

Lessons for Us From the Seven Churches

(Day 49)

Be zealous and repent, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

Fred R. Coulter—May 15, 2021

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to the Sabbath before Pentecost, or Day 49.

Remember, in counting Pentecost there has to be seven complete weeks, each ending with a Sabbath. Those seven complete weeks are 49 days, and this is where we are today. I would like to show you a chart:

Count Pentecost Chart

We start out with Passover in Egypt. You will notice that for the Holy Days we mark them importantly, especially the 14th and 15th day of the 1st month, showing that the Passover begins after sunset of the 13th as the 14th day began, and the lambs were killed.

It works out that way when you take the Calculated Hebrew Calendar and you punch in the year of the exodus.

- 14th day is Passover
- 15th day, the exodus began as the 14th day ended and the 15th day began

That's very interesting and everything, because we have all of the Scriptures that we've covered concerning it.

Here is the key: when the Wave Sheaf Offering happens. You look at the year, in which the exodus occurred and you will see that the Wave Sheaf Offering Day took place on the 18th of Nisan, which is the day after the weekly Sabbath.

As you know, the Passover does not fall in this sequence all the time. There are different day on which it falls. When it falls like it did this year, on a Sabbath Day, then the Passover Day being the Sabbath and an Unleavened Bread day, is the day which is the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread.

The next day as it was this year was the 15th. So, the count was actually three days earlier than this chart shows. But this chart—in the year of the Passover—was exactly the same sequence as it was in the year of the crucifixion in 30^{A.D.}

Then we come to the 21st day of the 1st month, day #4 of the count to Pentecost. This is when Israel crossed the Red Sea.

Then they began their journey and ended up three days journey with the Sabbath on the 24th. This is where they had to have the miracle of the tree

thrown in the water to make the water sweet from being bitter.

That's the end of week one in counting to Pentecost. Week two ends (turn chart to the second side) and you come to the second month.

The end of the second week is the 1st day of the 2nd month, and we end up in Exo. 16 where there was the argument what they were going to eat. This is a key chapter to always remember, because this shows the 15th day of the 2nd month—that was a Sabbath Day.

Then the 16th day is the first day of the count toward the manna. But when the 15th day ended at sunset, God sent the quail. They ate them between sunset and dark.

Then we come along and we count all the way to Pentecost. We'll get there in just a little bit. Let's think about something for just a minute: *every single Holy Day of God, plus the Passover*—a Feast, but not a Holy Day—*God does something tremendously important on those days!*

That's why the Sabbath and the Holy Days reveal what God is doing, and how prophecies are fulfilled and when they're about to happen.

You also have to plug in what we have with the study: *Daniel/Revelation*, because all of that ties together. But on every one of the Holy Days and major things, *God does something tremendously important!*

On the Passover Day in Egypt, what did He do? *He killed all the firstborn of the Egyptians and their animals!*

The next day, the beginning the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Night to Be Much Observed Unto the Lord, a great event happened; what was that? *The children of Israel started to leaven Egypt!* That's a tremendous thing to consider.

The next Holy Day had a great event, as well. The rolling back of the Red Sea so the children of Israel could cross and go over to the Sinai Peninsula.

Then we come to Exo. 19 and we will see a definition that is important for us to understand, which is this:

They arrived on the 4th, then we have three days before God came down on the mountain, which was Pentecost.

A great event happened on Pentecost: *the giving of the Ten Commandments!*

Exodus 19:1: “In the third month when the children of Israel had gone forth out of the land of Egypt, **on the same day...**”—*of the week that they left Egypt!*

It’s the same day of the week. It couldn’t be the same day when they left because they weren’t at Mt. Sinai. This is the same day of the week that:

“...**they came to the wilderness of Sinai;** for they had journeyed from Rephidim, and came to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness. And Israel camped there in front of the mount” (vs 1-2)—*Mt. Sinai!*

Let’s see what happened, because this always becomes important. What happened here is like God calling us, but this is back at Mt. Sinai, and God was going to speak to them, and He was going to make a covenant with them. Understand that whenever God proposes a matter, it sounds simple. We’ll see it here:

Verse 3: “And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on **eagles’ wings** and brought you unto Myself”’” (vs 3-4).

“...**eagles’ wings...**” *is a type of protection!* They walked; that’s how they got there.

