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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* [Acts 16:31a](#) And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving

your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”* Romans 10:9,10 *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Romans 10:13 *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Romans 5:1

THE LAODICEAN CHURCH

Biblical pastors and theologians have known for years, that the Church Age will be characterized by the seven churches found in the Book of Revelation with the last church being characterized by the Laodicean church. For decades they have assumed that this is still at some point yet in the future, but after a careful study of the passage and contemporary history, we will see that it is here upon us! Some of the things that we will be looking at are the relationship of the Laodicean church to the apostasy; it's relationship to end time events and the phenomena of the Holy Spirit no longer restraining the evil in the world and what that really means.

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation.’” Revelation 3:14

N. Letter to the Pastor of the Laodicean church. v.14

1. *“To the angel of the church in Laodicea”-*

Laodicea was a province of Phrygia in the Lycos valley in Asia minor, not too far from the other six churches mentioned in the book of Revelation. In 190 BC it came under the Roman province of Asia and suddenly became a great and wealthy center of industry. Laodicea was located at the junction of several trade routes and was strategically located to capitalize on all the trade that flowed in and out of Rome.

Some of the things found in Laodicea were: a tremendous trade in fine black wool because of the sheep raised there; it was the center for the manufacturing of a Phrygian powder that was used to make salve for the eyes that healed infections and other ailments; it was a tremendous retail center; the temple of Men-Karou, (also referred to as Aesklepis, a deity associated with healing), was located there; a world famous school of medicine was there and it was also a center for banking. Banking, agriculture, manufacturing, trade, commerce, wholesale centers, retail center all added up to the city and its inhabitants being extremely wealthy and prosperous. So wealthy was the city that when a major earthquake hit it in 60 AD, destroying the city, the citizens turned down Rome's money to rebuild it and did it themselves.

Which brings us around to the church that was located there. A church is made up of Christians and the Christians come from the town or the surrounding area that they live

in. If the town is “dirt poor”, then basically the Christians living in it will be “dirt poor”. If the town is wealthy and prosperous, then you will find that the cross section of believers living in that town will be wealthy and prosperous.

What we will see is that the culture, the economics and the mind-set of Laodicea had a tremendous influence on and shaping of the mental attitude of the believers who lived there. Instead of changing to the biblical standard, they conformed to the local culture, like so many Christians are doing in America today.

A major banking center, medical center, seat of a temple that insured religious pilgrims for worship, unique agricultural monopoly, a manufacturing center with world-wide distribution of its product, all located at the convergence of major trade routes all spoke of one thing- fantastic wealth and prosperity! Not just for a few people, but for all the people living in Laodicea, including the Christians there. From the educated to the political leaders to the owners of manufacturing companies to the owners of retail shops all were making money and all were prosperous.

With this prosperity came the ability to buy the best clothes, the best homes, food, medical treatment, etc. Much like what is going on in America today. The prosperity, the accumulated wealth of the last 25 years, (or the accumulated debt), has enabled Americans, Christians included, to buy the nicest houses, averaging close to \$400,000 in our area, nice clothes, several cars, boats, stereos, TV's, computers, RV's, vacation homes, condo's, timeshares, medical coverage, etc, etc, riches by any nation's standards.

But there is a **mind-set shift** that comes about in virtually every single individual, including Christians, when they become prosperous and that is **pride and arrogance**; the arrogance of personal success; the arrogance of position; the arrogance of wealth and possessions! Pride deceives the individual as to their true status. It also elevates the person in their thinking to think higher of themselves than they really are. Pride deceives the believer in this area where he thinks that his physical and financial prosperity are linked to his spiritual prosperity. That is, he thinks that because he has wealth, because he is rich and prosperous is the evidence that he is pleasing God, that he is walking with the Lord!

A point of doctrine: being spiritually blessed does not mean that one will become financially wealthy; being financially wealthy does not mean that one is spiritually blessed; being poor does not mean that one is spiritually poor, nor does it mean that one is spiritually rich either! Financial prosperity is never to be the determiner of one's spiritual prosperity or walk with God! The “Prosperity Gospel” today teaches that God wants you to be rich. And if you are a believer and have become rich, it's because God has blessed you.

