action by the Branham Tabernacle and the prophet himself, place it in their own church, teaching it as a doctrine as they did in Pergamos saying, all churches and pastors who do not follow this procedure are not in the message, nor in the bride of Christ, is going too far! The day any individual tells you, you must whip your church children in your congregation as did the prophet some nine years ago when there is no cause for you to do likewise, seeing your problem is not the same as was his, you don't have the lighthouse that reached across the gentile world; you don't have these characters and certain individuals overstepping their scriptural liberties within the congregation, and for some individual to say unless you do the same thing you are not in the message, and take that order and use it as a whip or a means to frighten people and churches into a certain line of thought which can lead only to total spiritual disaster and a complete driving away of the liberties of the Spirit among his people when there is no cause whatsoever, is to play into the hands of Satan to destroy the very revelation of truth which has delivered unto a people in this hour to place them back within that same early church fellowship with the Holy Spirit they had in the days of Paul and the early fivefold ministry.

Therefore, the CHURCH ORDER, which was merely a deed of action used in order to correct certain problems developed in one church, became a DOCTRINE and a guideline to others as to whether or not you are in the body of Christ or in the message of the hour unless you yield and accept it as a DOCTRINE into your congregation accepting those certain regulations governing the gifts of the Spirit, which was one of the major problems in the Branham Tabernacle - when you don't even have any gifts of the

Spirit in operation WHY WOULD YOU NEED AN ORDER TO REGULATE THEM? Don't you know a saddle is to be put upon a LIVE HORSE and NOT A DEAD WOODEN DUMMY!! Unless your people have gotten completely out of order, why would you want to punish them by taking away their liberties as so many did? Is there any wonder the Spirit of God was so grieved whereupon nine years later these churches who accepted this as a doctrine has driven the Holy Spirit far from their idea of worship! Yes, beloved, we have reached the point today, nine years later, certain men have taken it upon themselves to push this church order which could only be applied to one place and that was THE LIGHTHOUSE OF THE AGE! Men, first of all, who did not even have enough spirituality and God given leadership about them to know what they had in their minds of doing would kill every precious assembly, driving out the Spirit and the gifts as they used it for a whip or a club over people's head! There is nothing one of these characters could have done that could have pleased Satan more! They did not seem to have enough spirituality to know to leave the order where it belonged or had been originally placed in the beginning! Therefore, we have reached the place that thousands know what the CHURCH ORDER was (as it was used for a correction rod) but they DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURAL ORDER OF THE ASSEMBLY.

WHAT IS ORDER IN THE CHURCH? It is anything that has a scriptural O.K. on it! THAT IS TRUE BIBLICAL ORDER IN THE CHURCH! If it is scriptural praise, it is order in the church! If it is preaching, it is order in the church; if it is singing, it is order in the church; if it is gifts being divinely operated by the Spirit, it most certainly is order in the church. WHY? Because it is all scripturally sanctioned and okayed by the

Word of God. That alone is what makes it order by the church. However, and don't ever forget this, because this is partially what happened at the Branham Tabernacle causing that order to go into effect - if anyone is misusing any of that mentioned above or anything else of a scriptural nature whether it be praise, singing, preaching, prophesying or whatever then it becomes an act or deed of necessity to correct any misuse of that which has already overstepped its spiritual liberties!

MANY MISUSED FACTORS PROMPTED CHURCH ORDER

Therefore, as I stated earlier, in those years before the 60's when the Branham Tabernacle had not become such a prominent drawing card like that of Ephesus and every so-called preacher with every kind of idea had not as yet linked himself into this unspoiled picture, I can well remember for example, standing in the vestibule within the old building as Bro. Branham had delivered a lengthy sermon on some major Bible teaching that morning and we would be gathered back in the evening for the night service when in those days they came from far and near, from the East, West; from Texas to Maine, Canada etc., and there would always find certain characters standing - blocking the hallway, handing out tracts which would pertain to their own personal idea. Never will I forget one particular evangelist standing there one night in the vestibule with his revelation on **HOW MANY WERE ON THE CROSS AND EVERYTHING ABOUT THE CRUCIFIXION ,ETC.** Such things became a common sight of which down at Faith Assembly and many other congregations we did not have such problems, standing there in the vestibule of the Tabernacle teaching their own personal little doctrines to a dozen men or whoever they might corner, filling their heads with all kinds of ideas before the service. Imagine when a people had come