Now here’s a key thing for everybody in their relationship with God—you and me and everybody down through history, going all the way back to Adam and Eve and going forward to everybody in the future—here it is right here. This is exactly what Jesus confirmed:

Verse 5^[transcriber’s correction]: “Now, therefore, if you will **obey My voice** indeed, and **keep My covenant**... [all the details of the covenant that were yet to be given] ...then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a Holy nation.’ These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel” (vs 5-6). *Simple!* But within it are all the details.

- “...if you will **obey My voice...**” *means whatever God says!*
- “...**keep My covenant...**” *means whatever God will have written down,* because as we

will see an important part of the covenant is to write it down.

Verse 8: “ And all the people answered together and said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do.’...” *Always remember this:*

When *you tell God* something that you will do, you better do it! Likewise, *if God tells you* something to do, you better do it!

“...And Moses returned the words of the people to the LORD” (v 8).

So, God said, ‘All right, you, Moses, get them all ready, they have three days to get ready.’ (see the three days on the chart)

- day 1—Friday—they washed their clothes (v 10).
- day 2—Sabbath—they rested while the clothes were drying
- day 3—first day of the week—the day when God gave the Ten Commandments

That’s a great and historical thing, a one-time thing that has happened in this world and never again to happen the same way.

There may have been upwards of two million people all gathered around the mountain. God came down on the mountain and it was burning with smoke and fire *because of the power of God!*

The people trembled, moved way back; they were afraid. God called Moses up again and said, ‘You go down and tell them not to get near here—the mountain—or any animal. So, Moses went down and told them. After he got back down there, God spoke the Ten Commandments.

If there’s anybody out there who thinks that the Ten Commandments are harsh, they are totally wrong! Why? *Because it’s not the commandments that are harsh!* We’ll review them quickly since they were given on Pentecost. It is profoundly important. God’s commandments are based on love, the love of God.

In Deut. 30 Moses spoke as a rehearsing before they went into the ‘promised land.’ Here’s something always keep in mind: *everything that God does is based on His love, and based on the premise that ‘IF you will obey My voice and keep My covenant’—and commandments—THEN blessings will come!* But the harsh part of it is, not the laws of God, but the **penalty** for breaking them! *That becomes the harsh part!*

Unfortunately, the Protestants can’t separate that out from the rest of what God has said. They like to claim His love, but they don’t love Him back

because they don't keep His commandments. That's why God made it conditional: **IF!** Let's read the details of that **IF!**

Deuteronomy 30:10—*Moses says:* “**If** you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes, which are written in this Book of the Law, **and if...** [notice *how* you are to do this]: ...you turn to the LORD your God **with all your heart and with all your soul.**”

The blessings of God and the blessing of eternal life are so tremendous that God wants you to be wholehearted and wholly devoted to Him!

- not to any man
- not to any minister
- not to any pope

But God, because He wants to bless you!

Verse 11: “For this commandment, which I command you today *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off.”

Everybody has access to a Bible today, think about what that means in this world. There are more Bibles in the world, between what is printed and what is digital than at any time in the history of the world! Isn't that amazing, that that is occurring just before the return of Jesus Christ? *No one can say, 'I didn't know, Lord!'*

- They could have known **IF** they would have read it!
- They could have known **IF** they would have kept the Sabbath!
- They could have know **IF** they would have kept His Holy Days!

But they refuse! God is leaving no excuse available:

Verse 12: “It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’”

What did they say about hearing the voice of God? *Oh Moses, you speak to us!*

Verse 13: “Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it” (vs 13-14).

Not that God put it there, but in a language that you will understand; in your mouth, your language; in your heart a mind to understand it.

IF you believe that is *the work of God*, but here's the detail: **you must obey!** That's what Jesus also said.

Verse 15: “Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil.”

God always gives us choice! What are we going to choose? That choice comes to us all the time! In fact, everything we do in life is a choice, automatic or thought through, makes no difference.

Verse 16: “In that I command you this day to **love the LORD your God...**”

That's the first thing; that's the first commandment. Jesus said that it was ‘the greatest commandment,’ that we should love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being! That's how we do it.

“**...to walk in His ways...**” (v 16). Remember, *‘there is a way that seems right to a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.’*

“...and **to keep His commandments...** [nobody else's] ...and **His statutes...** [the Holy Days] ...and **His judgments...** [how to figure out difficult problems] **...so that you may live and multiply...** [that's what God wants] ...And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it” (v 16).