The “*angel*” of the church is *angelos*, which is the Greek word for messenger and refers to the pastor of the church. In Revelation 1: 12, 16, 20 there is a reference to the seven stars and seven lamp stands. The seven lamp stands are the seven churches and the seven stars are the angels/messengers/pastors of the seven churches. These pastors he holds in his right hand; the position of favor, power and protection.

Christ warned the church at Ephesus if they did not repent, (to have a change of mental attitude toward Bible doctrine), he would remove the lamp stand from its place, that is, he would remove or close down the church there in Ephesus. Revelation 2:4,5. The analogy of a star is used for the pastor of a church, because as a star gives out physical light in the darkness of the kosmos, so does **the Pastor-Teacher give out spiritual light in the darkness of the kosmos of the world system by teaching the Word of God.**

There are four concepts involved in the seven churches. One, it referred to the seven literal churches in Asia Minor. Two, there were certain characteristics found in each one of these churches. Three, concepts found in these churches would be found in various churches throughout the church Age. And four, the Church Age would be divided up by the characteristics of the seven churches beginning with the church of Ephesus and going right on through in order to the church of Laodicea.

Many good biblical scholars have done a good job on ascribing the characteristics of a certain church in Revelation to the characteristics of the church in general in the church age, even down to the approximate dates of their beginning and ending. For example, there was the Church of Rome with all its pomp, ceremony and ritual, followed by the church of Philadelphia, which would be the church of the Reformation, followed by the present day church of Laodicea, which we will have to study to understand its characteristics, so we can see that that's where we're at today.

The Philadelphian church was not just an open door for missions, but was about the true teaching of the true gospel. Spurgeon and many others understood this. It was also not only about church planting, but also about the establishing of nations with governments based upon Christian principles: America, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Rhodesia, South Africa, etc. It was when the church was based upon the Word of God.

Looking at the seven churches progressively over the church age, where one church follows after another, does not mean that that's the **only** kind of Christianity that would be found during that period of time. It means that during that time Christianity would become predominantly that kind of church, but the other six kinds of church would be still there in smaller measure.

Think of it as seven bumps or hills, each one having its own characteristic, only during that period of time in the church age, one hill will be much larger than the others. The others will still be there, but it's that that one kind of church will dominate over the others. Laodicean churches existed during the Philadelphian phase of the church age, but the church of Christ during that time would predominantly be the type of church described as Philadelphian. The church of Christ on earth in the church age during its Laodicean phase will be like that described as the church at Laodicea, but the other six churches described will still be there. That is, even during the Laodicean phase of the church age you will still find the kind of church described as Philadelphian, there will still be churches holding to the Word of God, but the church will be predominantly like the apostate church at Laodicea. All seven exist at the same time, but one stands out way more than the others.

Now, other than the tremendous economy of Laodicea and the money that was being made there, came certain other psychological characteristics. Pride was definitely a factor that lifted people up in their thinking, which would give people smugness, a sense of self-righteousness and complacency. But there was something else.

Banking, manufacturing, commerce, industry, retail, etc, can all be summed up in one word- money! **The business of Laodicea from the smallest shopkeeper to the largest of enterprises was to make money.** When a customer came in through the door the business of the shopkeeper was to make money off him. To do this the business owner had to adopt a personality or mental attitude of compromise, of being accommodating, of being non-judgmental so as to not offend his customer. So lack of principle, complacency and “going along to get along” became the culture of Laodicea. They were people who were “wishy-washy”, unprincipled; non-committal and no public stand for principles. They were indeed “politically correct”.

2. *“These are the words of the Amen”*

“These things say the Amen”. The Greek word *amen* is the same word as the Hebrew *amen* and it gives insight into what it means. Amen meant to prop something up, to support something; therefore it would hold you up, from that idea it meant that you could depend upon it. When it was used of a man you would say that he was reliable, dependable; you could count on what he said. Amen meant more than just to believe what one says to be true, but also to base one’s life and decisions on it.

Now Christ refers to himself as the Amen using the definite article telling us that we can base our lives on everything that he says; not only that he tells us that he is the Amen! **The only one that we can count on** to believe what he says, to trust completely and to base our lives and decisions on his words.