from all over the U.S. and many parts of the world to hear an end-time prophet proclaim a great revelation as his message was restoring us back to Bible truth when he would have to follow such characters who had overstepped their liberty to promote their own ideas before the prophet came to speak! Or sitting in the church itself, talking and yakking to perhaps 6-12 others concerning their own revelation, God forbid that a prophet of this caliber would have to take a bunch of minds like that and try to get them straightened out in about 1 hour and 45 minutes, seeing all this other garbage had been dumped into their ears! I ask you, what would you do? Really, what I feel should have been done, however I can only speak for Faith Assembly Church, the deacons should have shown these characters the front door and said **GET OUT OF HERE AS YOUR INTENTIONS ARE NOT WALK IN THE TUE REVELATIONS OF CHRIST**, and still leave the church door open as these are the exact instructions the deacons of Faith Assembly Church have from me personally considering any such characters who invade our assembly. And as the little song goes, when the people get to acting up in the pew what should you do - **THROW THEM OUT**, but leave the church door open and let the church roll on!

Another problem arising in those days was people had come along who portrayed themselves to be so spiritual and in line with this truth, yet wouldn't live right, refusing to pay their just and honest debts. In other words, dead-beats for the most part! However, they enjoyed standing in the open congregation of fellowship and operating spiritual gifts. See when you have such a collection of things which converge on the church and these conditions seemingly get no better only prevail worse and worse, what would you do? You are forced to act and the fact you act or what you do becomes a deed. You are forced to act because of prevailing conditions. And I say, with all due respect to

this great man of God which God so greatly used in this hour who knew, because of these many arising circumstances which was greatly affecting the spirituality of this lighthouse in which God chose to light his candle to the gentiles to spread the full revelation of truth to the 7th and final church age restoring a Bride people back to the unadulterated Word of God, and probably not aware of the fact in a few years after making this church order he would be off the scene, leaving the order to run in every direction or to about anyone's interpretation as to what is was all about, something had to be done to correct these who had overstepped their rights as a believer. And because of his own personal makeup, a kind, loving, easygoing man who didn't enjoy hurting anyone (instead of making an example out of this individuals) he made a church order which affected not only those guilty of trespasses, but also affected the innocent as well! For the order covered everything from the back seat to the Bible stand.

RESULTS OF INDIVIDUALS PUSHING CHURCH ORDER

Let me go on record as saying, as unwise characters began to push this church order out of its original bonds where it was supposed to be kept, like what happened at Pergamos etc., now after nine long years of this in other churches, placing it where it had no business has completely killed off the nine gifts of the Spirit which are supposed to be in the church of which this message was supposed to call out a people to be ready to go with the Lord who would have those nine gifts of the Spirit in operation within their local assemblies. After nine long years of misguided individuals taking this one order of correction, given to and for the BRANHAM TABERNACLE ONLY, having used it in such a pathetic way, it has spread enough fear, doubt, unrest, distrust and created enough spiritual disease that the nine gifts

and nine fruits of spirit lay dormant and yet everyone is crying HOW WILL IT ALL END, and some are even going so far to teach and believe it is going to take a PERSONAL RESURRECTION of Bro. Branham to return and straighten out this mess in order for it to be ever ready to go in the rapture.

