

The *Contender*

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

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BROTHERS AND SISTERS: WE ARE TRULY A PRIVILEGED PEOPLE. TO BE LIVING IN THIS HOUR OF TIME, AND TO HAVE THIS PRECIOUS WORD OF GOD REVEALED TO US AS MUCH AS IT IS, IS SOMETHING THAT MONEY CANNOT BUY. WE ARE

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TRULY FEASTING UPON THE MANNA THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, AND THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD THAT WE COME IN CONTACT WITH EVERY DAY, THINK WE ARE CRAZY, BUT IF THIS IS A TRUE EXAMPLE OF BEING CRAZY, I WOULD SURE HATE TO BE SANE AGAIN. HALLELUJAH! HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD! IN HIS GREAT WISDOM AND FOREKNOWLEDGE, HE INSPIRED SAINTS OF OTHER AGES TO RECORD THE THINGS THAT WOULD COME TO PASS IN OUR AGE OF TIME, AND YET HAD IT COMPLETELY HIDDEN FROM THE GREAT SCHOLARS THAT HAVE SPENT SO MANY YEARS OF THEIR LIVES STUDYING IT FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THEOLOGY, THAT NONE OF THEM EVER RECEIVED A TRUE REVELATION OF IT. JUST TO USE A VERY NATURAL

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ILLUSTRATION TO EMPHASIZE A SPIRITUAL REALITY, LET ME SAY THIS, WHAT MAY BE GARBAGE TO SOME FOLKS, IS LIFE GIVING, AND LIFE SUSTAINING FOOD TO OTHERS. YOU HAVE SEEN LITTLE CHILDREN, AND EVEN MANY ADULTS, FILL A LARGE PLATE WITH FOOD, AND THEN JUST SIT WITH A FORK, OR A SPOON, AND WALLOU IT AROUND EATING ONLY A FEW BITES, AND THEN IT IS DUMPED INTO A GARBAGE CAN. BUT YOU LET SOME FELLOW COME ALONG THAT HAS HAD NOTHING TO EAT FOR A FEW DAYS, AND WHAT HE FINDS IN THAT GARBAGE CAN BECOMES A GREAT FEAST TO HIM. THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT YOUR GREAT SCHOLARS HAVE DONE WITH THE WORD OF GOD. THEY HAVE WRESTLED WITH IT, WALLOWED IT AROUND, PICKED OUT A FEW MAN PLEASING THEORIES, AND THEN DUMPED THE REST IN THEIR SPIRITUAL GARBAGE CAN. THEY HAD NO TASTE FOR THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN WATER BAPTISM, NOR FOR THE ONENESS OF THE GODHEAD, NOR FOR PREDESTINATION, NOR FOR ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE TRUE BELIEVER, AND A GREAT PERCENTAGE OF THEM EVEN REJECT THE TRUTH OF THE NECESSITY OF RECEIVING THE

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST. BUT WE ARE LIVING IN AN HOUR WHEN TRUE BELIEVERS HAVE A CRAVING IN THEIR SOUL TO FEED UPON THIS HIDDEN MANNA, AND THEY DO NOT LOOK FOR A DOCTOR OF DIVINITY TO FEED IT TO THEM. GOD HAS AN ANOINTED MINISTRY OF APOSTLES, PROPHETS, EVANGELISTS, PASTORS AND TEACHERS TO DO THE FEEDING, AND THE ONLY DIPLOMA REQUIRED IS GIVEN BY THE HOLY GHOST. LET US KEEP THIS IN MIND NOW, AS WE CONTINUE OUR EXAMINATION OF THE LETTERS WRITTEN TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA BY THE HAND OF THE APOSTLE JOHN, WHO WAS IN EXILE ON THE ISLE OF PATMOS WHEN JESUS INSTRUCTED HIM TO DO SO.

PERGAMOS CONTINUED

We ended part one of this message, speaking of the hidden manna, and the white stone in which is written a new name known only to him that receiveth it (Revelation 2:17). We have pointed out the fact that the hidden manna is for us to feed upon in this present life, and the white stone with a new name, is for our life in immortality, for we do

not need a new name in this present life. The 19th chapter of the book of Revelation is where our new name comes into the picture, for that is where we read of Jesus descending to earth with the armies which were in heaven, and in verse 12, it says that He (Jesus) had a name written that no man knew, but He Himself. I will just say this, The new name must correspond to what He is in His office work for the hour of time that is being fulfilled at the time. Therefore let it be understood that our new name is for the hereafter life, when we are in immortality.

ONE MUST BE LORD

Now at this time I want to call your attention to various things that were written by anonymous men that I have come across in studying history. I found where one man wrote, and explained the Millennium, just like we have published right back there in the article titled, "The Age of Regeneration." When I read that, I felt just like stomping a hole through the floor, if I may express my joy in that way. I said, Hallelujah! Let these critics pull their hair out if they want to, for if I am crazy, at least there was one other man that was just as crazy as me. I do not know who he was; but listen to what he wrote concerning the Godhead, whether God is one, two,

three or a half dozen. He is challenging the heretics who are teaching that God is more than one, and says, "As to whether there be one God or more, there is indeed much ambiguity, for not only do individuals differ among themselves, but also peoples and nations. But he who shall follow the guidance of reason, will understand that there cannot be a Lord, except one. Neither a Father, except one. For if God who made all things is also Lord, and Father, He must of necessity be only one, or one only, so that the same may be the head and source of all things. It is not possible for the world to exist unless all things be referred to one person, unless one hold the rudder, unless one guide the reins, and as it were, one mind direct all members of the body. If there are many kings in a swarm of bees, they will perish, or be scattered abroad after a while." This man, whoever he was, lets us know what the basic issues were, in this great hour of struggle when Satan was trying to destroy the hidden manna that true believers were to feed upon. It also allows us to see that the sword of the Spirit, which is the truth, and the way it is handled, will always be used to defend the righteous and true child of God in his, or her battle against Satan and his heretics. This is the only way we can survive the many attacks of Satan when he is trying so hard to destroy everything, and every one that stands for truth. For what it really is when you know the truth of it, is a battle between two spiritual forces, the

Spirit of God in the true believer, against the spirit of Satan in the heretics. This is how God keeps the channel open for true believers of every age to find the hidden manna. There is never a question as to who will win in a battle of this kind, for we should always remember what the apostle John wrote in his first Epistle, chapter 4, verse 4, when he was speaking of these Antichrist spirits, "Ye are of God, little children and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." The Holy Spirit in us will always have the victory over false doctrine if we will just allow Him to lead us and give us utterance.

WHITE STONE - NEW **NAME TO OVERCOMERS**

Now Brothers and Sisters: Listen to a few more little excerpts that I will read from the many, many chapters this same man wrote concerning the great truths of the word of God. This next one is about the ending of time, as he refers to it, and the evils of the nations, just before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks of how the end will come, what will be accomplished by the wrath of God, and how the Millennium will be set up. Listen, "But when He shall have destroyed unrighteousness, (This is by the wrath

of God in judgement) and shall have recalled to life, the righteous that have lived, even from the very beginning, He will be engaged among men a thousand years, (This is a Millennium) And will rule them with just command. Then, they who shall be left alive in their bodies (mortal men, and woman, and children which survive the wrath of God) shall not die; but shall during this thousand years, produce an infinite multitude of offspring, (Is that not what we wrote in our paper? I have been condemned by some, for saying that there will be babies born in the Millennium, so you can just imagine how I felt, when I read what this man wrote about it). And their offspring shall be holy and beloved of God. But they which shall be raised from the dead shall preside over the living, as judges. But the nations shall not be entirely Extinguished, but some shall be left as a victory for God. About the same time also, the prince of the devils, who is the contriver of all evils, shall be bound with chains, and shall be imprisoned during the thousand years of the heavenly rule in which righteousness shall reign in the world, so that he may contrive no evils against the people of God that shall be collected from all the earth." Remember, Saints; This man wrote these things during that Pergamos age of time, which just proves to me that God kept a channel of truth open from that apostolic age, right on down to this very time, through those godly men who knew what it was to defend the

faith with the sword of the Spirit. This was the age when worldliness, corruption and immorality of every kind was creeping in, to bring everything back, back, back, to a pagan, immoral society. As in every other age since then, not all that claimed to be believers, were overcomers, but there have always been a few from every age that were, and it was to these, that the promises were made. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone, a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." But to the church at Pergamos, and to the age it symbolized, these words were written, "Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them (the corrupt ones) with the sword of my mouth."

Each age had a star messenger, but the messenger did not necessarily appear on the scene at the beginning of the age. Paul came on the scene at the beginning of that 1st age, but Irenaeus was already upon the scene when the 2nd age began. Then when you come to the 3rd age you find that the star messenger appeared later. The important thing about it all is that the star messenger always appeared in a strategic hour, when things were building up to a climax of some kind. Then it was a case of either repent for further existence, or else a shut door

that would just let the whole thing deteriorate and fade away. Of course we must realize, that God was not surprised by anything that happened, for He knew how each age would come and go, even before the foundation of the world. That is why Jesus spoke the seven parables of Matthew 13; it gave a little preview of each age, during the dispensation of grace.

THE MUSTARD SEED

When we look at the 3rd parable (Matthew 13:31-32) we find only two verses of scripture given to it, but, oh what a message it carries. Let us read it, (31) "Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, the kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: (32) Which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Now since this is the 3rd parable, it applies to the 3rd age, and we are able to look back and see how precise it was. Truly the grain of mustard seed is in reference to the first 120 disciples that received the promise of the Father, there in that upper room. One might have said, What can 120 people do in changing the course of the world? Therefore let me ask you, Have

they done that? You know they have. As the 1st chapter of the book of Acts opens, we find where Jesus made a promise to His disciples, that they would receive power whereby they would be witnesses unto Him, not only locally, but unto the uttermost part of the earth. He did not explain to them, what to expect, He only told them they would receive it. So what did they do, they gathered in an upper room, in Jerusalem, where they prayed together, and waited until something happened, ten days later. All of a sudden the place was filled with the sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. This was the promise of the Father that they had been waiting for, but did not know what to expect. This was also the Comforter that Jesus had promised to them, in John 14:26, and after they received this Comforter, this promise, this power, they did not have to be instructed how to react. No. They came down into the streets of Jerusalem speaking in tongues, and glorifying God. The Revelation of God's word was flowing through them like water, and when the skeptics began to criticize, this gave the apostle Peter opportunity to preach his first sermon, and a result, another three thousand souls were added to their number. Brother! That grain of mustard seed really got watered that day, and it burst wide open with eternal life. That little bush really started growing. By the time the 2nd age was ushered in, the kingdom of heaven had put its roots

into every Mediterranean nation of the old world. Then, by the time of the 3rd century, the kingdom of heaven had branches all the way from North Africa to the borders of Russia, from the borders of India, to Britain, to the shores of the Atlantic. That was what that grain of mustard seed had grown into, by the time of the 3rd century. But what did Jesus say would happen? He said that the birds of the air would come, and lodge in its branches. We could easily picture in our minds, a beautiful tree full of branches full of beautiful leaves, and a bunch of buzzards sitting on the limbs. Alright now, let us consider this other tree, which is the kingdom of heaven. Here it stood, casting its shadow across the whole earth, and the devil did not like it. He tried to cut it down by martyring God's saints, and that failed. He only fertilized it with their blood, so what did he do? He began to gather up a bunch of vultures to lodge themselves in its branches.