Notice that God always gives a warning. As I read these next verses I want you to think about what is going on here in America and in the world. The curses are coming because as a people **we've rejected God!** They come automatically because there is also Satan the devil to stir it up! Going clear back to Adam and Eve, they chose Satan instead of the Lord God. *So, God always gives a warning!*

People don't like the warning, because they want to go do whatever they want. That's how people get hooked into so many different things:

- lying
- cheating
- stealing
- adultery
- abortion
- drugs
- falsification in business
- lying from the pulpit every Sunday

I don't think that we grasp the severity of that last statement in relationship to what God is doing.

Verse 17: “But **if** your heart turn away **so that you will not hear...** [a choice] ...but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them.”

Isn't that what's happening today? *Yes!* Right here in the state of California they are teaching

the worst perverse things of perverse sex beginning in the second grade! I already showed you the book that they have: *The GayBCs* by M.L. Webb. They have the worst thing in the world, abortion upon demand right up to the point of birth.

Planned Parenthood has a new program now that they can chemically change the sex, called *chemical castration! It's done through the schools without the parents consent!*

You wonder why we have all these problems? But if I read the Word of God and say the Ten Commandments, *I'm harsh, miserable, cruel and angry!* Do you want to meet God face-to-face and explain it to Him? *Think about that!*

So, all of these things that I just mentioned are other gods!

Finally, in California they are teaching the children to chant to the cannibalistic human sacrifice gods of the Mayans and Aztecs of Central America! ***But they won't let the Bible in the classroom, lest those precious little children learn the Truth!*** Here's what God says is going to happen; ***God doesn't have to do a thing! It is automatic!***

Verse 18: "I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth... [It's still here, isn't it? *Yes, it is!*] ...to record this day **against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live**" (vs 18-19). *That's what God wants!*

But He will and already has set in motion ***the penalties that come automatically because of the sins of the people!*** You need to understand that!

But here's what God wants; v 20: "That you may **love the LORD your God, and may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life...**"

Never forget that! No one anywhere in any nation that has ever been is an entity unto his or her own self. ***You***—and every human being on earth—***has life because of God, whether they understand that or not!***

"...and the length of your days..." (v 20)—*because God wants to bless you!*

Jere. 16—Here's what God told Jeremiah when things were really getting bad, as Jerusalem and Judah were going down, ***down, down*** into the cauldron of sin. They were sinning so much so that God was left no choice because of their sins and depravity to send them off into captivity to Babylon

and destroy Jerusalem and wipe it off the face of the earth. He did it again in 70_{A.D.}

And for anyone who believes in God doing things on days, the 9th and 10th of Ab—on both occasions: 500_{S.B.C.} and 70_{A.D.}—destroyed Jerusalem and the temple! So, poor Jeremiah was having a tough time!

Here's what God told Jeremiah, and let's listen to these words because these are very instructive. Here we are on the day before Pentecost, which pictures the first resurrection; just exactly as the Day of Pentecost, when they heard the Ten Commandments and God speak, ***they became God's nation all gathered together before God!***

So, here they are 900 years later, Israel—the 10 tribes—was already carried off into captivity, and Judah, Benjamin and some of the Levites were left. Remember, Jeremiah was a priest.

Jeremiah 16:1: "The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for yourself, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place.' For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them, and concerning their fathers who begot them in this land: 'They shall die grievous deaths of diseases...' (vs 1-4). ***Sound like what's going on today?***

"...they shall not be mourned, nor shall they be buried... [that's coming] ...*But* they shall be as dung on the face of the earth. And they shall be destroyed by the sword and by famine; and their bodies shall be food for the birds of heaven and for the beasts of the earth' For thus says the LORD..." (vs 4-5).

Now listen to this—and these days are going to be repeated for us—so hang on, look to God so that you can be as God wants you to be:

Verse 5: "...'Do not enter into the house of mourning; do not go to weep nor moan over them....'"

There comes a time when God will do this, because He's been merciful, kind, loving and understanding ***in spite of all of their sins***, but they choose to do so much evil. Now it comes to this:

"...**For I have taken away My peace from this people.**' says the LORD, '**even loving kindness and mercies**'" (v 5). *That's the result of sin and curses!*

Now let's go back and read the Ten Commandments. Let's see how good, wonderful, right and tremendous they are. And you can add on

to it the Passover, the Holy Days, the whole way of God!