PAUL NOT RAISED TO CORRECT FIRST AGE

All I have to say is this, according to the scripture God didn't resurrect Paul to come back from the grave to straighten out that first age after it had followed Ephesus' exampleship and made a doctrine out of the thing crippling the influence of the spirit of God to move through his church, destroying the authority of the fivefold ministry and brining in a priesthood which carried it into the Dark Ages. NO, GOD DID NOT RESURRECT PAUL AFTER HIS DEATH, but He did speak through John on the Isle of Patmos saying to Ephesus, You left your first love and have there those who hold deeds of the Nicolaitanes of which I hate. Therefore I command you to repent, else I take away your candlestick. Oh, I realize after nine years when I make a statement like this people who have no scriptural grounds to hold to and have no intentions of returning to the scriptural truth in which this prophet's life was dedicated to restore us unto before Christ would come for a Bride whereby at the wedding supper we would be a people all believing the same thing, these people will say oh, YOU ARE SPEAKING AGAINST THE PROPHET! You see, that is what they always say, because they do not have anything scriptural to support them, therefore, they hide behind this favorite statement.

I WANT TO SAY AGAIN JUST FOR THE BENEFIT OF THESE INDIVIDUALS, I AM NOT SPEAKING AGAINST WHAT

THE PROPHET DID IN HIS OWN CHURCH, AND FURTHERMORE, WHEN I VISIT THAT ASSEMBLY I AM COURTEOUS TO OBSERVE EVERY RULE MADE BY THAT GREAT MAN OF GOD CONCERNING THIS ORDER OF CORRECTION MADE FOR HIS LOCAL ASSEMBLY. But brother, God forbid the man who says simply because the prophet did a certain thing in a certain way as he saw fit to spank his unruly child, that I must in turn spank my child the same when my child may not have done this, THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! God is not looking for copycats of this nature, He is looking for people who will copy after the one and only - THE LORD JESUS CHRIST! Question: If you had 7 children and only one overstepped his privilege, would you punish all 7 or only the one who overstepped his privilege?

Therefore, when this certain CHURCH ORDER went into effect at the Branham Tabernacle, true it stopped those characters from sitting long hours in advance of the service teaching their own private doctrines to a dozen people or standing in the vestibule expressing their own views and distributing their tracts, however, it didn't stop them from moving out into the parking lot, because the order only covered the inside of the building. At least they couldn't do it within the meeting house anymore! It stopped the false prophesying from the congregation, but don't forget IT ALSO STOPPED THE TRUE PROPHECY which had also been coming from out of the congregation. You see, the true also suffered! And now that CHURCH ORDER has been in affect for some nine years, all over this country, an order intended for only one place, simply because of unscriptural dealings by certain individuals, it now not only affects one place as it was originally intended, it seriously affects multitudes of other places! After nine years the hearts of many people know something is wrong and perhaps even see their gross error,

only are too proud to admit it. That's a gentile for you. In general he is too proud to admit he was ever wrong. I want to say, had they left the order alone where it was originally intended to be, the message itself could have moved on in the Spirit of the Lord! When the prophet himself said after making this disciplinary order to affect his local church, WE WILL LEAVE IT IN FOR A WHILE THEN WE WILL SEE WHAT THE LORD WILL HAVE US TO DO ABOUT IT! It was definitely his intention after it had served its purpose at this one location to have been lifted, however, before the prophet could do this he was taken from the scene and this order, as it was picked up by others who didn't care if a gift ever operated, who didn't care whether God's blessings ever flowed through the congregation, their orders became, get rid of your tambourines, get rid of your guitars and your special singings. In reality they were saying get rid of everything God could use to bless a soul with an then they would use the church order, as a whipping post, to get their carnal ideas across! Until today it has reached the place preaching church order, to these characters of which they can find no scriptural grounds for doing, has become more important than seeing a soul walk in the true revelation or be baptized in the same Jesus Christ! It seems the subject of CHURCH ORDER was the first thing a preacher wanted to get in the pulpit with and begin to hammer and beat everyone else in the face with, using such unscriptural phrase to frighten people as, God will severely judge you if you don't or your are not in the message thus you couldn't be in the Bride! Throw out those tambourines, guitars and special music!