[caption id="attachment_1335" align="left" width="389"]

Emperor Constantine[/caption]

When I was a little boy, growing up, there was a place close by, called Buzzard Roost. There was an old dead sycamore tree standing there by the side of a stream of water called Muddy Fork Creek, and any time the clouds

began to get dark, and the storm winds started blowing, all the buzzards for miles around would come and light on the branches of that old dead sycamore tree. I am just using this for an example, to sort of illustrate what happened to the kingdom of heaven when the storm winds began to blow, in the Roman empire. Every buzzard (army generals, politicians, potentates) began to run toward this vigorous, green tree of this parable. They could see that it was something that had life. They wanted to take shelter in it, and what I am going to read from secular history will let us see how they took shelter. "In 313 A.D., Constantine and his colleague Licinius, issued the edict of Milan, which proclaimed for the first time in history, the noble principles of religious toleration. This edict placed the Christian faith on an equality with paganism. The conversion of Constantine is one of the most important events in ancient history. A Roman emperor, himself a god to the subjects of Rome, became the worshiper of a crucified provincial of his empire. Because of his own conversion, he thus favored the Christians throughout his reign, and surrounded himself with Christian bishops, freed the clergy from taxation, and spent large sums of money building churches." We have seen the evidence of his church building efforts, as we toured the land of Israel. His mother also became converted to Christianity. Her name was Helena. She took vast sums from

the treasury of the Roman empire, and built churches on the various sacred spots mentioned in the Bible, including those places where Jesus performed miracles, as well as His birthplace, and the place where He was crucified. Even though his mother Helena was in charge of getting the work done, this was the work on Constantine, the Roman emperor. I might mention also, that he had 50 great Bibles published. Many of them are yet in the Vatican library even today. They are under glass, and cannot be touched, but they are there, huge thick books. Now many people will say, Oh, he must have been a wonderful saint of God. No. He was not that at all. In his subtle, deceptive way, Satan used Constantine to accomplish many of the things he wanted done. This Roman emperor was just a tool in Satan's hand. Constantine even abolished the use of the cross as an instrument of punishment, simply because Jesus was crucified on one, but that did not make him a true Christian. For many centuries the cross had been used by the Romans as an official means of public execution. It was already in use prior to the crucifixion of Jesus, and many true saints after that, also hung upon those old crosses until Constantine abolished the use of them. He also enacted a law that required Sunday to be a day of rest. That is why the Seventh Day Adventist accuse us of following a Catholic practice, because we worship the Lord together on Sunday. But I have already read to

you, where the early Christians were already worshiping on Sunday, long before Constantine, and it told why. They worshiped together on the day of the resurrection of their Lord and Savior. Just like we have already said, Constantine made it a law, but the practice of Sunday worship was already in effect, by the early church. To them, the first day of the week marked the beginning of the new creation.

ARIUS V/S ATHANASIUS

I will now read another little excerpt from secular history. This is in relation to the Nicaea meeting, to settle the dispute over the deity of Jesus Christ. "Significant of the emperor's attitude toward Christianity was his action in summoning all the bishops in the different provinces to a gathering at Nicaea, in Asia Minor, which is in Turkey. The principle work of the council of Nicaea was the settlement of a great dispute which had arisen over the nature of Christ. (What we are reading this time, is from secular history, and does not give as many details as the church history we have read before, but it does allow us to see that both accounts harmonize.) Some theologians headed by Arius, a priest of Alexandria, which is in Egypt, maintained that Christ the Son, having

been created by God the Father, was necessarily inferior to Him. Athanasius, another Alexandrian priest, opposed this view, and held that Christ was not a created being, but was in all ways, equal to God. The council accepted the arguments of Athanasius, condemned Arius as an heretic, and framed the Nicaea creed, which is still the accepted summary of Christian doctrine. Though thrust out of the church, Arianism lived to flourish anew among many of the German tribes of people in that hour." Let me say this now, in respects to this other doctrine. Using the doctrine held by this priest named Athanasius, the Nicaea council came up with the concept that Jesus Christ was the second person of the Godhead. They declared that God the Father was a person, God the son was a person, and God the Holy Ghost was a person. That gave them their blessed trinity, which has always been declared to be such a great mystery, that no mortal being could ever understand it. They are absolutely right about one thing. God being divided up into 3 separate persons, and all three being equal in authority, could certainly never be reconciled to the many scriptures where God has spoken in the singular (I AM, I WILL, and so forth.) How could one speak like that, if everything had to be agreed upon by three separate persons? It would have to be WE, in all those places would it not? It took Satan more than 300 years to get that doctrine established, but Constantine

played right into his hands. Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, but by the time you get over to Pergamos, those deeds have turned into doctrines. Then those doctrines were laid on the council table there at Nicaea, and out comes a trinity, which the Catholic church holds to be so mystical that it makes it sacred. I wonder if any of them have ever asked themselves this question, How could Mary have been with child by the Holy Ghost, and that child be called the Son of God, the Son of the Highest? If the trinity were correct, then Jesus would have needed to be anointed by both the Father, and the Holy Ghost, because they who teach this doctrine, believe that all three are persons, and that they are all equal in authority. However, since we know assuredly, that this trinity concept of God is a false doctrine, we also understand that when Jesus was anointed by the Holy Ghost, He was anointed with all the fulness of the great eternal God. He became incarnated of the God that created all things. Now technically we could not rightfully say that this made Jesus the Son, God, even though He was endowed with all the fulness of that Spirit which is God the Father, for throughout His complete ministry, Jesus speaking as the Son of God, always spoke of His Father that dwelt in Him, as in John 14:10. If I could say this without someone giving it a wrong meaning, We could say that the physical body of the man called Jesus, housed both the mind of the Son, and

the Father. He had a mind of His own, but it was completely submitted to the will of the Father that swelled in Him. In other words, in the ONE PERSON Jesus, the Christ, we see the ONE GOD, which is Spirit, in the office work of the Son of God. Then we would call your attention to how this ONE GOD, on the day of Pentecost, after Jesus the Son had been taken up, and seated on the right hand of power and authority, returned to the disciples in Spirit form, to dwell in them. That is what caused the apostle Paul to write, concerning this great mystery (Philippians 1:27) saying that, It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Some have said, Is it God in us, or is it Jesus in us? My dear Brother and Sister, when you see how the Spirit of the Father, and the spirit of the Son blended together into one Spirit, then you will understand, that when you receive the Holy Ghost, you are actually receiving both, and when a believer is truly immersed (baptized) into, or by this ONE SPIRIT, then that believer becomes one with both the Father, and with the Son. This blending together of the spirit is just like mixing smoke from different brush fires, once it is mixed together, it is one smoke. That is what Paul was looking at, when he wrote Colossians 3:3-4, saying, (3) "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in Glory."

ONE GOD IN THREE OFFICES

In our message on the humanity, and the deity of Christ, we tried to show, how that before Jesus was baptized by John at the age of 30, He was not deity. He was simply a perfect human, just like we all would have been if sin had never entered the picture. He was a perfect human, because he did not come into this world through the normal man and woman relationship. His conception was of a divine nature, yet he came forth from the womb of a woman, just like all other little babies. Furthermore during the nine months that Mary carried him in her womb, he gained all of his human makeup from the very same elements that came from Mary's human makeup. The important difference, and the thing that made him sinless and perfect, was the genes. God created an embryo in the womb of that virgin girl, bypassing the sin laden genes of all other humans. God's own nature demanded that man's sin debt be paid by the offering of a perfect sacrifice, and since it is impossible for mankind to produce such an offering, the loving Father Himself took the initiative, and by this creating process in Mary's womb, allowed mankind to have such an accepted sacrifice. For the first 30 years of his life, the perfect Son of God was free to exemplify his

perfect human nature before all mankind. He had a mind of his own, and could have done whatsoever he chose to do, but he always chose to do the will of God. But what we must see, is that the Father did not send His Son to the cross; He got inside him, and went with Him to the cross. Before the cross though, He allotted 3½ years of time whereby He would walk upon earth in this Son, and demonstrate the very nature of Himself, the eternal, and sovereign God of all creation. That is why Jesus speaking from His human mind would say, "The works that I do are not of me, but the Father which dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." It was not a human force that produced those miracles; it was the Spiritual force of the very God of all creation, that caused those created things to go contrary to the very law that governed them. Jesus the man, could not walk upon the water during the first 30 years of His life, but that night when His disciples saw Him doing it, what they could not see, was the very God that created the law of gravity inside that human form, ruling His creation to suit the occasion. In other words, to defy the law of gravity. Therefore we would have to say, concerning this ONE GOD, manifested in three offices, He was Father, in creation. The He incarnated His Son for the purpose of redemption, and thirdly, in the form of the Holy Ghost. He is in those redeemed ones, regenerating, and reconciling them back to Himself. In other words, we do not become exactly

like Jesus Christ the very moment we receive the Holy Ghost, but when He comes in, He is there to work on our natural from within us, and eventually we will be molded into the very image of His perfect Son Jesus, who became the firstborn from among the dead. It is ONE GOD, in three offices. Of course I realize that some of you have heard these things many times before, nevertheless we have to repeat them for the benefit of all those who have not heard them before.

SATAN'S MILLENNIUM

Now let us bring out another technical point concerning translations of these various scriptures. For instance, there is Matthew 1:18, 20, where it speaks of Mary conceiving of the Holy Ghost. That term Holy Ghost, should have been translated Holy Spirit, for God is Spirit, and God is Holy, but the term HOLY GHOST should only be used where it encompasses both the Spirit of the Father, and that of the Son, for it was that blended Spirit of the Father, and the Son that came to indwell the disciples on the day of Pentecost. In other words, the term ghost, actually implies, the spirit of a departed one. That is why, when we receive the Holy Ghost, it can be referred to as receiving the Spirit of God, or the Spirit of Jesus Christ either one. It is all the same

thing after Calvary. When He walked upon earth, after His baptism there at the Jordan, Jesus had the Spirit of the Father without measure, in Him. Within the one vessel of clay was every attribute of the great eternal God. On the other hand, we do receive the Spirit by measure. We receive a measure of the Spirit, that is always sufficient to enable us to be overcomers. For the measure we receive of God's Spirit, is greater than the spirit of our adversary, the devil. That is why the apostle John wrote, "For greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." In the darkest hour of human history, between 500 and 1500 A.D., it seemed like the Spirit of God had left His church. But no, He just simply would not have anything to do with Satan's church. He allowed Satan to have a Millennium of darkness, knowing that His millennium of righteousness was still out in the future. It took about 500 years for Satan to get his church clothed with their robes of formality, rituals, and traditions, and then he ruled her for 1000 years, until Martin Luther broke from her ranks with a message of restoration; the just shall live by faith. So it looks like God is allotting the next 500 years to restore His bride church back to what Satan stripped the early church of. Then it will be time for the Millennial rule of Jesus Christ with His saints in righteousness. That Pergamos church age ran right on into the Dark Age period of time, and the 4th church age,

which was the Thyatirean age, ran throughout the Dark Age period, until later 1500 A.D., when God anointed Luther for his role in the Reformation. Naturally the fourth parable of Matthew 13, spoke of the 4th age, just as the first three parables spoke of their corresponding ages, and that is what we will look at next, for I feel that we have said about enough about Pergamos, the 3rd church of the seven, and the 3rd age of the seven church ages.