Here are the greatest number of people to hear the voice of God when He was in His glorified form speaking from the top of Mt. Sinai in great thundering language with the trumpet blowing and the wind blowing *to show the power of God*, which then God would use to bless them ***IF they obeyed His voice and kept His covenant!***

Exodus 20:1: “And God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of **the house of bondage**’” (vs 1-2)—*slavery!*

How many people today may not be slaves working in a household, but are slaves to sin? *Let’s start with:*

- Sunday-keeping
- drugs
- lying and cheating

God wants you to come out of that!

Commandment #1

Verse 3: “**You shall have no other gods before Me.**”

Why? ***Because God wants to give you:***

- His love!
- His peace!
- His grace!
- His blessing!

Commandment #2

Verse 4: “**You shall not make for yourselves any graven image**, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in the heavens above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, the LORD your God *am* a jealous God...” (vs 4-5).

Why is He jealous? ***Because the devotion that you should be giving to God personally is going to some stupid idol that can’t see, hear, walk, create or answer prayer!*** That’s why!

“...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me” (vs 5).

There are a lot of people who hate God today; that’s why it’s so evil! Remember, all of these things come automatically, just like day and night!

Verse 6: “But showing mercy to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments”

(v 6).

That’s Old Testament doctrine and New Testament doctrine! That’s what God wants to do. But men say,

O God, we have a better idea. We think that because of the situation, that it would be better if we didn’t keep the fourth commandment. But Sunday is one day in seven, so we’ll do it that way, and You have to accept it because we’re good people.

That is a satanic lie!

Commandment #3

Verse 7: “**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain**, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

Commandment #4

Verse 8: “**Remember the Sabbath Day...**”

All Sunday-keeping ministers take God’s name in vain every single week! All of those who believe in Halloween, Christmas, New Years, Easter and a Sunday resurrection ***believe in another god!*** That’s well documented! The truth is, they know all of those things are pagan.

Oh, but it’s good for the children! Really! Is it good to lie to your children? Satan comes and ‘let’s have fun.’ That drives God away! They forget the Sabbath!

“...to keep it Holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God.... [He owns it! So, get your dirty feet and filthy hands off His Sabbath!] ...In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, nor the stranger within your gates; **for in six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day.** Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath Day and sanctified it” (vs 8-11).

The only other days that He blessed and sanctified are the Holy Days! ***No other days!***

Now back off and think about as I read the next commandments. How great, how peaceful, how wonderful the society would be if they kept the commandments of God.

Commandment #5

Verse 12: “**Honor your father and your mother** so that your days may be long upon the

land, which the LORD your God gives you.”

How many teenagers die in various things: drugs and accidents and so forth.

Commandment #6

Verse 13: “**You shall not murder.**”

Do you think God overlooks 62-million murders of the most innocent being killed and torn apart as they’re ripped from their mother’s wombs?

Commandment #7

Verse 14: “**You shall not commit adultery.**” And that’s how all of that (abortions) comes about!

Commandment #8

Verse 15: “**You shall not steal.**”

Commandment #9

Verse 16: “**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**”

Commandment #10

Verse 17: “**You shall not covet** your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor’s.” *Wonderful thing!*

(break)

Let’s see what happened and how they responded, and let’s see how God gave them wonderful statutes and ordinances so they would know how to get along with each other in love.

We’re to love God *first*, and love our neighbors as ourselves. Then we, as Christians, are to love each other as Christ loved us. We’re also to love our enemies.

Exodus 20:18: “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear. **But let not God speak with us, lest we die**” (vs 18-19). *Whoa!*

Verse 20: “And Moses said to the people, **‘Do not fear, for God has come to prove you...’**”

We don’t have to put God on the judgment seat to judge Him, *because He made us! He judges us!*

“...**and so that His fear may be before**

your faces, so that you may not sin” (v 20). *God didn’t want them to sin, because He knew the automatic penalties that would come!*

Verse 21: “And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God *was*. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, “You have seen that **I have talked with you from the heavens**. You shall not make with Me gods of silver, nor shall you make gods of gold for yourselves”’” (vs 21-23). *Then God tells him how to build an altar! Quite an interesting and tremendous thing!*

What happened in less than 40 days? *Aaron made a golden calf! What a short memory!*

Exo. 21-23—God gave all the statutes and commandments on how to get along with each other, and the ordinances.