BLINDED INDIVIDUALS DRIVE OUT SPIRIT

Therefore, these individuals drove out what little Spirit had remained in these assemblies robbing them of their personal joy and oral expression of liberty and most of all destroyed the gifts of the Spirit from operating in the church. Now you sing two songs, have a short prayer, read out of the books and simply say something about the prophet, dismiss the service and go home feeling - BOY, WE SURE ARE IN THE MESSAGE AND READY FOR THE RAPTURE, when beloved, they who walk in that kind of attitude and atmosphere are as the old saying, "DEAD AS A DOOR NAIL"! Why, the Baptist have more Spirit than that! No, I am not making fun, but I realize after nine years what this has done to the churches and what the church has come to. These poor people haven't manifested a gift of God since that day! Naturally, after nine years why should they believe in them. After nine years of all this they have no more spirit or know anything more about God. No, it is sad to say they don't even know as much as they did nine years before about God and won't ever know. WHY? Because they invited this into their hearts and shut the door on the leadership and manifestation of the Spirit of God!

OVERCOMERS IN EACH AGE

Christ continually says to the churches, he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh (overcometh what?). This condition within the church and to the age. I say, as it was in that hour of the Ephesus Age, it is up to the individual to overcome those things which hinder them as well as the worldly conditions of the hour. It is up to the individual to recognize his own liberty in the Word of God as God through His sovereign grace gives him the liberty to be in and participate as a yielded vessel in the plan of God. Yes, it is up to the individual to overcome those spiritual conditions, rise up and shake himself and

walk in the love of God, allowing the joy of salvation to live within his heart. The condition itself will go on, not getting any better yet, God says to the individual, to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Oh, how thankful I am there is a great promise of what we may have access to in the other life if we overcome!

MANY IGNORANT OF REASON FOR CHURCH ORDER

I have met people across the country who had no idea why CHURCH ORDER was ever brought into effect in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Many people have their idea that the prophet needed all the time himself and that is what caused it to be made. Well, if that be true then what about the great percentage of time he wasn't there? He certainly didn't need the time then and what about since he has been gone these seven years, he certainly hasn't needed the time. No beloved, that is not why CHURCH ORDER was made! I remember so well when I first began going to the Tabernacle when it had an open fellowship, it was this very thing that made me feel so at home. No sooner had we set down then someone shook our hand and said we are glad to see you, where are you from etc., and after the service invited us to return. Although when I heard that man speak for the first time in my heart I knew I was going to return. After preaching he would come down and stand in the aisle where we would all talk until late hours before going home and we felt like we had been to church!

SATAN MUDDIES WATER IN OPEN FELLOWSHIP

However, it wasn't long before you could sense there were these certain individual people who didn't want the Holy Ghost to move, some of them who were out of certain

denominational churches who sat in high places, who wouldn't give their tithe there but instead send it back to a denominational church. Beloved, I have never done a dirty trick like that! I believe in paying my grocery bill where I buy my groceries! And in those days the congregation was always left open for the Holy Spirit to have option in whatever it saw fit to do. And so, often the Spirit would move and bless the people. There was always someone who wanted to make a fuss about it. Nevertheless, God would move back the opposition as He moved in with enough momentum for a short period of time it would seem like the Holy Spirit was going to have complete authority and the right to work and do as it pleased Him in the congregation. You can rest assured when the devil knows that, he will have to put another shot in the arm. Then it wasn't long until people would take advantage of testimony time talking about things which should be thrown in the trash can and every time it seemed the Holy Spirit would give the opportunity and liberty to testify of God's goodness, these same individuals always wanted to hassle and wrangle about foolish things, which isn't testimony but complaining! And coming to prayer requests, some people don't seem to know the difference between prayer requests and how sick someone's dog is. I am not complaining, I am presenting you a picture of when people have liberty in the congregation how the devil doesn't like it and does everything possible to muddy the water!