THYATIRA

Let us go first, to the 13th chapter of Matthew, and read the parable that actually pointed to the Thyatira conditions. As we read this parable now, please remember that the church is always pictured as a woman, and that would naturally be true of the false church also. Alright, we are starting to read in Matthew 13:33. "Another parable spake He unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Brothers and Sisters: I want you to know that the woman of that parable was the Roman Catholic Church, and meal has always been looked upon as the staple food of God. Meal makes bread, and the word of God is referred to in the Bible as bread.

Therefore what we are looking at, is what Jesus said such a woman as the Catholic church would do with the word of God. Now we could look at the three measures of meal as three works of grace; justification, sanctification, and baptism of the Holy Ghost, for we know for sure that the Catholic church completely destroyed the reality of all three. Her leaven is her dogmas. She destroyed the reality of ONE GOD, in three offices, and substituted her great authority to make Him three separate persons. She took away baptism by immersion, and put in sprinkling. She took away the Lord's supper, and put in a mass. Then she took away the new birth, and put in church confirmation. Therefore regardless of how you type the three measures of meal, it still winds up to be the leaven of the Catholic Church, the woman of Revelation, chapter 17, which is referred to as a whore. We will see her in this 4th church age that we are about to examine, and we will see the type set forth in the church at Thyatira. In that church, they had a woman named Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess, taught false doctrine, and seduced God's servants, causing them to commit fornication, and to misconduct themselves concerning things sacrificed unto idols. In other words, she was running things to suit herself. That was taking place right there in the first age, only 40 years after the apostle Paul founded this church, and Paul taught plainly, that a woman should not teach, nor usurp

authority over a man. As we have already said, One cannot help but wonder how a church that was so on fire for the Lord, and that was founded upon apostolic truth, could get so far off course in just 40 years. This church at Thyatira was in worse shape than any of the others, and that is exactly why the Lord Himself chose her to type the conditions of the 4th church age. Yes, it definitely was the Lord Himself, who chose the seven churches that John should write to, and it was He that chose the order in which John should write about them, and He told him what to write. Therefore we see a definite purpose of God in the messages sent to these 7 churches. Their conditions in 96 A.D., were each to represent the spiritual condition of a certain age, during the dispensation of grace. But how many Christians before this last church age, ever knew that these letters actually had a message that reached beyond those local churches, to an age of time that would have universal conditions corresponding to the conditions mentioned in the letters? In just a few short letters, Jesus spoke of spiritual conditions that would affect the church of the living God, in seven different periods of time, that would span a nineteen hundred year period of time. That is how long it has been since John wrote those letters, and naturally we believe that we are living in the last part of the last church age, the age of Laodicea.

STAR MESSENGERS

In the first age, the apostle Paul stands out as the star messenger to that age. It was his ministry that founded these 7 churches, and many, many more. But when the original apostles had passed off the scene, a saint named Irenaeus picked the sword of the Spirit, and stood out as the star messenger to the 2nd age. Then a saint named Martin in the 3rd age. History shows that he stood head and shoulders above everyone else, in that age. He fought against that Nicolaitan doctrine for all he was worth, but the church still plunged headlong into one thousand years of almost total darkness. Did anyone have light during the Dark Ages, some may ask? Yes, there are a few, but the general downward direction of the church was not changed until after 1500 A.D., when a monk by the name of Martin Luther was anointed of the Lord to take a stand against that old Roman Catholic spirit of darkness. But before we get to him, we have another star messenger to speak of, the star messenger to the longest church age of any, Thyatira. History refers to this man as St. Columba, an Irishman, and a man that had many miracles in his ministry.

FIRE IN JESUS' EYES

et us go to Revelation 2:18, at this time, and read the letter that John was instructed to write to that church at Thyatira, the church that typed the 4th church age. Now, just like all the others, this letter starts out, "Unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write." This lets us know that there was a man in the congregation that was charged with the responsibility of furnishing leadership to the rest of them. God held him accountable for the destiny of the church, for he was the one that would have the say, as to what affect this message from the Lord would have upon the church as a whole, or he was the one responsible for seeing that they heard it. Therefore let me say once again, This word ANGEL, has a twofold application. First, it was to be the bishop, or leader of a certain congregation of believers, and then, it would have a universal scope of application, as it applied to the star messenger of each different church age during the dispensation of grace for Gentiles. Another thing I will call your attention to, is how the Lord Jesus addressed Himself to the church at Thyatira. He did not identify Himself to the other churches in that manner. Notice now, "These things saith the SON OF GOD, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass." Just keep that in mind, and we will get back to it a little later,

after we get some other things connected up.

TIME MOVES WESTWARD

Knowing how time always moves westward, we want to see if that is not just as true with the gospel, and with the church ages, and so forth. The first church age messenger (Paul) was a Jew that had been schooled and raised as a Pharisee, but he was of Greek descent, coming from a place called Tarsus, a city in southern Turkey. His Greek background served to acquaint him with the environment of the Gentiles. He knew their culture, and their manner of life. He was very familiar with their worship of idols, and needed no one to explain to him what they were doing. Neither did he need any, other than the Holy Ghost, to instruct him on how to approach them with the gospel of Christ. He stood in the midst of Mars' Hill one day, and said to them. Acts 17: 22 "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. (23) For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." In other words, we can see that the star messenger to the 1st age, strictly had all the qualifications, and association right

there in Asia to start the setting. Then we find that Irenaeus was the star messenger to the 2nd age, and Polycarp the bishop to the 2nd church, and they were linked to Paul moving from the first age to the second age. Then coming to St. Martin, the man commonly accepted to be the star messenger to the 3rd age, we see the westward trend. He was born in Hungary, but most of his work concerning the gospel was in France. However, he did establish a foothold in the island of England. He was an uncle to St. Patrick, the same St. Patrick that has a day set aside to honor him.

As I read from history how the ministry of St. Martin reached all the way to the British Isles, I was reminded of the great conflict that has raged between Catholics and Protestants there in Ireland for so long. We have had a tendency to think of the English people as one native type of people that have lived there for centuries, but they were not. History allows us to see that back around the first century, and into the second century, the people in the British Isles were called Britons. It was called the land of Brittany. But in later centuries as the gospel began to be proclaimed by various missionaries, having more or less Eastern and Asiatic influence, it made a difference. But let us just skip down a little of what history has recorded, just from early European

history. The Anglo Saxons, which were actually Celtic people from out of the regions of eastern Germany, mainly like the people of Austria, Swiss and so forth, had migrated across the continent of Europe, into the regions of the British Isles. These Anglo Saxons also brought to Britain their heathen faith. Christianity did not come to them until the close of the 6th century. At this time more or less, intercourse had sprung up between the people of Kent (History shows that the areas now known as England were once called Kent.) Lying next to the continent and the Franks, and Gauls. Ethelbert the King of Kent, has married the Franchish princess called Bertha, and he allowed his Christian wife from the continent, to bring a bishop to her new home, and gave her the deserted church of St. Martin, at Canterbury. I know you have all heard of Canterbury, in London. That is exactly where St. Martin had a church in his day. So this heathen king married a French princess from the mainland, who was a Christian, and gave her this particular church building that St. Martin had used, and before long, it was a place of worship with great influence. Queen Bertha's fervent desire for the conversion of her husband, and his people, prepared the way for an event of first importance in English history. (It mentions the pope, and tells what happened.) There was a bishop sent by the Catholic church, (and Augustine was his name) with about 40 other monks, to the British

Isles, and were given complete freedom in their work. The king, being already well disposed toward the Christian faith, greeted the missionaries kindly, and told them that they were free to convert whom they could. Before very long, he and his court also embraced Christianity, and the people of Kent soon followed the royal example. The monks were assigned a residence in Canterbury, a city which has ever since remained the religious capitol of England.

WHEN GOD MOVES - WE MOVE

Now Brothers and Sisters: We have read these excerpts from history, in an attempt to show why the British Isles are now coming into view, in relationship to this particular age. Because then, as we go into this fourth church age, and draw from this Asiatic church, which in 96 A.D., was only about 40 years old, we get everything that exemplifies the age to which it corresponds. St. Martin was an uncle to St. Patrick who came on years later. This St. Patrick was a man that really helped to Christianize the Irish people. Not that he was a star messenger, but just that he was a man who had a tremendous impact with the gospel message among those people. It all turned out to be Catholic, in years to

come, but nevertheless he was mightily used. Then after the death of St. Patrick, years passed, and here comes an Irishman by the name of Columba, who according to history, was the star messenger to the 4th age, the age that this Thyatira church exemplified, the church we will read about, here in a few minutes. Before we go on though, let me say this for the benefit of any new people, you may get the idea at first, that I am just picking on individual people. That is not the case at all. It is just a case where, if we speak the truth according to the revelation of God's word, it is going to cut across people's denominational beliefs, for God has never intended for His true church to be a denomination. The truth is supposed to set us free from all of that. You could have gone to church all your life, and still miss God. Thousands upon thousands have been loyal to their particular churches, just like the Jews were, in going to the temple. Yet the Messiah they had been taught to expect, came right among them, and they failed to receive Him. They knew what was written in the scrolls, but when those prophecies began to be fulfilled, they could not see a thing. So it is today. Some people work so hard being loyal to a church system, yet they are completely alienated from true spiritual fellowship with God or man. The devil makes sure of that, for he does not care how much you may talk about Jesus, if you do not know the truth. Even in spite of adverse circumstances though, God is

able, by the power of His Spirit, to knock on the hearts door of a particular individual here and there, and cause truth from His book to open up to them. Methodist people have said from time to time, Why is he always picking on the Methodist church, the Baptist likewise, and others? But let me say again, I do not pick on any of them, I just try to show from the word of God where they all missed the boat. I was a Methodist at one time, and before that, I was even baptized by the Church of Christ Church, but now I just have to thank Lord for opening up my eyes, and allowing me to see that it is not these denominations that He is coming back for. He is coming for people from every nation under heaven, that has allowed the Holy Ghost to lead them into all truth, just like Jesus said in John 13:13. I would like to hold the Bible up before the face of every denominational person upon the face of this earth, and say, Show me your denomination in here. Read me your articles of faith out of this book. They cannot do it. They can trace what they are following, back as far as their founder, and no further. Some of them even feel that there is virtue in belonging to an old line church; one that has a name such as Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, and so on. But I am here to tell you, that if there was any virtue in an old name, I would want to join the Roman Catholic church. It is the oldest one of them all. Oh! But Bro. Jackson, we all know that they are wrong. Yes, we do. But when

was the last time you stood before the mirror of God's word, and let it reflect a true image of your spiritual soul? I am telling you, mortal creatures, We are living in the end time. YES! THE END TIME! It is high time we started getting ourselves dressed up in our wedding garments, if we expect to be in the bride of Christ, and that can only be done by those who have a true revelation of the word of God, which you will never find in any of your manmade systems. In the days of Jesus, the Jews were divided up into many sects, some Pharisees, some Sadducees, Zealots, Herodians, and such like, and they all failed to recognize who Jesus was, except for a few individuals. Brother, if you are going to walk with God in the light of truth, it isn't up to you to choose the route you will take. You just make sure you hear the voice of Jesus, and start following; He will lead you in the path He has chosen, and I guarantee you this much, He will not lead you to join a denominational church system. That is exactly why I am not in the Church of Christ Church anymore, and also why I am no longer a Methodist. The true church of the living God is not a system; it is a spiritual organism, filled and led by the Holy Ghost whose indwelling presence is for the sole purpose of leading every true believer to perfection. He is the one that furnished the hidden manna for us to eat of, which is the true bread of life, the revealed word of the living God. Did the church at Thyatira have it, you

may say? Yes. That is what it was founded upon, just 40 years prior to 96 A.D., but do you know what happened? They went just so far with it, and stopped, just like the Baptists, the Methodists, and all the rest. In other words, God does not want us to put a period to what we have, and stop. He expects us to be ready to move on, when He says, Move on. He demonstrated that when He led the children of Israel out of Egypt, going before them in a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. When He moved, they moved.