Exo. 24—God had Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the elders come up near to where God would be, along with Joshua who was the attendant of Moses. They saw God on a Sea of Glass. They ate! *They had a meal in the presence of God!*

We’ll cover that a little later: We’re called to the Lord’s supper, which will be in heaven at the first resurrection. *Think about that!*

Then they had the sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of blood and the people again said, ‘All that the Lord has said, we will do.’ *They said it twice!*

Then God responded by having Moses come up and He gave him specific instructions beginning with how to make the Ark of the Covenant and all the things concerning the tabernacle.

Why did God do this? *Because He wanted to do something special for the people:*

- so they would always remember Him
- so that He could bless them
- so they could love Him
- so He could love them

Here’s what God wanted.

Exodus 25:8: “And let them make Me a sanctuary so that I may dwell among them.”

God wanted to dwell with His people! That’s been the whole story of human kind beginning with Adam and Eve. God wanted them to dwell with Him. But they rather have Satan the devil.

Let’s see what God was going to do, because they wanted *a man* to speak to them, *instead of God!* Well, that didn’t work with Moses,

did it?

- How long did it work with Joshua?
- How long did it work after Joshua and the elders died off?

In a flash they were out after other gods!

So, God said that in the future He was going to fulfill their desire to have God speak directly to them as a man. Here's a prophecy of Jesus Christ, and He—the One Who gave the Ten Commandments—divested Himself of His glory to become a pinprick of life and be born of the virgin Mary. To grow up and be a man to be the Messiah, God manifested in the flesh.

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren...”

Jesus was of the house of David, the tribe of Judah, and the prophesied Seed of Abraham.

“...One like me. **To Him you shall hearken**” (v 15). *That's a very interesting phrase!*

This means that *you will listen to obey or there's no other option left!* He's saying here, this is why I'm doing it.

Verse 16: “According to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die.’ And the LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well what they have spoken’” (vs 16-17). *They were well-intended!*

How many times do good intentions or well-intended people end up in disaster? *Because these good intentions is an excuse to leave God!*

Verse 18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth. And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him.” *You can read what Jesus said about that:*

- I don't say anything of Myself
- I don't do My own will
- I do all that the Father commanded Me to do
- I speak the words of the Father

Verse 19: “And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him.... [pretty heavy words] ...But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name...” (vs 19-20).

Remember that Jesus said about that: *In the*

end-time there shall arise false prophets, many! False christs and give great signs and wonders to deceive the elect! So, we need to be on guard! God is going to require it of them!

Verse 20: “But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak...”—‘let us all keep Sunday’ ***God never commanded anywhere***—New Testament or Old Testament—***to change the Sabbath and Holy Days of God—period!***

“...or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die” (v 20)—*the second death!*

Let's see something very important; let's see what Jesus said. What was it that Jesus said to Satan when Satan was tempting Him for 40 days and 40 nights? *He quoted:*

Deuteronomy 8:3: “...man does not live by bread alone; but by every *word* that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD does man live.” What was Jesus also called? *The Word of God!*

Now, this is absolutely consistent with what God said in the Old Testament; this is today:

Luke 6:46: “And why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord’...”

Yes, ‘many will come in My name saying that I'm the Christ and shall deceive many!’ We'll see in a minute that all the Churches of God always have to be on guard!

“...but *you* do not practice what I say?” (v 46). What is it that He said? *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God!* And the only Word of God at that time was the Old Testament. Tie in Deut. 18:15.

Verse 47: “Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and practices them...”—*that's us!*

We have to live them, practice them and think about them. That has to be every bit a part of what we do and how we think!

“...I will show you what he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid *the* foundation on the Rock... [that Rock is Christ] ...and a flood came, and the torrent beat against that house, but could not shake it, ***because it was founded on the Rock***” (vs 47-48).

*Now turn the coin to the other side; v 49: “But the one who has heard My words and ***has not practiced them***...”*

Oh we like this and that's so nice, but the Sabbath and these Holy Days... No, we really

have so much more fun with Halloween, Christmas, Easter and New Years. Yes, that's fun!

That leads to death! Christ's way leads to eternal life!

- What do you want in the flesh?
- The Truth of God so you can live forever?

or

- The fun of the lies of this world promulgated by the ministers of Satan the devil and you die with no hope of eternal life?