3. *“The faithful and true witness”*

Faithful tells us that you can count on Christ’s testimony, and true tells us that what he says is true. A witness is one who has had to see things with his own eyes, or hear things with his own words.

Christ has seen the Father, he has heard his promises and testifies as to their validity. And we can count on them because he is the faithful and true witness. And because he is the Amen, he is also the personal guarantor that the father’s promises will be fulfilled to us.

4. *“The Ruler of God’s creation”*

As the *arche* Christ is the origin and source of God’s creation and he rules over it. This documents the preexistence of Jesus Christ that he existed before the creation of the universe and all things that were created. It also documents the deity of Christ, in that he not only rules over all things, the function of deity, but he created it, also the function of deity.

Now, in view of everything Christ has stated about himself, one needs to take this very serious and as a matter of truth to be counted on when he goes on to give his evaluation of the seven churches and what they need to do about their problems.

O. Neither cold nor hot. V.15

1. *“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot”*

When Christ said, *“I know”*, the perfect tense of *oida*, it meant that he knew fully and perfectly well what was going on; he had known about it all along and now he is informing them of the problem.

Cold and hot probably refers to the waters of Heiropolis and Colosse. Colosse was located around ten miles south of Laodicea and had cool water there, while Heiropolis was located seven miles north and was famous for its hot springs.

The word deeds, *erga*, refers to one’s actions, their activity as believers. The term neither cold nor hot **refers to their lack of zeal, their complacency, that they were self satisfied and indifferent to the real issues of faith and the Word of God.**

2. *“I wish you were either one or the other”*

I wish, *opheilo*, is the desire that Christ has for the Laodicean church, but it also has the idea of a necessity that needs to be considered because of the matter at hand. The thing that they need to consider, the matter at hand before them, is that Christ is about to judge them, so they need to listen to what he has to say and apply it to their lives.

He wishes that they were one or the other, either cold or hot, then he would know what to do with them. If they were hot, he could use them to serve him. If they were cold, they would need saving. As it were, they were neither! So what do you do with them? The references to the cold and hot waters of the two neighboring towns tells us that at least the cool waters of Colosse were useful to people to maybe drink or swim in and the hot waters of Heiropolis were therapeutical for the body.

Christ isn’t saying that he wishes they were unsaved; it’s just an expression of what do you do with somebody who is smug, complacent, self-satisfied, indifferent to the things of the Lord, with people who think that they are all right as they are! How do you get through to people who are aloof? The reference to lukewarm ness implies that at one time they were hot, on fire for the Lord, probably as new Christians, but got caught up in the economy and culture of Laodicea and became lukewarm.

P. Luke warm Christians v.16

1. *“So, because you are like warm- neither hot nor cold”*

Being lukewarm has a reference back to the water supply of Laodicea. In spite of all its wealth the water supply of Laodicea was tepid, a condition that sometimes brought about nausea in the people who drank the water there. The water came from the mountains where it was hot and then cooled down by the time it hit the city, but was still lukewarm. People were frequently hit with nausea and vomiting upon drinking it. And here Christ was saying that **the Christians there were like their water- lukewarm and nauseating.**

The condition of being “lukewarm” tells us that at one time these believers were hot, but had cooled off. At one time they were “on fire” for the Lord and his Word, but had become complacent, compromising, accommodating, self-satisfied, lifted up with pride, indifferent, materialistic, worldly, no true spiritual dynamic, selfish, covetous, greedy for money and success and no stand for the truth.

Instead of having their lives changed by the teachings of the Word of God, the influence of the city had changed them, where they had become like all the other unsaved people living there, the Phrygians, the Syrians and Jews who had moved there to make money, but all the time maintaining a religious façade. They were like their water supply, where, when it was up in the mountains away from people and things it was hot, **but when it came down into the city,** it became lukewarm.

When they were living wherever it was that they came from they were zealous for the Lord and his Word, but when they came to Laodicea they cooled off. They became like the people of Laodicea, accommodating, complacent, worldly and materialistic. They “went along” so they could “get along”. Instead of getting on in the plan of God, they were just simply trying to get ahead. **This certainly is a description of the condition of the Church today in America.** Instead of taking its stand for the Word of God, it has become like the world. It has no stand, for the most part, for the truth, only a compromising, materialistic, accommodating spirit.