ONE TRUE MEDIATOR

Maybe now, we are ready to get back to Revelation 2:18, and look at the Lord's message to the local church in Thyatira, before we try to deal with the age of time it portrayed. Let us read it again. "And unto the ANGEL of the church in Thyatira write, These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass." Before we read the actual message to the church, let me just make a few remarks about why the Lord identified himself to them like that. From all the available evidence, I would say that Thyatira must have been a wicked city. Overall environment usually has a lot to do with what kind of people settle in a

geographical area. Sodom and Gomorrah was a good example of that. It was an oasis in the Jordan valley where the right people like to go for retirement, and where perverted and immoral sorts, found a haven. But after a while immorality affected the whole society socially, so much so, that a man like Abraham would not stay there, and that kind will always attract others of their own kind. Thyatira must have been a wicked city like that. A city whose social environment attracted a low morals society of people. Nevertheless God did redeem enough of them to establish a church there. But over the years Satan hammered away at them through the environment of the city as a whole, and in 40 years time, it was hardly recognizable as the church founded off of the teaching of the apostle Paul. That is why the Lord identified Himself to them as He did. To the church at Ephesus, He was He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Then to Smyrna, He was the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive. To Pergamos, it was He which hath the sharp sword with two edges. But to Thyatira, It was the Son of God, who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet like unto fine brass. No church system upon the face of the earth ever used the term Son of God, any more than the Catholic church. That was because they made Him the second person of a trinity, instead of the Son of God in whom the Father was

incarnated. I say, Why should He not have fire His eyes, when the Catholic Church, in that Thyatira age, has taken Him completely out of His mediatorial office, and elevated His mother Mary, to a position above Him? How do Catholics pray? Hail Mary, mother of God, pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. You never hear them pray, Heavenly Father, In the name of Jesus Christ, be merciful on me. All you ex-Catholics know Mary got all the attention. You know how you prayed. Why shouldn't the Son be angry? I know you have all heard the old expression, That man is so mad, he has fire in his eyes. That is exactly what I see here, and the feet like fine brass, speak of how He took our place, and was judged for our sins. Now you may say, Was that church like that, in 96 A.D., when John wrote to them? As I have pointed out already, You cannot say that every deed was in exact likeness to the deeds of the age represented, but it was the same old spirit of Satan both in the church at Thyatira, and also in the Thyatirean age to follow later. The Lord knew what that perverse spirit was leading to. He did not have fire in His eyes at Ephesus. He did not have fire in His eyes at Smyrna, nor at Pergamos. But he did at Thyatira, and I believe we can understand why. Don't tell me that the high priest can go on for hundreds of years, never being prayed to for intercession, yet seeing mortal creatures on earth, bypass Him, and pray to Mary. You find it in the Bible

where God says, I am a jealous God. That applies to every situation where people rob God of His proper glory and honor. Trying to bypass the one and only true mediator between God and man, is just as serious in the eyes of God, as when people just outrightly worship idols. Therefore I ask you to just think about this for a moment. The Catholic church readily confesses that Jesus the Christ, was (and still is) the Son of God, but that is all they will allow Him to be. They have made Him into a little boy, subject to His mother, and robbed Him completely of His true recognition as the only mediator between God and sinful man. The very fact that He stood in judgement for you and me, gives Him the rightful position as our mediator, He has the authority to intercede for us.

FAITH WORKS - HUMAN **WORKS**

Alright now, I believe we can see why Jesus identified Himself to the church at Thyatira as He did, so let us read verse 19, where we will begin to catch the message He had for them. "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." Of course we know that the first

works mentioned here, are works of true faith, that the Lord always looks at first. This is characteristic of all churches founded upon truth. But notice what He mentioned next. This word is not even mentioned in the other letters. In the Ephesian letter He said, You have left your first love. In that particular statement the translators had no difficulty translating the word used, into LOVE, instead of charity, which in the old English meant the same thing. But when they got to the word used in this Thyatira letter, they did not use the word LOVE, for in this case it was not the same undefiled love that the church at Ephesus had left. This church at Thyatira had no doubt fallen upon the idea of trying to convert the whole wicked city, and that naturally degenerated into a program, of what they considered to be good works. But the Lord does not look upon all our labors, as labors of pure undefiled LOVE, if we are just functioning as part of a program of seemingly good works. Therefore the translators left the word here, translated as charity, in order to make a difference. (Listen to me now Saints, Let us make this application only to these letters written to these seven churches, and not try to make it hold true every place the word charity is used in the Bible.) We all know that there is not a more benevolent organization upon the face of the earth, than the Catholic church, and of course they would say that it is the love of God that causes them to be so

charitable. They build schools, hospitals, refugee shelters, and all such like, and the world looks upon them as being full of love and concern for humanity, but when you know the truth of it all, you know that it is all just a part of an overall program of religious deception. Now Brothers and Sisters: I hope none of you will think I am saying that there are no sincere Catholic individuals. That is not what I am saying at all. But what I would have you see, is that they are completely dedicated to a system of religion that has no life of God in it. They will serve the system faithfully all their lives, die in their sins, and miss God completely, because they never come to a true relationship with the only giver of eternal life. The pope, nor none of his cardinals, nor bishops, nor any one else, can ever impart eternal life to any one, no matter how sincere and faithful they may be. This is true, not only of the Catholic Church, but of her Protestant daughters also. Take for instance, the woman that stood on the street corner passing out tracts for her church, and then went home too tired to fix supper for her family saying, I have been working for the Lord all day, and just have no strength left in me. Do any of you believe that was a true work of the Lord? No, it was not. She was only being faithful to a program of her system of religion, and God wasn't even in it. So this is what I see here at the church in Thyatira; their work, and charity, and service, and faith, had lost its purity. They were still

doing the same things, as far as the natural vision could detect, but the genuineness of pure love and motives had left them. Their love had deteriorated from the true love that was present 40 years earlier. In other words Saints, when you get yourself wrapped up in a religious program, you become obligated to do the same thing for everyone. You cannot be led of the Holy Ghost as Jesus was, or you will have a law suit filed against you, or be kicked out of the system, or even be shot. Jesus Christ would heal one person by the direction of the Spirit of the Father that dwelt in Him, and pass up a dozen more that needed healing just as badly. Why? Simply because He would not do anything apart from the leading of the Spirit of the Father, no matter how worthy it might seem to the natural mind. Therefore for the present, I will just say that the word translated charity in verse 19, pertained to a perverted love, which was not the love of God at all. They had allowed the devil to so motivate their programs, they were functioning on a very low level spiritually. That is why you see two sets of works mentioned here. The 2nd set of works, which He said, was more than the 1st, was works designed strictly for humanitarian purposes, with no spiritual benefit whatsoever. Just look for instance, at all the schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and all such like, that have been built by the Catholic Church to promote their religious system, but tell me, How

many souls have ever been led into a true relationship with the Lord through these institutions? Of course they have a vision. So do all these Protestant preachers who are involved in these great programs, but where does the Lord fit into it? That is the question. I will tell you this, a man like Phillip who went down to Samaria, and had such a outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon his ministry, would never be very popular among the religions orders of our day. For when the Spirit of God spoke to him and said, Go out into the desert, he did not say, But Lord, I cannot leave here now; Just look at all the people that are getting saved. No. He just simply said, Hallelujah! The Master is calling me. Good bye folks, I will see you later, and away he went. By the standards of world religion, a man would have to be crazy to do a thing like that, but God requires it, if He is going to be in what we do.

GOD PAYS HIS OWN BILLS

God does not require us to sponsor soup suppers, chicken fries, rummage sales, and all such as this, to support His work upon earth. The Bible says that God owns the cattle of a thousand hills, and I believe it. If you look at it properly, you will see that God created all things, owns everything also. He therefore can do with it whatsoever He

chooses. As for myself, I have always felt that a God that could not support, and take care of His own, is not worth serving. That goes for having to beg for offerings to support what you are involved in, no matter how worthy it may seem, you had better check up to see whether you truly are doing a service for God, or not. I will tell you this much right now, The God of the Bible is not a beggar. Therefore if you are doing it, you are bringing reproach upon His great name. That is the same as saying, There are some things that God cannot do, and He will fail unless we help Him. Personally, I could never entrust my soul into the hands of such a God as I see portrayed by so many preachers of our day. Furthermore all these welfare programs, clinics and hospitals that are built by religious organizations for poverty stricken people, would be a wonderful thing if the government did it, but that has never been a commission of the church of the living God. Mark 16 verse (15) "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Not build hospitals and schools). (16) He that believeth and is baptize shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," (even if he is baptized.) This was the only commission given to the church, and anything you may read in the Bible that seems to justify anything else, was a ministration among the saints, and not a charity program set up as a means of trying to win people to the Lord. What did Jesus teach His disciples, in Matthew 6:30-33,

concerning everyday life? Let us read it, (30) "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more cloth you, O ye of little faith? (31) Therefore take no thought (worry) saying, What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (32) For after all these things do the gentiles seek; (or unbelievers.) For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. (33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Does that sound like true children of God should ever have to beg for necessary things in life? Do you not believe God is able to keep His word? If you do, then obey His word, and allow Him to lead you into whatever He wants you to do, and He will pay the bill for it.