"...is like a man who built a house on *top of* the ground, without a foundation; and *when* the torrent beat against it, it fell at once, and the ruin of that house was great" (v 49).

Here's what we have to do; the old self has been buried, died in the watery grave. We're to walk in newness of life. But we still carry around part of the old man so that we can learn to overcome.

Luke 9:23: "Then He said to all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself...'"

How do you do that? *Love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being!* That's denying the self!

"...and let him take up his cross **daily**... [whatever that may be, and it's different with everyone] ...and let him follow Me; for whoever desires to save his life shall lose it... [to save it *their* way] ...but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall save it. For what is a man profited by gaining the whole world, if he himself is lost or destroyed?" (vs 23-25).

Think about this; v 26: "For whoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and *in the glory* of the Father and of the Holy angels. But I tell you in truth..." (vs 26-27).

Then He takes them up on the Mount of Transfiguration.

"...there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the Kingdom of God" (v 27).

They saw Jesus in His glorified form and that was the same as being in the Kingdom of God.

Now let's look at the seven Churches, and see something that's important. If there's any one thing, it's this: *once saved, always saved* can only be true if the following phrase is added: **If we are faithful to the end!** Remember what we just read: *practices His words*—Old Testament and New Testament all together.

Just like a lot of people, the Church at Ephesus, began with love, zeal and miracles, and then they let down.

Let's understand that Christ is in the middle of all of His Churches. He's the Head of the Church, even though there are seven subdivisions of that, as listed here in Rev. 2 & 3, because He talks to each one of them. He's in the midst of the seven Churches!

These Churches were seven Churches in Asia Minor when this was written. They are all types of historical prophetic projection of the Church down through history to the end-times.

Then in the end-times we will again have all seven Churches manifested. That's why with all the proving and testing that we have gone through, with all the different Churches of God, Christ is still the Head!

Jesus Christ knew ahead of time what would happen. Rev. 2 & 3 are here to give us encouragement. Christ is always with us as the Head of the Church. He loves us and He knows our works. ***But He also knows our shortcomings and our sins!***

So, here is the Church at Ephesus, and notice that people heard the voice of God directly, but here's a prophecy from Christ that we all ought to listen to the messages to the seven Churches.

Church at Ephesus

Revelation 2:1: "To the angel of the Ephesian church, write: 'These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who walks *in the midst of **the seven golden lampstands***'"—*which are the seven Churches!*

Verse 2: "I know your works..."—*God knows us!*

- Do we have the Spirit of God in us? *Sure!*
- Does He know that? *Yes!*

"...and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil... [they tried them out] ...and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars" (v 2). *Look at what we have today with all of the liars!*

Verse 3: "And *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary; nevertheless, I have *this* against you ... [notice that He points out the difficulty] ...that you have left your first love" (vs 3-4).

The first love, the primary love, is the love

toward God. What happened? *They turned toward doing things for brethren and people more than worshipping God and serving the brethren from the attitude of serving God!*

Verse 5: “Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do not*, **I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.**”

How strong is that? If you think some of the things that I read in the Old Testament were strong, compare that with this:

Verse 6: “But this you have: that you hate the works of the **Nicolaitans**, which I also hate.” *That’s the hierarchy to rule over the brethren and ending up bringing in false doctrines!* We’ll see what happens.

Verse 7: “**The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.** To the one who overcomes I will give *the right* to eat of the Tree of Life that is in *the* midst of the paradise of God.”

All of these messages are to the Churches, because even though it flows to the seven Churches originally, and down through different eras of the Churches through history, everything still applies to all the Churches of God all the time, because all these different attitudes can be found with these spiritual conditions within the Churches of God.

Church of Smyrna

Verse 8: “And to the angel of the Church of *the* Smyrneans write: These things says the First and the Last, Who was dead but is alive. ‘I know your works and tribulation and poverty (but you are rich)... [spiritually] ...and **the blasphemy of those who declare themselves to be Jews...**’” (vs 8-9).

Paul wrote that a *spiritual Jew* was one who was *a Jew inwardly, with the circumcision of the heart!* That’s what Christ is talking about. They were claiming to be true Christians, but they weren’t, that’s how the Catholic Church began, a little at a time. Then tribulation against the Church they would be imprisoned.