2. *“I am about to spit you out of my mouth”*

This is an expression of divine disgust over their walk with God. *Emeo*, spit or spew, actually meant to vomit. It has the idea of taking a drink of water in your mouth because you’re thirsty and the first thing you notice is that it’s lukewarm. You really don’t want to drink lukewarm water, but you’re thirsty so you might as well choke it down. But after drinking it your whole body reacts to it and you vomit it out. It’s not that you hate water- you love water, but this water you can’t stomach.

This speaks of divine rejection; not of these Christians, but of the kind of Christianity they are practicing. It’s just like the water; you’re not rejecting water, you’re rejecting lukewarm water. Christ stands outside the door of this type of church. He is not inside it, yet they are practicing a type of Christianity, which they think is biblical, but it isn’t! Why? Because the Word of God is not found in it, only a religious activity that they pass off as Christianity! It is significant to note that there is a church there, but Christ is not in it, just like so many churches in America today. **And the reason why Christ is not in them is because their churches are not centered on the Word of God.**

Why we know that this centers on the Word because of the reference to gold refined in the fire and the reference to Christ being outside the Laodicean church. Christ is the incarnate Word of God, the Word that was in the beginning with God, John 1, he is the Way, the Truth and the Life. And if the Word of God is not in these churches, then you can be sure that Christ is not in them!

This ties in with the great apostasy prophesied by the apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2. The word *apostasia* was originally the revolt of the troops against their military commander. They reject his orders, his authority and then go off and do their own thing. It was also a departure from walking with God according to the protocol that he had established. In the church age the protocol is living by faith in the Word and God's grace. The apostasy of the church in the last days is not just a departure from the spiritual dynamic of faith in the Word of God under the filling of the Holy Spirit, but an adopting of the dynamics found in the world system. A spirit of worldliness, accommodation, compromising, complacency and materialism now rest in the church. Where the believers actually blend in with and become like the world in the communities in which they live. They have a type of "Christianity", but it really isn't. It is a worldly church with no stand for, or love for the truth of God's Word.

Q. The Problem Revealed v.17

1. "You say, 'I am rich'"

"*Because you are saying, 'I am rich'*". The present tense of lego tells us what their present mental attitude is as well as what they were saying. Found in the 2-person singular of *you* it wraps up the mental attitude of the church there in general. Remember, getting ahead, wealth and prosperity was the ambition, goal and the status quo of Laodicea. The city was predominantly, as most are, made up of unbelievers and for them prosperity was the only issue in life.

But this letter is not directed to the unbelievers living in Laodicea, but to the Christians living there. This statement that Christ gives us reveals what their problem was and what the problem would be in Christianity in the last days before the Lord returns to earth. And we're seeing it all around us.

Eimi is the verb of status quo; it defines our existence. Saying that, "I am rich", says something entirely different than, "I have money", or, "I have wealth". **It says that, "I have arrived", "I have finally made it", "I have all the money that I wanted", "I have attained my goals", "I am finally successful"!** It all centers around the ego. It **defines a subtle shift in the mind-set where the believer now views his existence in an entirely different light**. He now sees himself as being wealthy and prosperous, as many do here on the west coast. It isn't saying that he's got all that he wanted, (that never ends); but that he's finally arrived at a place- "I am rich"!

Plousios meant wealth or riches in a material sense, to have money, to have many material possessions, (talk about America again). So it speaks about having money and

material things, not just some, but an abundance of both. The believers in Laodicea compromised their doctrinal stand for the Word and became like the unsaved living there, just like in America today, for the purpose of and with the result that they accumulated money and many things, and the Word went by the wayside.

There's also an allusion to the mistaken idea that they thought they were spiritually rich too! That is, because they had acquired an abundance of money and things, they were being blessed by God and were spiritually rich. The spirit of the surrounding culture had crept into the church and had paralyzed their spiritual life. But they couldn't see it because they had been deceived by all their prosperity and possessions! Wealth, and all that it brings, deceives those who have it. It deceives them about their relationship to God and how they perceive themselves. It lifts people up in pride; it deceives them concerning their relationship to God: it gives them a sense of self-reliance, that they are sufficient unto themselves, and it gives them a sense of self-importance.