RELIGIOUS BLASPHEMERS

We have been to India twice, to preach the gospel, and some of the first questions they asked us was, Will you build us a school? Will you build us a seminary? Will you build us a clinic? Where in the world did they get the idea that we might do a thing like that? Simply because denominational missionary programs are launched like that. I will say this also, It would take

a totally blind person not to see the need for all such facilities, and I am glad for them to have them, but my point is this, and I hope you have caught it, God never meant for the gospel to be preached in this manner. I have heard various ones say, You cannot get the spiritual attention of a physically suffering person, unless you take care of their physical needs first. But that is not true. You cannot find it taught in the scriptures. It is just the opposite of that. God sees the spiritual condition of the soul to be the first concern. If we take care of that, He has never promised to supply the needs of all the unbelieving people of the world, but He has promised to supply all that a true child of His needs. But we cannot make a true disciple of God with anything less than the truth that is revealed for our hour of time. But let me just give you a little example of what the gospel has been watered down to, by some of these big preachers of the world. A brother in the church handed me a little book the other night, and I read where some big preacher down here in Virginia made blasphemous statements challenging the fundamentalists, who he said were always dwelling on technicalities of the scriptures, such as whether Jesus was born of a virgin, whether He rose from the dead, whether He was God incarnate, and so forth. He said, "We do not have time to argue over such little details. We couldn't care less, whether He rose from the dead." Brother, I will tell you one thing, He

wouldn't have said a thing like that in the presence of the apostle Paul, and get by with it. Paul plainly said, Jesus was crucified, buried, and rose from the dead the third day, according to my gospel. Hallelujah! Now who wants to go up against Paul's revelation? Paul would have said, Mr. I turn you over to the devil for the destruction of your flesh, that you may learn not to blaspheme concerning the word of God. If any of you think we do not have a bunch of religious blasphemers running rampant in our day, just turn on your radio, or your television, and listen to some of them. Most of them couldn't care less about the major doctrines of the faith. All they are concerned about is preaching a little 5 minute sermonette, and taking up a large offering. It takes a lot of money to support their programs, and there is usually not two cents worth of spiritual help to be found in any of them. People just seem to get so wrapped up in what they are doing, they forget why they are doing it, and it just turns into a human effort, with God on the outside. He no longer has any part in it. So that seems to be what happened in the church at Thyatira, causing the Lord to say, "I know your works, and charity and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; the last to be more than the first." They no doubt started a lot of fellowship programs, trying to win the worldly people of the city to the Lord. But that is not the way the Lord Jesus commissioned the church to do that. Neither is that the

way Paul instructed Timothy. In 2nd Timothy 4:2, we find Paul writing to Timothy these words, (2)"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound DOCTRINE; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; (4) And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." You may think that scripture just applied to a certain age, but I am here to tell you that Satan has tried to sidetrack every true work of God that has ever been started. Furthermore, history itself proves that he has had a lot of success in his efforts. In less than 40 years, he managed to get the church in Thyatira off course, and you must remember, they started out with an apostolic founded church. What happened? The same old thing that has happened ever since. Satan began to whisper into their ears. Your doctrine is too strong. You need to ease up a little until after you get people saved, and then you can teach them. Just tell them about how God loves them, and how he has already paid their sin debt, and all they have to do to be saved, is join the church. Isn't that the same compromising, watered down version of the gospel that you hear in most churches today? Brother, if the truth will not get them in, you just as well leave them alone where they are. The only thing you can make otherwise, is

a make-believer. There are thousands of ways to get people into your church fellowship, but there is only one way to get them born of the Spirit, and that is to preach the truth of God's word to them, just like Peter, James, John, and Paul preached it. Whenever a preacher, or a church, get their mind set on winning a whole city to the Lord, they always depart from the true leading of the Spirit of God, and begin to institute programs. That is what the Catholic church did in the church age that this Thyatira church typed. They started building hospitals, schools, relief centers, and all such like, and said, We will convert the world, and what they could not do by charitable deeds, they did with the sword. That was their church program. The church in Thyatira did not go to those extremes, but they did depart from the pure gospel they were founded upon, and they allowed Satan to run the church, which we will see in the next verse we read, verse 20.

SELF APPOINTED PROPHETESS

After the Lord reminds Thyatira of what He knows, He continues saying, (20) "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess, to teach

and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." All seven of these churches had women in them, and I believe many of these women stood right there in Ephesus, and heard Paul preach and teach the gospel. I believe they learned proper conduct and principles both spiritually and naturally. I also believe there were true prophetesses in those churches. There is nothing wrong with a woman being referred to scripturally, as a prophetess. For we realize that Acts 21:8-9, speaks of Phillip the evangelist having 4 daughters that did prophesy. We also read of Anna a prophetess, in the account where Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple to make an offering for him. But these women did not call themselves prophetess, their lives and service to God, caused others to refer to them in that way. God made them what they were. But we see here, that Thyatira had a woman in the congregation that called herself a prophetess, and she was doing the very thing that the apostle Paul forbade women to do, teach and usurp authority over men. The Lord said, You have allowed her to teach and seduce my servants. Now to teach in this case, is to explain scriptures, and to seduce, is to deceive, mislead, beguile, or take away certain convictions. That is exactly what happened in the garden of Eden. The serpent beguiled (seduced) Eve. In this case, when the Lord said, My servants, He was speaking of the ministry,

apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. A large church like this one, in that 1st age, no doubt had many preachers in the congregation. Not necessarily representing all five offices, but certainly some of them. In modern terminology of today, the Lord might have just said, That woman taught my clergy to commit fornication. Oh Bro. Jackson, surely you do not mean that literally. Yes I do! Get you some history that goes back 1900 years, and read how Gentiles lived in those days. They were pagans, they worshiped pagan gods, and a part of many of their worship practices included some sort of sexual involvement. Many of them were converted to Christ, and lifted up out of their former ways of life. But time has passed, and somehow this Gentile woman who claimed to be a prophetess, slipped in among them, and got their attention. She was a tool of Satan, of course, but I am sure she really put up a convincing spiritual front. More and more, she would prophesy among them, until they no doubt, looked upon her as some great woman of God. Her next move was to gradually inject some of the old pagan practices back into their worship services, until she actually had the preachers committing fornication with her. This, then, gave her power over them. (It goes on in Washington, D.C., all the time, in the political realm.) It was a literal condition in the church, and the Lord warned them of the consequences, but at the same time,

this condition was setting a type for the spiritual condition of the 4th church age. Pergamos was guilty of some of the same thing, but Thyatira had the condition that typed the age when Catholicism would come into prominence. Once that spirit of the Thyatira church settled upon the world, somewhere around 500 A.D., it went right on through into 1500 A.D., and out of all that perverting of the gospel, came a clergy called the priesthood with the bishop of Rome being elevated to a position as the supreme pontiff, (pope) universal head of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then came celibacy of the priesthood. They made it a law. No priest was allowed to choose a wife. I have never yet been able to figure out how they justified that. The pope of Rome has always claimed to be the successor of St. Peter, and we all know that Peter had a wife. In Matthew 8:14, we find where Jesus came into Peter's house, and saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever, and He healed her. Now I ask you, Why did Roman Catholicism adopt celibacy? I will tell you exactly why. She was following in the footsteps of her ancient, pagan religions. Those pagan priests did not marry, but they had what was called vestal virgins, that they had immoral relations with. In other words, they were the forerunners of the Roman Catholic nuns. The devil was very happy to get that pagan practice introduced into the ranks of Christianity. Now Saints, I realize that

some of you may have trouble believing that a practice like that actually existed in what the world looks upon as the mother of all Christianity. But I want you to know that I have read some of the stories that have come out of Mexico, Cuba, Canada, and various places, concerning how those black robed priests used those young nuns as common prostitutes. Many young girls have wanted to dedicate their lives to the Lord, and have become nuns, only to find out after it was much too late, how those priests molested them. Some of you may say, Bro. Jackson: That is a serious accusation. I know. But it is the truth, and it is about time to take the wraps off of it, and let the world see what that old system is really run by. Most of them will not believe it, but nevertheless, it is the truth, and some will be helped by it. If any of you are hearing this for the first time, I invite you to open your Bibles and read the 17th and 18th chapters of the book of Revelation, and you will see that as early as 96 A.D., Roman Catholicism was already pronounced to be the mother of harlots, a great whore. That was before she even came into existence. Well, what are we supposed to do about it? Just do what the Bible says, if you are still a part of such a system, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Revelation 18:4) In the 14th chapter it plainly tells us the communism is going to gnash on her, and burn her

with fire. That is still ahead. Communism will destroy Catholicism, but Communism will never rule the world. It will be time for the King of Peace to rule the world. All other Empires have risen, and then fallen, but the power of the Catholic church as an institution, still remains. She has carried on her political intercourse with every form of government upon the face of the earth. Why do you think South America is in the shape she is today? I am talking about the political chaos, and wars. It is because the time is nigh, for the Catholic church to take a tumble. She has ruled in everyone of those dictators and potentates for centuries, but when that Communistic spirit began to hit this world, the Catholic church felt a tremor. It was worse than when Mount St. Helens erupted, and the fallout from this eruption has Catholicism worried. These struggles you are seeing in so many places, like Poland, are not between the devil and Christianity. It is just something the Lord is allowing, to set the stage for the week of Daniel. That woman of Revelation 17:3, must ride that beast until it comes time for her destruction, and right now, the woman (Catholic church) is busy calling all her Protestant daughters back home through this great ecumenical movement in the churches. Come on home, daughters. Let us be one, so we can fulfill the prayer of Jesus, in John 17. This old ill famed woman has many daughters, and the doctrines of every last one of them are

an abomination to God. But God will wait until the week of Daniel fulfills itself, and then He will settle the score once and for all.

JEZEBEL REPENTED NOT

Now just to get our thinking back to our text, let me say once again, That Jezebel in the church at Thyatira, typed that old Catholic church that has been committing fornication throughout her whole existence. We mentioned what goes on between some of those priests, and some of the nuns, but you can be sure of this one thing, her spiritual fornication is the most abominable to God, of all. Therefore let us read verse 21, and see what God had to say about that woman Jezebel, before we go any further. (Revelation 2:21) "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not." In other words, I would say that God no doubt dealt with her through His convicting Spirit, many times, but she failed to take heed, and now the Lord is saying, (22) "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." You must keep in mind, this letter was written in 96 A.D., still in the 1st age, but that age of martyrdom began to strike, this was the very thing the Lord was going to pull that church into. Because He intended

to judge that evil which was in that church, by the great blood bath that hit the 2nd age, and that set the type for what He will do to Catholicism, as the great tribulation closes out this age. Of course some will say, But Bro. Jackson, most of those people are innocent. That may be true, but they have sold their souls to an Antichrist system, and God cannot overlook that. Neither will He overlook those blasphemous remarks from supposed to be, preachers, no matter how popular they may be. Satan has blinded their eyes, and is deceiving them into believing they are the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, but the word of God, which most of them have very little time for, tells us differently, and lets us know that they are the false church. God will burn that when it has run its course, along with all of its offspring. Brothers and Sisters, do not even think God was just having John write idle words to these churches. Every last one of them portrayed a true picture, or type of a particular age of time in the life of Christianity. Therefore I believe it will be beneficial to your spiritual stature, if you can just see these types in relationship to an age. God has allowed us this privilege here in these last days, so we can have an opportunity to prepare ourselves for what is just ahead. We must purge ourselves of all ties with these illegitimate systems, and dress ourselves with true righteousness, if we are a part of the bride of Jesus Christ. You can read Revelation 19:7-

8, and you will see that the bride, or wife of Jesus Christ, is to make herself ready.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN **BORN**