ORDER MADE AFFECTING ALL
RATHER THAN HUMILIATE
GUILTY

What does he do, he shoots just enough human nature and ideas into it to aggravate the situation and create a condition. Rather than humiliate anyone or make anyone a victim of circumstance, let us just make an order. This will be done and that will be done

and when we have done this for a while we will see what the Lord will have us to do. No sooner was this said and done sure, it stopped the testifying, the prayer requests and those long-winded preachers who couldn't say anything, but the word of the prophet, when the congregation already knew the word of the prophet - beloved, let me say, if the name of Jesus Christ cannot become the central theme of your message and your preaching and still be thankful in your hearts to God He was kind enough to send a prophet to straighten out our thinking and put us back in the truth of the Bible, then there is something carnally wrong in our minds. Because I want you to know all prophets prior to Christ's coming, as well as these since His coming, God has willed that everyone who preaches anything in respect to this gospel preaches it centered around and about the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ said if I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me, nevertheless, I once heard an individual make the remark about this scripture, which pertained only to Christ hanging on the cross, saying, He was going to lift up William Branham. Beloved, may I say this, if you don't lift up Jesus Christ who died on the cross, I have my doubts that very much of the atonement which flowed from the cross of Calvary will ever be your portion! Everyone knows when Bro. William Branham preached he magnified and lifted up that Christ who hung on the cross and never once was it ever his intentions to be lifted up himself. The virtue of Calvary didn't come from this man, however, by the spirit of this man he pointed you through the revelation to that Christ.

Yes, as I said, this church order stopped those long-winded preacher in the pulpit who couldn't say anything but, the word of the prophet, although once the prophet himself had delivered a lengthy message those individuals couldn't wait until they had dashed to the outside world and because they had no leadership of the Holy Spirit to guide

them to know what God was doing, their feelings like Pergamos was **WHATEVER IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE TABERNACLE IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR HERE!** Beloved, through their diabolical leadings they have placed the church in the state it is as they have killed out the Spirit and His nine gifts and diseased the nine fruits of the Spirit, as they took their whip (this order) and did worse to the grace of God than the Catholic Church ever did!

Church order placed in other churches did not kill the Spirit in every assembly because some were **ALREADY DEAD!**

MANY WEIRD IDEAS SINCE **CHURCH ORDER**

Briefly I want to show you I am not ignorant of what I am speaking, of how the spirit which has led these people has now led them into revelations straight out of the pit. I say the man I heard called William Branham the prophet, what he taught me placed me **BACK IN THE BIBLE**, and if you haven't been placed **BACK IN THE BIBLE** you are still wandering and drifting today! To any of our new readers who might not understand what I am teaching and you think this is simply awful, you should have set in some of those early apostolic churches before 96 A.D. when the elders at Ephesus had clamped down on the Spirit of God and heard some of those ridiculous revelations which floated through the congregation!

Recently I received a call from a very disturbed person who had been in this message two years. Somehow they had received one of our Contenders with the message **REVEALED SCRIPTURES PRODUCE CONSISTENCY**. The individual informed me how because of a deep hunger for God they had been led from a certain denominational church and had been given