There was the pride that they had arrived, that they had money, success, and material possessions all in abundance, but it is also implied that there **was pride over the means by which they had acquired their wealth!** Their hard work, their skills, their merit; they had an independent, self-sufficient, self-reliant attitude that they had done this. Pride, conceit, arrogance, self-deception, independence, self-satisfaction, smugness, spiritual indifference, boasting, works, materialism, covetousness, greed, worldliness and many more things were the dynamic going on in their souls, but not the spiritual dynamic of metabolized doctrine.

The statement, "*I am rich*", is such a powerful, but negative statement that reveals so much about these believers. "I am" is a different concept than "I have". They had lost their love for Christ and his Word and now wanted to go after the things that the unsaved in the community were pursuing. And after pursuing their worldly goals, (deceiving themselves that they are walking with the Lord), they had finally arrived. Now they, too, had money and possessions. **They had gone through the stages of: getting by, to keeping up, to getting ahead, to finally arriving.**

The same spirit that had infected and overcome the Christians living in Laodicea has overtaken the Christians living in America today! The Laodicean church is a worldly, compromising church that goes after money and things and is deceived as to its true condition. Bible doctrine is not its priority, just like in America today. For most people truth is nothing more than a malleable commodity.

2. "*I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing*"

Plouteo is the verb form of *plousios* and it looks at the **action** of accumulating wealth and material possessions. And the first thing that stands out is the use of the active voice where it is the subject that produces the action. Which is to say that it is these believers who had accumulated their wealth and possessions! **They had not been give the wealth by God, for the passive voice would have been used if that were the case.** It is very clear that these believers had gone out, according to the spirit of Laodicea, and had made

their money and accumulated many material possessions in their own strength and works **and were boasting about it!**

The next thing we notice is that it is in the perfect tense, which looks at the beginning of an action, its progress and then arriving at a completed state. Before these believers went off in the pursuit of money and all that it brings with it, there was first an entire mental and spiritual dynamic in progress. At one time these believers were zealous for the Lord and his Word; they were living by faith, learning Bible doctrine, applying it to their lives and being conformed in their thinking to be like Christ. But in time they started to cool off. They began to see the prosperity of those around them in society **and in time they wanted to be like them!**

Instead of being conformed of the image of Christ through faith, obedience and the intake and application of his Word, (Romans 12:1,2), they began to be conformed to the world system as found in Laodicea. **Day by day they saw the prosperity of the other people living in Laodicea/Redding/Wherever; they saw the new clothes, the homes, the wealth, their material possessions and started to want it for themselves!** The pride of life, the lusts of the flesh, and the desire for money, for success, for things started to capture their thinking. They began to neglect or reject the spiritual dynamic of faith in the Word under the filling of the Holy Spirit and started to go after these things!

They were weak because they had rejected Bible doctrine; and because they were weak they were influenced and shaped by society and the world. The things of Christ and his Word started to dim in their hearts, while the things of Laodicea grew brighter. All the while they were justifying themselves; they subjectively concluded that their prosperity was the result of walking with the Lord, while it was the farthest thing from the truth, as we shall see.

The Christians living in America today are Laodicean Christians and have been infected with the same error. Throwing off obedience to the teachings of Christ, (at best they pick and choose, and how can they obey the teachings if they're not interested in getting them?), they too have gone after money and material possessions. **The term "Laodicean Christians" is a description characteristic of the majority of Christians living in the last part of the Church Age.**

But the Christians living in this phase of the Church Age have one other error going against them that they use to justify their actions and that is the "**prosperity gospel**". It teaches that God wants you to be rich, to have lots of things, thereby justifying their lusts, their carnality, their worldliness, their covetousness and their negativity toward Bible doctrine. They use 3 John 2, "*Brothers I pray in all respects that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your souls prosper.*" **But they miss the point that it all hinges upon the soul being prospered and the soul is prospered by means of Bible Doctrine!** God adds prosperity to us when he sees doctrinal capacity of the soul, and there can be no doctrinal capacity of the soul when the believer rejects the intake and application of the Word!