As we continue here, with this local church at Thyatira, we must see how this woman by the name of Jezebel types perfectly the Catholic church that ascended to such a place of power over its people in the 4th church age. No doubt this woman presented herself as a very godly woman, to that church in Thyatira. She probably spent a lot of time visiting sick folks, helping the poor, and talking about how they should love each other. Then as opportunity opened up for her, she would prophesy good things to them, and no doubt, call attention to the other women of the Bible that prophesied. Naturally after so long a time, people begin to put a lot of confidence and trust in such a person. (The devil always takes time to lay the groundwork for his plots.) After she gained their trust, then little by little she could begin to lead them astray. Naturally she did not fool everyone, for in every church, there were always some who were looked upon as overcomers, and the promises were to them. But a great number of these Thyatira folks began to follow her, and

look upon her as a great spiritual leader, a fresh voice from God, and she had no trouble leading them back into pagan practices, for some of them probably had not been converted from such practices very long. Furthermore it enabled them to win the favor of the other people of the city, for they were living down on their level. These things do not happen in a day's time, but little by little Satan just strips down, and leaves them standing completely naked, spiritually speaking. They lose their vision, they lose their enthusiasm, and just simply fall into a ritualistic pattern. Jezebel had those men who were referred to as servants, eating out of her hand. She taught them that it was all right to commit fornication with her, (Naturally she did not call it that) and also, that there was nothing wrong with eating things sacrificed unto idols, and all such like. But she did not stop there, for as we read verse 22, we find that her relationship with them has gone past fornication, and it is now referred to as adultery. That speaks of a marriage relationship. Somehow she got the idea that she could marry all these men, and they fell for the idea. That is completely contrary to anything you could ever find in the Bible. Even in the Old Testament where polygamy was practiced, it was never a case where one woman had more than one husband, it was always the men that had more than one wife. So she has turned this completely around, and we see in verse 23, that

children have been born to her. For the Lord said, (Revelation 2) (21) "I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. (22) Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; (Remember what this woman types, (Catholicism) and remember who the children of Catholicism are, and you will plainly see how all these denominational systems are going to wind up.) (23) And all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." It certainly looks like the Lord was going to make an example out of His actions against these evil ones here, for He said, "All the churches will know." Brother, when that bloodbath of martyrdom hit the church, there in that 2nd age, God made sure that all this evil received its just reward. He judged it right there. Some of those old saints earned a martyr's crown during that period, but many others, who were called saints, went down to the grave in disgrace as they earned their reward for their evil. God judged that particular church, because they strayed so far away from the original church. He had fire in His eyes, and He had a reason to be angry, for they had been founded upon the same revelation as all the other churches. They knew good and well that a woman was not to teach, nor have authority over men, and they had

certainly been taught not to commit fornication, nor eat that which was sacrificed to idols, and here they were, doing just the complete opposite of every bit of it.

NICOLAITAN TAKEOVER

When you transfer what we see in this Thyatira church, over to the age it types, you can easily see why God would hate that old spirit of the Catholic church, for it has followed the same path of false teaching and fornication. Christianity started out pure, undefiled, and full of true works of faith, but when the tares started making their inroads into the assemblies of the saints, she began to slide down, down, down, until she could hardly be recognized as the church of the Lord Jesus Christ any more. That old Nicolaitan spirit which the lord hated, just kept eating away, until the clergy had conquered the laity. That put the church of the living God under a priesthood, instead of a five fold ministry like it started out. Go back and read the history of the Dark Ages, and you will see that those black robed priests so elevated themselves above everyone else, that they became feared by the laity of the congregation. They demanded respect and honor, and no one was ever allowed to say anything contrary to what they said,

and get by with it. They dressed Christianity up like ancient pagan religion, and then Satan just sat back and ran the whole thing. The gospel was perverted until the church of that hour lived on the same level as the people of the world. When they got a convert, the only thing that was changed was his belief; his life style remained the same. In certain areas of the world missionaries would go, and gain converts; if they had been sacrificing chickens to some pagan God, they would still sacrifice their chickens, but in a different order. What was preached as the gospel in those days, had no life changing power to it. The old leaven had really done its work. We all know that leaven mixed into the other ingredients of bread, is to change the consistency of it. Leaven will cause those other ingredients to rise out of proportion, and that is exactly what was portrayed in that 4th parable of Matthew 13: 33 "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." The parable does not say that everything will be exactly alike, but rather like unto, or similar. In this case let us just say that the parable no doubt relates to the three definite works of grace. No, there is not three different ways to get saved, but there are three important phases of the new birth. You have justification, sanctification, and baptism of the Holy Ghost. Infant baptism has no place in this, but the old mother of harlots, and

many of her daughters have it just the same. The first thing they lost was the revelation of the Godhead, and as I see it, everything else in God's storehouse is hinged upon that one thing. The Godhead revelation is the key to all of God's storehouse of treasures. We would like to say also, that water baptism, by immersion, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not just an option; it is an absolute requirement for true believers, no matter what you may have been told by some of these compromiser's. When the Bible says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," that is exactly what it means. That is all God will accept in this hour when the truth has been restored to the church. Bro. Jackson: What do you mean, "the church"? I will be quick to tell you, that the church is not a building some place; for the true church is a universal body of believers that are following the word of God, instead of man's tradition.

A WOMAN AND HER CHILDREN

The Catholic church will boast because she is the oldest religious organization, says she is the mother church. Now it is true that she is the oldest organization, and it is also true that she is the mother of all these harlot

denominations, but she does not go back as far as the true body of believers that actually make up the church of the living God. As for being the oldest, the Bible shows that Methuselah was the oldest man that ever lived, but he sure wasn't the most spiritual. No, the virtue is not in age; only a pure heart is acceptable to God, and he couldn't care less about age. Neither does it matter so much to God whether all are able to pronounce every syllable of every word correctly or not; He knows what we mean. As for this woman named Jezebel that set the type of the Catholic church, I can just see her now, as she exerted her own influence and dynamic personality above that of the men in that church. I have, through earlier years, come in contact with various women preachers, and every last one of them have had a very dominating personality. It was though you could almost hear them saying, I may be a woman, but don't you cross my path. You could not help but notice, in every congregation that had a woman pastor, how the men of that congregation would lose their masculine headship. They just sat like little poodle dogs, ready to do whatever she dictated to them. If they ever give one thought to what the apostle Paul said about not allowing a women to teach, nor usurp authority over the man, you could not tell it. But then, to the other extreme, is where we find churches that will not even allow a woman to open her mouth in the worship services. Both of these are

wrong. God is not glorified in either case. Women may sing, pray, prophesy, shout and praise the Lord any time it does not interrupt the order of the service, just like the men may. They are just not scripturally allowed to interpret the scriptures, nor rule in the affairs of the church. In reality, Christianity was never meant to be a religious order with authority to rule over anyone. But do you think Catholicism ever cared about that? She has ruled dictators for centuries, and only a few men ever dared take a stand against her dogmas, and domineering ways before the hour of the Reformation, and when certain ones did, that was God, giving Catholicism an opportunity of repentance, just like He did that Jezebel woman at Thyatira, but there was no repentance. These black robed priests have been worse than the Mafia ever even thought of being. They have much blood on their hands, to give account of before the very throne of God, before they are cast alive into the lake of fire. Now you may say, Bro. Jackson, I have known a lot of priests, that were never like that. Nevertheless they belong body and soul, to the same old religious order that has always been used by the devil to do his dirty work ever since she came into power. Revelation chapter 17, is not just referring to Catholicism of the Dark Ages, for John was being shown what her end would be. Notice what the angel said to him in verse (1), "Come hither; I will show unto thee the

judgement of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters. (Verse 15, tells us that the waters upon which the great whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.) (2) With whom (the whore) the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication (her doctrines). (3) So he carried me away in the spirit into to wilderness: and I saw a woman (a church is always considered in the female gender) sit upon a scarlet colored beast, (scarlet is that old Roman Catholic color) full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." We will not try to deal with everything we see here in Chapter 17, for we have other articles on that, but I do want you to see the Roman Catholic church in this description of that great whore the angel showed John, so let us read a little more. Verse (4) "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, (You may not see too much of that in the Catholic churches of America and Canada, but go to the old world, where Catholicism originated, and in every cathedral, some of them large enough seemingly to cover 4 city blocks, and their libraries, and museums, you will see everything garnished with gold, picture frames and everything. You could never even begin to estimate what would be the value of all that she owns and controls. It is just Satan's way of using the "church" to disguise

his plan of eventually controlling the wealth of the world.) having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: (5) And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. (6) And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." All right, we will stop there. But I believe you can see that this great whore, the mother of harlots, was not just some little old honky tonk girl. What John saw was a sophisticated, aristocratic type of woman. This kind is always portrayed in their evening gown, split up the side, with low neck and back, and decked out with fine jewelry. This is the kind of woman that can usually get men to do anything she demands of them, even if it leads to their destruction. That is a perfect picture of the Catholic church, and do you know what happened in the years after 1500 A.D.? In a symbolic sense, she began to give birth to some offspring. The measure of the Spirit of Jesus Christ that was still present in that system, because of certain individuals, could stay there no longer, so out came a spiritual birth. Lutheranism, and then Methodism, and so on. Each of these were as a little child, innocent at birth, born of a truth that grew to maturity and served its purpose, but then became just like its mother. Except for the basic truths of

their founding fathers, these offspring have generally the same doctrines as their ill famed mother, trinity, baptism, and such like. But God is going to kill those children with death. How? In the great tribulation, or as a climax to the great tribulation. In the last 3 ½ years of that week of Daniel, that Roman Catholic church, and all her protestant daughters are going to have a great big wedding, with the Antichrist. Yes, for 3 ½ years this western world is going to be under the spell of that woman, until she has fulfilled her last role. But at the end of that, God is going to turn those horns loose, and that protestant spirit will be destroyed along with Catholicism. Right there, God deals to every one of them according to their works.

OVERCOMERS PROMISE

Let us look back to Revelation 2:24 now, for God did have a message to the overcomers that were in the church at Thyatira, and that message applies to overcomers of the age also. (24) "But unto you I say, and unto the rest of Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which know the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. (In other words, God will require nothing more from them, that what they have already been faithful with. (25) But that which

ye have already hold fast till I come. (26) And he that overcometh, (even in the Dark Ages) and keepeth my works (true works of faith) unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: (27) And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; (with Jesus, in the Millennium) as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." Brothers and Sisters: That allows us to see, that even in the Dark Ages, anyone that could hear the voice of Jesus, and follow the convictions of his heart, somehow living above the moral filth and degradations of the multitudes around him, and walking in all the light he had in that hour, would have his, or her place in that church that will rule the nations with Jesus in the Millennium, according to Revelation 19. The Catholics thought the promise was to them, and that it had a present day application, so they ruled all of Europe with a rod of iron, in the name of Christianity, for 1000 years. That is why some say that Satan has already had his Millennium, and certainly we would have to agree, for that is a word that simply means one thousand.