“...and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan” (v 9). *So, the devil is always there trying to come after the Church!*

- Did that happen in our day? *Yes, indeed!*
- Where are all the ministers that left?
- Where are all the ones who went to Ambassador College?
- Where are all of those who were baptized,

but never stuck it through?

Satan is there!

Verse 10: “Do not fear any of the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast *some* of you into prison that you may be tried... [or proved, do you really believe?] ...and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be faithful unto death... [they’re going to kill you] ...**and I will give you a crown of life.**”

Don’t worry about it! The only thing they can do is lop off your head!

Verse 11: “The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.”

- Isn’t it interesting that there are seven Churches? *Yes, indeed!*
- How many weeks is it counting to Pentecost? *Seven weeks!*

This is typical, spiritually fulfilled, of the seven weeks counting to Pentecost, and we will see tomorrow that Pentecost is the first resurrection! Here we have it.

- Did the children of Israel have troubles and trials all during that time? *Yes, they did!*
- Does the Church have troubles and trials all during the time of Christ’s death and resurrection to His second coming? *Yes!*

Notice that once Satan comes in and he gets a foothold, he doesn’t leave! The only thing that the *true Christians* can do is leave those organizations. That’s why we’re scattered today!

Church of Pergamos

Verse 12: “And to the angel of the Church in Pergamos, write: ‘These things says He Who has the sharp two-edged sword. I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan *is...*’” (vs 12-13).

Anytime you get close to the operation of Satan the devil you are bound to have some practices come off on you like they did.

“...but you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells” (v 13).

After that, what happened? *We’ve seen that when the ministers of Satan come in and take over!*

Verse 14: “But I have a few things against you because you have there *those* who hold the

teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel...”

Oh, come over with us, children of Israel, and have some nice meat; you haven't had much meat lately. Oh, we have a little bread for you to eat; we heard that you can't eat anything but manna. So, come over here and have some of our bread. Oh, by the way, we're going to have a wonderful sex orgy. You will really enjoy that!

“...to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. Moreover... [in addition to that] ...you also have *those* who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, **which thing I hate**” (vs 14-15).

They were building the hierarchy; putting a man between the brethren and God!

Notice how serious what they were doing was, in fact, before God.

Verse 16: “**Repent!** For if *you* do not *repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” **Do you want God to fight against you?**

Verse 17: “The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches....”

Church of Thyatira

Oh what a Church that was!

Verse 18: “And to the angel of the Church in Thyatira write: ‘These things says the Son of God, He Who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet *are* like fine brass. **I know your works, and love, and service, and faith, and your endurance, and your works; and the last are more than the first**” (vs 18-19).

This is during the time of the Waldensians, and also of the Church in Britain, and the time of when the Protestant Reformation came. This was quite a span of time, *about 500 years!*

We have a church historian—John Guenther—who has studied out all of this and found out about the Church. The Church at Thyatira was pretty powerful, but it was always at war against the Roman Catholic Church, and the Roman Catholic Church against the Church at Thyatira.

Verse 20: “But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to **idols**”—*the Sacrifice of the Mass or the Roman Catholic Eucharist!*

And everything but the Passover falls within

the realm of what they were doing here.

Verse 21: “And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent.”

Even in the Council of Trent, which lasted for decades, they had a party of priests who wanted to return to ***the Bible only*** and not have any traditions. But they were voted down. As you will read in **Rome's Challenge to the Protestants** (Appendix N in the *Faithful Version Bible*), Cardinal Gibbon documents that they lost the attempt to bring *Scriptures only* into the Roman Catholic Church, ***because the Protestants kept Sunday!***

Sunday was a tradition and instrument that the Catholic Church invented and Cardinal Gibbon wrote about every place in the New Testament the first day of the week has nothing to do with Sunday-keeping. The Bible only teaches the Sabbath, and in 1893 when Gibbon published *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* for four weeks in a row in July 1893. since then the Protestants have gone down hill!

Verse 21: “And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent.”

So, God is going to cast them “...into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works” (v 22).

Verse 23: “And I will kill her children with death...”—*that has to be the second death!* Her ‘daughters’ are the daughters of Rev. 17.

“...and **all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches the reins and hearts**; and I will give to each of you according to your works” (v 23).

Then He says that those who repent and don't fall to the depths of Satan will rule the nations.

Rev. 3—notice the progression of what happens:

Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:1: “And to the angel of the Church in Sardis, write... ‘I know your works, *and* that you have a name as if you are alive, but are dead.’”