“*I have need of nothing*”, they say. They don’t need anything because they have everything. And why do they have everything? Because they went away from the Lord and doctrinal obedience to get money and things. The word for have is *echo*, to have or to possess. “I have no need of anything because my money, **which I have acquired**, has bought me everything I need: cards, homes, furniture, insurance, retirement, etc”. *Chreian, need*, speaks of that which is necessary to life. “**I have acquired** everything I needed in life and now I’m prospered! **I did it**”! See the problem?

When we read in *Philippians 4:19*, “*And my God will provide all your needs through his riches in glory through Christ Jesus*”, that it is the Father who’s to provide all our needs, we see that they have thrown off the place of God in providing our needs as we trust in him and depend upon him, instead they have provided their own needs through their own works, and all the while justifying their own actions. It certainly is a description of the yuppie generation today, but it really encompasses the older generation from WWII to the present younger crowd. They all have been infected by the spirit of Laodicea and become worldly, self-justifying and materialistic Christians. Context gives us perspective, such as; in *Psalms 73* Asaph is a type of doctrinal, Philadelphian type of believer living in a Laodicean society.

3. “*But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked*”

The Laodicean believers in the pride of self-accomplishment smugly and boldly proclaim that they are spiritually and financially rich; they have need of nothing! Which implies that they don’t even need God. This is their distorted evaluation of themselves. But now Christ gives **his** evaluation of them and it’s not a pretty picture.

He says, “*But you do not know*”, and the word used for know is *oida*, which is the word for the kind of knowledge where the individual has a full and complete understanding in the matter, which Christ obviously did. But the Laodiceans didn’t know! They had a little doctrinal knowledge about this and that matter, but they didn’t have a thorough knowledge about prosperity, money and an abundance of things. They thought that having an abundance of things was indicative of God’s blessings on them- **but they were wrong!**

Now Christ gives them his evaluation of them and none of it is good. In the other churches he had something to good to say about all of them, even if there were criticisms. But with the Laodicean church crowd he had absolutely nothing good to say about them, not even one thing. He starts off with, “*Do you not realize that you are wretched*”! It is found with the definite article and it’s, “*The wretched one*”.

Talaiporos referred to the condition generally found in the poor. It was the miserable, distressed condition of the body, mind, or the environment. It was caused by being worn out by hard work in the physical realm, or by being worn out emotionally. Stress, pressure, exhausting labor, no life, no money, and all the adversities of life contribute to the condition of being miserable and wretched. Wretchedness was the condition of the poor because they had it so hard in life. But Christ tells them that, “*You are the wretched*

one"! They thought that because they had money that put them above the poor, but in truth they were the wretched ones.

Pitiful is *eleeinos* and it was used of someone in life whose life was so miserable, so wretched, so far down mentally, financially and socially that they were objects of pity. Again this is a picture of Laodicean believers looking down on people "less fortunate" than them as objects of pity. **Once again we see how wealth, without doctrinal capacity of soul, lifts believers up in pride** so that they look down on other believers. They thought they were something because of their money, but Christ said that they were the objects of pity. He said that these rich, prosperous believers with all their material possessions were really the ones who should be the objects of pity because they had missed the whole point of the Christian way of life and weren't walking with the Lord according to the Word. How deceived they were.

Poor, *ptochos*, were those without money, (sounds like so many of us today), and without money they were at the bottom of socio-economic scale. They were poor because they couldn't get any jobs, and what jobs they did get paid next to nothing. They lived in the worse of places, or were forced to live outside. They wore hand me down clothes or rags. They barely had enough to eat, and perhaps worse of all, they had no prospects for the future; they had nothing to look forward to.

The rich believers kept them down there by paying low wages, (or withholding their pay), because that's how they could insure a source of cheap labor. As the Apostle James wrote, "*But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones dragging you into court?*" James 2:6

Looking down upon, insulting and pitying them brings to mind the phrase, "What a pathetic loser", and that's how the believers who had made it viewed those believers who hadn't. James condemned this in the rich in James 1:1-5, where he says weep and wail of the misery that is coming down upon them. They had lived in luxury and wanton indulgence but were going to lose their wealth, and then they would be like the poor. The poor are rich in faith, but that's not how the Laodicean/Yuppie viewed them. They viewed them as objects of pity because they could never "get their acts together", which they tried to do over and over, but the rich never see that.