There are many more things we could say about this Thyatira age, just like all the others, but I feel that we have said enough to help you get the parable, the church, and the age associated with each other, thereby enabling you to see other related things that will come to

your attention from time to time. The Thyatira age ran all the way through the Dark Ages, to the time of Luther; therefore we are ready to look at the 5th letter, and see how it sets the type for the 5th church age. Naturally those of you who have never studied history related to these periods to time, would not be as quick to see how perfectly the different churches with their particular spiritual conditions set the type of spiritual conditions in their corresponding age. But some of you have, and I know you will have to say, Amen, when I say that we have a beautiful preview laid out right here before us, of the very age we are living in, the age of Laodicea, which we will deal with last in this message. For if the others lined up perfectly, so will this one.

SARDIS

The opening remarks in this letter are very different from all the former ones. (Revelation 3:1) "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." This is the age of the beginning of the Reformation, so let us see why the Lord would have John write such words to the church that typed this particular age. Sardis was an inland city, about 50 miles from Smyrna, located on one of the caravan trade routes. Naturally the lifestyle of the

whole city was affected by whatever commerce and trade she had, and the lifestyle of that city as a whole, had a certain affect on this Christian church that was located among them. Therefore let us begin reading the letter John wrote to them at the Lord's direction, and see if we can establish the reason why He opened the letter with these remarks. We are in chapter 3, verse 1. "And unto the angel (man in charge) of the church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, (He saith that to all of them) that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." As we have stressed all the way through, the primary message was to the bishop or pastor of the local church, but in each letter, there was also a far reaching message to the age each individual church typed. And that would be directed to a man also. The man whom God would lay His hand upon to be the star messenger to his age of time. In this case it was Martin Luther, the first of many men that stood out in the Reformation. Coming out of the Dark Ages, God gave Luther the revelation, that the just (or justified) shall live by faith, instead of by the creeds and dogmas of the Catholic church. But let us notice at this time, how Jesus introduced Himself in this letter. "These things saith He that hath the SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD, AND THE SEVEN STARS." Does that mean that God is seven different spirits? No. That simply pertains to the

seven major attributes, or attributable names of the ONE GOD who is Spirit. Through the Old Testament, you find God called by these various names. Names that express what God was to certain individuals, or in certain events. (We published an article in which we included these seven attributable names, and why they meant.) Therefore when Jesus spoke of Himself like this, it was another way of saying, The fulness of the Father is in me, and what I say is not really me saying it, but the Father that dwelleth in me. Whatever Jehovah was in the Old Testament, is all invested in His Son Jesus, the Christ. When John first saw Jesus, back in chapter 1, He was standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, holding seven stars in His hand, and he was told that the seven candlesticks were the seven churches, and the seven stars were the angels of those churches. Not spirit beings, but men. Then in chapter 4, when John was caught up by the Spirit into heaven, he saw seven lamps of fire (candlesticks) burning before the throne of God, and it says there, that these are the seven Spirits of God. Now saints we have to be able to see the symbolism in these things, for is we try to make a literal application every time, we will get so far off course we cannot get back. When John was caught up in heaven, and saw this, Jesus was already seated on the right hand of all power and authority. Those seven lamp stands before the throne would have to pertain to something of the great eternal Spirit

that had been invested in Jesus, the Christ. Therefore in chapter 1, where John saw Him standing in the midst of the churches, (candlesticks) He was dressed in the attire of a high priest. That identified Him as our intercessor. But He is also a judge, or the Judge of all judges, and that would be portrayed, or spoke of, with Him in a seated position, so just remember this, and above all, do not allow yourself to think of God as seven different spirits, and do not think of these seven spirits as angelic beings. Furthermore, in the book of Zechariah where the remnant came out of Babylonian captivity to rebuild the temple, and when they found the cornerstone, they saw that it had seven eyes engraved in it. There is your seven spirits of Jehovah, symbolized right there in that cornerstone, and that cornerstone in its rightful position prefigured Jesus Christ, whom Paul says is the chief cornerstone, that was rejected by those pious builders called Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and so forth. Then in Revelation, He is the first and the last; He is the beginning of a new creation, which is called a new creation because of redemption, and not by an outright act of creation. When Jesus is referred to as the beginning and the ending, then right there is your cornerstone. Watch your contractors when they build these huge buildings. There is always one particular corner where all measurements start, and all measurements end. So as we see Jesus Christ, in relationship to these seven

churches, let us not allow ourselves to think of it as an attribute of Christ in each church, but rather a full display of power and authority by the one in whom all these attributes are invested. In their beginning, those churches were presented a full revelation of truth, whereby they might have a proper foundation to build upon, but Satan got into most of them, and robbed them of their pure revelation, and the very one that imparted that pure revelation in the beginning, and that stood as their high priest, to intercede for them, will at the end, sit and judge all ungodliness, and cast the devil and all of his deceived ones into the lake of fire, so keep in mind the fact that we are talking about Jesus Christ. He is the one that said, I know thy works, to all of these churches.

DEAD WORKS BY DEAD PEOPLE

Now before we look at church number 5, let us look at the wording of Jesus' opening words to the first four. To Ephesus, He said, I know thy works, AND (CONJUNCTION) thy labors, and thy patience, and so forth. To Smyrna, He said, I know thy works AND (CONJUNCTION) tribulation, and poverty, and so on. To Pergamos, He said, I know thy works, AND (CONJUNCTION) where thou

dwest, and etc. To Thyatira likewise. But when he came to Sardis it was different. (I believe this is important, and well worth taking note of.) I believe God is the author of perfection. He knows what He is saying, and how He is saying it. He is not subject to misusing words, like I am, so let us take note of the fact that there is no conjunction after the word works in this letter to Sardis. After only 40 years, this church has come to such a borderline of death condition, that He makes a difference in the wording of His message to them. (We are speaking of spiritual death, of course.) He still started out with, "I know thy works," but it is obviously a different kind of works than those referred to in the other letters. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead." He was not speaking of His name. No, absolutely not. They were just like those denominational churches of our day. They claim to have life; they call themselves the bride of Christ, but they are full of dead works. The Spirit of God is no longer in their system of religion, yet you will hear them say, Come to our church this Sunday, where you could be blessed, or, Come, and enjoy our choir, we have the finest choir in the land today, and many, many other words do they use to entice unstable souls. But all they have is dead works, the life of God is not among them. Some who go to these places are just looking for good air conditioning in the summer, and good

warm heat in the winter. They could not care less whether there is any real true spiritual food there or not. If the preacher uses proper words, they will praise him, and if he does not, they will go home fussing, I think it is about time we got us a preacher who has a seminary degree in theology, and knows how to pronounce Bible words. Brother So and So embarrasses me, the way he talks. Saints: That is just about all some people go to church for, they hear little else than mispronounced words. This is just some examples of what I believe the Lord saw in the Sardis church. He was not pleased with their works at all. He is not even referring to the original kind of works they started out with. That is just His way of saying, you claim to be alive spiritually, but you are dead. Now notice Revelation 3 verse 2, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: (He did not even bother to name them.) For I have not found thy works perfect before God." In the other churches, they must have still had some true works of faith, but not this one. They were completely given over to man made programs, trying to convert the rest of the city to their fellowship. Their flame had gone out. All they had left was just a little flick of a coal burning down in one corner of the wick, so to speak, just stinking everything, and doing a lot of smoking, but giving no light whatsoever. Thinking of an old kerosene lamp in that condition, if you blow real hard,

and fan it a little, there is a possibility of getting it to burn again. That is symbolic of what Jesus was referring to here when He said, "Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." It is sad that a church which started out right, could get into such a shape in only 40 years, but Jesus sees it as dying, with only a very slight hope of any life being restored.

HOLD FAST - REPENT

After telling them to strengthen what remained, Jesus reminded that church that they had been taught right in the beginning. Notice verse 3, "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." Jesus knew they had been founded upon the teaching of the apostle Paul, as he stood for 3 years in Ephesus preaching the whole council of God. All of those 7 churches were started from the one revival there in Ephesus. The scriptures declare that all Asia heard the word of God during that time. Therefore this church was not following a program of dead works because they did not know any different, for they did. They just found that by leaving the name of Jesus out of their activities, their programs were more appealing to the people they were trying to win over to their church fellowship. This is why Jesus said,

"You have a name," but he knew it was not His name. So the admonition in verse 3 is to the few in Sardis which have not defiled their garments with what the church as a whole is doing. "Hold fast," was to them, and "Repent," was to the others. "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." The Lord was making it very plain to them, that judgment was ahead, for He was not going to allow this condition to continue on forever. On the other hand though, He did make a promise to those who had been true to Him. Verse 4, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; (This was the minority, and they were not the ones that run the church programs.) And they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." These will have their place in the Millennium, right along with all the other overcomers of all ages. Hallelujah! It pays to serve God with all our heart, for he Keeps an accurate record. Another thing that we see, is that God always gives people a chance to repent, and get back on the right road, after they have gone astray. Maybe you cannot change the things you see wrong with the lives of other people, but certainly God expects you to hold fast to what you have, regardless of what others may do.

WHAT MARTIN LUTHER DID

At this point, I believe we should take time to see how the conditions in the Sardis church, typed the spiritual condition of the 5th age. It was the age of Lutheranism, starting in the early years of the 1500's A.D. The world had existed in the darkness of Roman Catholicism for so long, that the name of Jesus Christ was completely out of the picture. The true formula of water baptism was no longer observed. The Godhead revelation as originally taught by the apostles of Christ was completely out of the picture, and so was the true experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. All the major doctrines of the Christian faith had been kicked out of what was called "the church" in that hour. Roman Catholicism had brought about death to the revelation of the scriptures. As far as the church of that hour was concerned, death hung over her. But God is never without a means to carry out His next phase in His plan of redemption, so His anointing fell upon Luther, a little spark of light that needed some fanning. He did not restore much light, but he certainly was used of God to get the spiritual condition of hungry souls pointed in the right direction. Most of what Luther did was write up a list of 95 things he saw wrong with the Catholic church. He hardly even touched the

word of God. He saw in the scriptures, that the just shall live by faith, and that those who would seek to be justified by the works of the law are under a curse, because they cannot keep the whole law. Brother, what joy that brought to the hearts of those who were affected by this rediscovered truth from the word of God. When people have been ruled, and held under subjection by fear tactics, to a manmade system, release from all of that brings a time of great joy to their hearts. But enthusiasm alone does not last very long before it begins to wear off, and a process of death sets in. What Luther started was dying, and God had to raise up men like Knox, and Calvin to keep fanning, and rekindling the fire. Predestination and eternal security of the believer added enough oil to the wick to keep the little fire burning, but none of that ever got very far away from the framework of Roman Catholicism. That is why then, that the whole thing could not live on, and really be a shining light, all the way to the end. Because sooner or later it would have to burn out, for the simple reason that the name of Jesus Christ was not in it. By His own words Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life, so nothing outside of Him, could ever produce eternal life. God knows how to turn His own affairs though, and it was His purpose to restore a true revelation to the church little by little, just like she lost it. But you know, the sad part is when a church is dead and does not know it. That was the

condition of the Sardis church. They thought they still had a great work of God going on, and did not even know that the Spirit of God had already left them. By the same token, the people of Luther's move could say, We are the church, we have life in us, we are free to walk with God. But were they? They still had their trinity, 3 persons in the Godhead. They still had their same formula of water baptism, sprinkling (that substitute method) in the titles of God, instead of immersion in the name of Jesus Christ. They had catechism just like Roman Catholics, the apostles creed, and before long their clergy was even dressing just like the Catholic priests. So I ask you, Were they free? Did they have life? Was that all the church of the Lord Jesus Christ should have? We all know better today, but how were they to know?