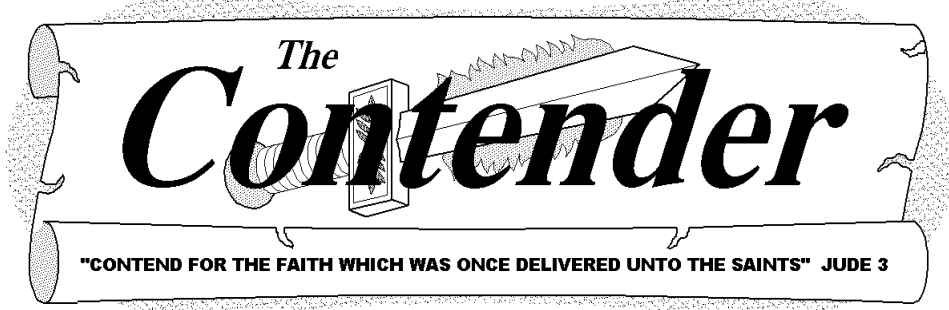
some literature concerning what Bro. Branham had taught. Later they began to attend this certain church whereupon as the months passed by instead of being helped they realized they were becoming more confused. The person said, I was aware God has sent a prophet and what he had taught was supposed to put me back in the Apostolic faith, however, the more I listened in this certain place I wasn't hearing at all what I had been reading. I was only hearing certain parts. It soon reached a place I was very disturbed. Each time they got in the pulpit it seemed every other word, said this individual, was **THE PROPHET, THE PROPHET**, until they began to wonder **WHERE WAS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN ALL THIS**. If I dared open my mouth, continued this person, people would try to hush me up with this phrase, **NOW DON'T YOU BLASPHEME!** I heard this until I thought my life was dominated by fear. Now, the caller said they have taken the extreme in this church to teach that people should remain unmarried. Remember, I said, Paul wrote to Timothy saying in the latter days some (thank God not all) would depart from the faith teaching that very doctrine. I know where that idea came from, it came from certain individuals' personal interpretation of what their twisted minds understood Bro. Branham to mean when he preached on **MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE**. No, they didn't get that idea from the Bible. And I said to this person, those poor people who didn't take on that kind of spirit, got influenced by another which is just as rotten, referring to one's mate that if you feel God did not give you the right one, ditch her and get another, or else just keep her and get a second one. Beloved, it is time we returned to this Bible! I am only saying these things to show you when the people wandered off the trail once they accepted a church order because it did not pertain to their assembly as it was used strictly for disciplinary action.

To show you how far this thing had drifted, many who took that route (of church order) since now driving the Holy Spirit from their churches, no teach no one has the Holy Ghost, and I personally doubt that anyone who remains very long in that atmosphere does have the Holy Ghost. A friend of mine, doing missionary work in Trinidad has made three visits, said each time he visited the island things were drifting further and further into the state of apostasy. Men from our local area, who are supposed to be a part of this message, had been on the island teaching in churches that no one was born again until they came into this message. That, by the way, is what they were teaching last spring. However, on his recent journey he discovered the northern part of the island where churches had been established in this message, all of them had been caught up in this teaching as he was given no opportunity to speak in any of them. One pastor whom he questioned was bold enough, who had this diabolical spirit upon him so strongly that not only did he explain it to the missionary, he wrote it down, dated and signed it and we have a copy. It goes like this; **THERE HAS BEEN NO ONE BORN AGAIN APART OR OUTSIDE OF WILLIAM MARRION BRANHAM SINCE THE DAYS OF THE NICEA COUNCIL UNTIL THE DAY THE SEVEN SEALS WERE REVEALED BY WILLIAM BRANHAM, GOD'S PROPHET IN 1963.** There has been no one between these two periods of time born again outside the prophet.

Now do you see why some misguided souls go through the land teaching no one has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost because they certainly do not have it themselves.! If they did, they would not teach such rotten stuff from the pit and think **THEY GOT IT EVERY BIT OFF A MESSAGE ENTITLED, "THAT STATUE OF A PERFECT MAN."** When Bro. Branham taught that message he never intended for

anyone to develop such a carnal opinion as that. He preached that message to get you back in the Bible as he preached all his messages; to make a real Christian out of you wherein Christ might dwell in your life, and certainly he was not responsible for such a weird teaching as that! Such characters as these running over the country are ruining God's people! Instead of helping them go forward, they are responsible for them going backward, and what they can't make go backward they cause them to go sideways. And they say to me, Bro. Jackson, you know we have to have love! Beloved, I say these sheep killing dogs, or dumb dogs as Isaiah called them, wouldn't know the love of God if they saw a boxcar load of it! The only thing they love is for you to get deceived like they are, get in the same ship with them and sail out in no-man's land far, far away from the truth! **REMEMBER, BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER!**

should be looked upon strictly from a



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