

Revelation Lesson 28
Ephesus: The Lagging Church (Expectation) Part 2

Revelation 2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

We saw last time what Christ expected the Ephesian Church to do: Remember, Repent and Repeat the first works. Now, within this second part of Christ's Expectation we find something that seems to be more of a Commendation or Compliment than a Command. What is this and who are the Nicolaitans? Stay tuned!

But – The dictionary states that this word is used to introduce something contrasting with what has already been mentioned. So, the Condemnation was given, and then the first portion of the Expectation was given in the previous verse. Here Christ introduces what many state is another part of the Commendation or Compliment and should have been inserted therein. I for one will be so bold as to say that God placed this statement here where He intended it to be. To change the placement would cause man to be God's Editor and such is not our right with the Word of God. My own view on this is that what Christ is describing is “active” and as such was currently “going on.” Thus what Christ is doing is not merely is He ascribing them a compliment but also is giving an Expectation in that this function needs to continue.

This – The word this here is referring to the “hatred of the deeds of the Nicolaitans.”

thou hast, - Again note the singular usage of THOU in referring to the local body of Christ. They are said to “have” something. This denotes that they currently had it in the present. It wasn't something they once had, but was something they were doing at that moment.

that thou hatest – Waite says: “As we said before, many people say we don't hate anything. Some people don't even hate sin. The Lord Jesus Christ tells us differently. We are to hate evil.” As a matter of fact see what the Bible tells us:

- Psalms 97:10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.
- Psalms 119:104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.
- Psalms 119:163 I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.
- Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.
- Amos 5:15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

Some are shocked to find that believers ARE to HATE. Waite stated: “We are to have evil and wickedness, starting with ourselves. If we do not hate the evil in our own beings (that's where we start), we don't have the capacity to have evil elsewhere. We start with our own wicked, sinful flesh. We must hate the evil of our flesh.”

the deeds – Some “Christians” have gone overboard on the issue of Sodomites (gays or homosexuals) as in the case of the Westboro Baptist Church – what a blight on the face of our faith. Now I want you to notice what was “hated” - it was their deeds or works. Christ NEVER said that He hated the Nicolaitans, but He stated that he hated their deeds. Some people get the sinner and the sin “mushed” into one, but recall that the sinner ought to be loved but his sin and wickedness dealt with and given over to the Lord Jesus Christ

of the Nicolaitans, - Here we come to something that is considered somewhat mysterious in the Bible. Waite says: “The Lord Jesus Christ said He also hates the “deeds” of the Nicolaitans” and He continues to hate them. The word “Nicolaitans,” comes from 2 Greek words: NIKAO [which means] “to conquer” and LAOS [which means] “the people.” Thus it is surmised that the “deeds” of the Nicolaitans involved what the word says: To conquer the people.

Many movements both political (Jeffersonian Democracy) and religious have been named after their founders or leaders. Consider a few:

- Arminianism - after Jacobus Arminius
- Buddhism - after Buddha
- Calvinism - after John Calvin
- Christianity - after Jesus Christ
- Millerism or Millerite - after William Miller
- Darwinism - after Charles Darwin (Wait! Some cry, that's science! Nope! Darwinism is a religion same as Creationism – after the Biblical Creation!)

Seeing this process through history, many as Greene says: “outstanding Bible authorities teach that the sect of the Nicolaitans began with Nicolas of Antioch.” In Acts 6:5 we find that the Church of Jerusalem chose 7 Deacons: *“And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:”* What we find interesting here is that Nicolas was a Gentile who had converted to Judaism. His home had once been Antioch. This is the only place in the Bible his name is mentioned. Some have taught that he defected from the faith and began to corrupt “the faith once delivered” Green states again: “Other authorities deny this suggestion.”

Again, the word means “To Conquer the People.” Green states: “No doubt the deeds of the Nicolaitans, hated by the church at Ephesus was the setting up of certain men to rule over the ordinary believers in the church, and this probably marked the beginning of the priestly order in the church, which continues in this day in the Roman Catholic church and others.” Waite follows up his comments in like manner with an illustration pointing to the Catholic church testifying that these are some of the deeds of the Nicolaitans: “The conquering of the people is the situation in the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), where the Pope is the supreme power in the church. In the past, the people were not permitted to read or interpret the Bible. Now they say they can read it, but not interpret it. Years ago, they couldn't even have it or read it. The Roman Catholic leaders “conquered the people” so that the ordinary people couldn't come to the Lord Jesus Christ individually, and they still have to go through it.” Such is absurdity and evil!! Evidently the Catholics and others have not read 1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;” There it is!! There is ONE Mediator between God and Man – Christ Jesus – not some two-legged preacher, pastor, priest, pope, virgin “mary” nor saint nor angel!!! THE ONLY go between is CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD!!!

Consider that no man has a right to be as 1 Peter 5:3 says: “Lord over God's Heritage.” Furthermore, “God NEVER intended, “ said Oliver B. Greene, “His Church to be divided into priests and laity,” for “every born again believer is a priest....not just a priest, but a royal priest (1 Peter 2:9). Every believer is invited to enter boldly into the holy of holies (Hebrews 10:19-25). God appoints under-shepherds, or Pastors, to care for the flock, to feed the sheep and to keep out the wolves; but God does not appoint Church bosses, or special men to pray for us or listen to our confession of sin. We are to confess our sin to the Lord God through our Mediator the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul stated in Galatians 5:9 “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” and he also stated such in 1 Corinthians 5:6 “Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” thus without the proper spiritual leadership other “leaders” of a corrupted or “wolfish” nature will creep in. Note Paul’s address to the Ephesian Elders (Acts 20:17) in Acts 20:29 “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” So the apostle said and so it happened.

Greene states: “Corruption spreads, and spreads rapidly. Ephesus hated these impurities. Ephesus hated the terrible deeds of the Nicolaitans. Ephesus was troubled only with deeds. Ephesus would not put up with the Nicolaitans.”

As such, it seems that this continued stand that Church at Ephesus had, caused some of the Nicolaitans to move to Pergamos. We will see move about that in Revelation 2:15. But be that as it may some still clung inside of the Church of Ephesus, but they were resisting their deeds and it seems it was working. Christ is merely telling them that He agreed with WHAT they were doing, and WHY they were doing what they were doing in regards to those whose deeds were hated!

which I also hate. - Here God purportedly drops a “bombshell” in that He says He hates. Many people quoting 1 John 4:16 “God is love” are puzzled at how a “loving and merciful” God can hate anything. Such are the naïve ones out there. When mankind hates it is most of the time rooted in sinful reactions or situations. God does not have to worry about Ephesians 4:26 where it states: “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”