WILL GOD BLOT OUT NAMES?

You will notice that the 5th church age was just a little more than two hundred years, and it took various men to keep the fire going, that Luther started, and when John Wesley came on the scene, he did not start a new fire, he just added a new supply of oil to the fire that was already burning. But do you know what? If God had never moved anyone to go beyond Wesley's

movement, there would be no life left from those movements today. Just look out here at the Methodist church, and tell me what you see? It moved on with God, when the movement as a whole would not go any further. Because Lutheranism would not move on with God, and make a complete break from political ties, and Antichrist doctrines, it was God's purpose that it should die. It seemed like everyone of those movements would just push out so far, and then stop, and death would set in. Bro. Jackson: Are you saying that no one made it to heaven out of those churches? No! That is not what I am saying at all. We are dealing with the overall picture of the various movements, and what their end was; or will be, but we must remember that the grace and mercy of God is always extended to every individual that will walk in all the light God shines upon his, or her pathway, just as Sardis, where there were a few that had not defiled their garments, so has there been a few from every age that stood out above all the rest, therefore they receive their promised reward for overcoming. The thing that stands out to me in this Sardis letter, besides the points we have already mentioned, is that the Lord did not say to them, You have Nicolaitans among you, nor, you have Baal worshipers among you, nor any such thing as He said to the other churches. It makes it look like tares was about all there was in that church, except those few old-timers that had somehow held on to their former

revelation, and managed to live true to the Lord in spite of all the other things that were going on round about them. The Lord said, (4) "These shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. (5) He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels." Now of course some will say, Would God really blot out a name from the book of life? Then you have others, when you are dealing with election, foreknowledge and predestination, who will say, Predestination cannot be a true Bible doctrine, or God would not speak of blotting out names from the book of life. This has always been a controversial subject, because there are multitudes of professing Christians, who have never learned to respect all of the word of God. They just read, and accept what they life, and as far as they are concerned, that is all there is in the Bible. Then they will look at their own kind, when they fall by the wayside, and say that God will blot their names out of the book of life. Brothers and Sisters: Listen to me. The Lamb's book of life is not for man to write in, and blot out names, as he would, for the Bible clearly tells us that those who were chosen, by foreknowledge, were written in the book of life before there ever was anything else. Revelation 13:8 says, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (the beast) whose names are not written in the book of life of the

Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Then in Revelation 17:8, we read these words concerning the beast. "They that dwell on earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Now, Saints: Here is my answer. The Lamb's book of life carries the names of all that have been elected in Jesus Christ from before the foundation of the world, and I can assure you that it has no blank spaces in it where names have been blotted out. You just have to realize that this warning was sounded in a church that was made up mostly of tares, and those tares looked forward to the same promises that the true seed looked forward to, and no man knows whose names is in the book of life and whose is not. Only God knows that, and His universal plea is, Whosoever will, let him come. He gave Cain that same invitation, but you must realize, He knew before the foundation of the world, who would come, and therefore could record their names in the book of life. But for the benefit of the tare element in that church, that believe a person can get saved any time they choose, and that their names are written in, when they make that decision, and that their names are blotted out when they fail to follow all the way with what they stated, God just speaks to them on that wise. But the true elect knows that his name was written before the foundation of the world, and that it will never be blotted

out. In other words, Since the tares are in, He has to speak to them on the level of their understanding. If the church had stayed pure, like it was in the book of Acts, there never would have been such language as that used, for He would have been dealing with nothing but pure predestinated seed of God. But when the tares got into the churches, God's admonition had to cover the whole picture, for He would not give anyone a hint as to who was predestinated, and who was not. We only establish our predestination by doing what the scriptures tell us to do. Peter did say (1st Peter 1:10), "Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure", but he was not saying that we should work, in an effort to get predestinated. What he was really establishing was the fact that if we are predestinated, we will have these Christian qualities active in our lives, that he mentions just prior to that statement. It is our hunger, and our search for truth, that really allows us to know that the Spirit of God is moving in our lives. A tare will eat anything, (spiritually speaking) and never know the difference, but a predestinated seed of God will never be completely satisfied until they find a fountain of revealed truth springing forth from that ONE great eternal fountain. When you see people playing around with strange doctrines and things of the flesh that are contrary to the scriptures, and just flirting around with the world in general, that is a very bad sign. The

scriptures put it like this, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. If we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." The predestinated soul is not very happy unless he or she can see themselves being molded to be more like Jesus. One thing I am sure you have all noticed in the scriptures, even in the gospels; where Jesus would speak saying, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." Did you ever imagine that any of those people might not have had physical ears sticking out on the side of their head? Did you ever even wonder what was meant by such a statement? What it really meant was, only predestinated souls will have the kind of hearing that will carry these words to the depths of his soul. Any of them could have heard the audible words, but only the predestinated ones could hear what the Spirit was saying. That is why all seven of these letters to the churches of Asia ended like that, only those predestinated souls that were still in those churches would be able to hear and follow the Spirit of God. All the rest were following something else. They were being led by a spirit, but it was not the Spirit of God. This is why Jesus said what He did in the 10th chapter of John's gospel. Let us read it. We will begin in verse 25. "Jesus answered them, I told you; and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. (26) But ye believe not, BECAUSE YE ARE NOT OF MY SHEEP, as I said unto you. (27) MY SHEEP HEAR

MY VOICE, and I know them, AND THEY FOLLOW ME." There is predestination, and here is eternal security. Verse 28, "And I give them ETERNAL LIFE; and they shall never perish, NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN (or devil) PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND." If you have an ear to hear, you will not even argue about this, for you will know that it is the truth. Predestined seed do have an ear to hear. That is why they could sit in a Catholic church for years, and then one day, above all the carnal confusion around them, they could hear the voice of the Spirit of God, calling them out of it. Everything has its purpose, but sometimes God is the only one that can see the true purpose of certain things. Luther's hour had its purpose, and God has sealed to Himself, souls that came through Lutheranism, but that Lutheran church system is dead. It will never have the life of God in it again. They may merge, and be the 2nd largest Protestant denomination, but they are still dead, and they are on the road back to mama. They had a name, that they were a living church, a living faith, but now they are dead.

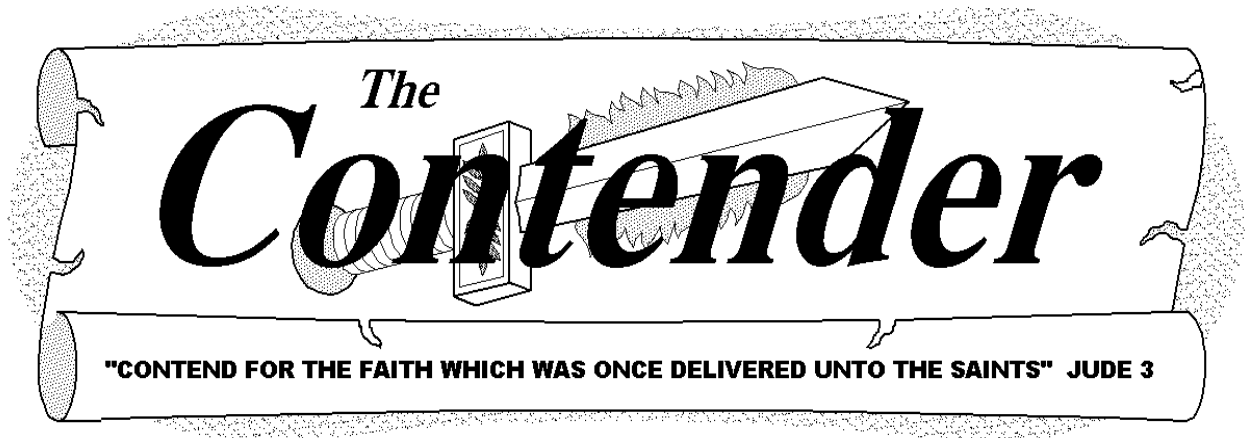
PHILADELPHIA

We find quite a different picture as we read the letter to the Philadelphia church. (The name Philadelphia,

means brotherly love.) This church had held on to the name of the Lord, and kept His word with whatever strength they had left, and we must remember, all of these letters were written in 96 A.D., and they were dealing with present conditions in the respective churches. There are two extreme opinions in the church world today, concerning these seven churches of Asia, and the letters written to them. One group sees only seven local churches, that stood in need of admonishment from the Lord, in 96 A.D. They cannot associate them in any way, as setting a type for a future age. Then on the other side, is a group that does see them typing an age of time, but they try to literally apply every little detail they see in those letters, to the age they correspond to. Neither concept is completely right. We must endeavor to see the spirit that was working behind the scenes in those local churches, and then we will identify the working of that same spirit in the age that each church corresponds to. The deeds may not always be literally the same, but there will always be an identifiable parallel. There are always keys, to a proper understanding of the word of God. It is the same with the seven thunders, there in Revelation 10:3. I kept still for a long time, concerning those thunders, while others traveled the world giving out their version of what they (the thunders) pertained to. But finally, the last two words of that verse stood out so clearly to me, I felt it was time to

speak. I have since, preached on them, and we have printed the messages, and I am completely convinced that THEIR VOICES, pertains to seven different men who will be anointed to speak on behalf of God, to the bride of Christ, just prior to the time of the rapture, after Jesus is off of the mercy seat. No one man could possibly fulfill that scripture, for there is no way that THEIR VOICES, could be applied to anything one man might say. THEIR, is a plural pronoun word, and VOICES, is used with it, and that is also plural, so let us just be sensible about this thing. In order for it to be as some would have it, the wording of that verse would have to be changed to read something like this, And when He had cried (the mighty angel of verse 1) another voice uttered seven thunders. But even if you read it like that, you are still in trouble, for this does not take place until Jesus is off of the mercy seat, the seventh seal is opened, and the little book (scroll of redeemed names) is in His hand fully opened. Even then, there is still verse 4 to deal with, "When the seven thunders (plural) voices (plural) I (John) was about to write." That lets us know that John heard what those voices spoke, for he was getting ready to write it down, when he was told to seal it up, and write it not. Now Saints, if you will just stop to realize that John was projected in the Spirit, all the way into our age of time, and that he was standing at the end of the age, seeing and hearing these things, this will clear up in your

mind. Here John was a type of the living bride church, that would stand at the end of the age, and heard, and understand, that which God anoints these seven men (thunders) to speak. I hope you can see now, that THEIR VOICES, could not possibly apply to one man. There is no symbolism that can be stretched that far. On the other hand, in the first part of verse 3, where you see the word VOICE (singular) used, that does have symbolic application. Symbolically, that identified the mighty angel of verse 1, for it says that "He cried with a loud voice, as when a LION roareth." Jesus Christ, who has been in His mediatorial office for almost two thousand years, will soon complete that office work, and then chapter 10 will be fulfilled, and He will be just about ready to adorn Himself in His Kingly attire, for His rule upon earth in the Millennium, and the scriptures identify Him as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. That is just another one of those keys we mentioned.



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