That's what happened. They got down to a few, didn't do anything but just keep the Sabbath and the Passover. That was about it! They didn't do much evangelizing, small groups everywhere.

So, Christ told them, v 2: “...For **I have not found your works complete** before God.”

“...I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life...” (v 5), *but I will give you white robes and you shall walk with Me!*

Church at Philadelphia

Now, here’s the one everyone wants to be, but it can’t be. This is the Church that Jesus loves with ‘agape’ love. Laodiceans He loves with ‘phileo’ love. Here’s why: *The Philadelphians*:

- stay true
- are faithful
- keep the Word of God
- do not tolerate false doctrine
- do not give in to the synagogue of Satan

They resisted against that so much that God is going to make sure that when those of the synagogue of Satan are resurrected that they are going to have to worship God at the feet of the true Philadelphians!

Verse 8: “I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, **and have kept My Word, and have not denied My name.**”

Think about that! If you don’t keep the Word of Christ, you’re denying His name!

Verse 9: “Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, **who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie.** Behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and **to know that I have loved you.** Because you have kept the Word of My patience... [patiently kept My Word] ...I also will keep you from the time of temptation, **which is about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth**” (vs 9-10).

Not some little local thing, *this is worldwide!* What does that mean? {note our message: *Understanding Temptation vs Tribulation*} *Temptation is the receiving the mark of the beast!*

Verse 12: The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the Temple of My God, and he shall not go out anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him My new name*—triple name!

Verse 13: “**The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**”

Church of Laodicea

Here is the one that today is the most prominent!

Verse 14: “And to the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginner of the creation of God. I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot” (vs 14-15).

They’re ‘cool man’! A word today in the English languages that explains the same thing; *you’re ‘cool’!*

Verse 16: “So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say...” (vs 16-17).

Think about this: *The Laodiceans are the only ones of the seven Churches that talk back to God!* They want it *their* way.

“...‘**I am rich**...” (v 17).

Look at all the blessings that God has given us, and all of these things that we have. It’s kind of like a little Garden of Eden down here on the earth.

“...and have **become wealthy**...”

Remember that the income for one year—before the collapse of WCG happened—was \$200-million!

“...**and have need of nothing**; and you **do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked**” (v 17),

You can’t even see or understand your own condition; you think that everything is just fine! ‘Yes indeed, let’s have a reunion in Las Vegas! That will be hunky-dory’

Verse 18—*God says this*: “**I counsel you** to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, **so that you may see.**”

- *see the Word of God and that it means exactly what it says*
- *see your own wretched condition*
- *see how satisfied with all the things that you have*
- *see how you look upon them as blessings from God*
- *see how you don’t need God as much as ‘those poor people over there that are struggling’*

You better have another thought!

Verse 19: “As many as I love, I rebuke and

chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. **Behold, I stand at the door and knock....**” (vs 19-20)—*which two meanings:*

1. He’s close to returning!
2. “...If anyone hears My voice and opens the door...” (v 20)—*and repents!*

Opens the door of his mind to receive what God has!

In other words, a lot of those in the Church of Laodicea should be converted, ***but they’re not!*** They have lost their conversion because of what they were doing, *and thinking everything was fine!*

Here they have a chance to redeem that conversion if they repent and come to God: ***open the door of your mind!***

“...I will come in to him... [by the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ] ...and will sup with him, and he with Me” (v 29).

May there be for the people of God who are in this condition ***a vast repentance and return to God!***

Verse 21: “To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His Throne. **The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**” (vs 21-22).

The day before Pentecost!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 19:1-6, 8
- 2) Deuteronomy 30:10-20
- 3) Jeremiah 16:1-5
- 4) Exodus 20:1-23
- 5) Exodus 25:8
- 6) Deuteronomy 18:15-20
- 7) Deuteronomy 8:3
- 8) Luke 6:46-49
- 9) Luke 9:23-27
- 10) Revelation 2:1-23
- 11) Revelation 3:1-2, 5-10, 12-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 16; 19:10; 21-24
- Revelation 17

Also referenced:

- Chart: *Count Pentecost*
- In-Depth study: *Daniel/Revelation*
- Booklet: *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants* (also Appendix N; *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version Bible*)

- Message: *Understanding Temptation vs Tribulation*

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