Blind, *tuphlos*, plays off the culture of Laodicea where eye salve was manufactured for the healing of the eyes. **The Laodicean believers had access to an optical remedy, but had neglected the spiritual remedy that comes from Christ**. What it also tells us is that they thought they had insight into Christ, the church and the things of Christ, but they didn't. Once again, their wealth, possessions and position in the community had blinded them; it had deceived them as to the truth. All they could see was material matters, not spiritual.

Wealth, possessions and position in a community do not make the believer an expert or authority on Christ, the local church and spiritual matters! But those who have it think it does! They think that they are qualified to comment on these matters because they have made it- but they're not! That's the arrogance and deception of

wealth and personal success talking. It blinds them as to the truth. But convinced of their righteousness in the matter they become experts. They do until Christ sets them straight in his own evaluation.

Naked, *gumnos*, means to be without clothes, and this, too, has a reference to the culture and industry of Laodicea. The area produced a rare, high quality black wool that was in demand. In addition to that, due to the tremendous wealth of the local economy, clothes, fine clothes, lots of clothes were the norm for the people living there. The fact that Christ brings this up shows that it was an issue for the believers living there. Their wealth bought them fine clothes, and the fine clothes fed their egos and pride, while other believers were going without clothes.

Everything they prided themselves in, all the things that they thought were indicators of being on the right track were in essence exactly the opposite. They were so far gone, so far removed from the reality of their walk with God that they couldn't see the fact that they were the naked ones! To walk around naked was about as low as one could get in those days; it was a disgrace. Saying that they were naked said that they were a shame to the body of Christ, that they disgraced the community of God's people. Yet they were so deluded that they thought they had on fine clothes.

R. Christ's Counsel v.18

1. *"I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire"*

To counsel, *sumbouleuo*, refers to the giving of advice from one person to another, it encompasses personal advice, counseling and advice in the military arena, economics and government. A board or panel of men can be set up to give advice and that would be called a council, or advisory panel.

If the middle voice is used it means to ask for advice, which is not the case here. The Laodicean believers are not asking Christ for his advice concerning their lives and practices. **They had already rejected that when they rejected his Word.** Why didn't they ask for his advice? Because they "knew" they were already doing the right thing. Why did they come to that conclusion? Because they have the money and things! They believed, like the prosperity gospel crowd today, that wealth as the indicator of them is blessed by God. Besides, as it says here, "They had acquired wealth and were not in need of anything"!

They didn't ask the Lord for his advice, but he's going to give it to them anyway. He says, "I advise you". **Now when Christ says, "I advise you", we better listen to what he has to say.** To buy is *agorazo*, the verb form of *agora* the word for the marketplace, where all sorts of things can be purchased, things that were necessary for daily living and survival. "I am advising you to buy from me gold that has been refined in the fire".

This reference to buying brings to mind the famous marketplace near the temple of Men-Karou where all the commodities manufactured at Laodicea could be purchased, along

with imports from other areas. But there was nothing at the market there that could help their spiritual condition that could only be acquired from Christ. They were financially rich, but spiritually poor.

The answer for God's people today doesn't lie in the shopping malls of America, yet they still keep flocking to them to buy this thing or that thing, lust driven creatures frantically seeking happiness to fill the void in their souls- **and they don't!** Only Christ has what our souls need and that is Bible doctrine metabolized by faith, and you get that by sitting under the teaching of God's Word, not by going to the malls!

Gold was the medium of wealth in Laodicea; it was used for money, gifts, and jewelry, even utensils for kings. It was the most desired and sought after thing of the city, but there was another gold, vastly superior to material gold, that Christ wanted them and us to have. *"The ordinances of the Lord are more precious than gold."* [Psalm 119:10](#) *"I love your commands more than gold."* [Psalm 119:127](#) *"Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold."* [Proverbs 8:10](#) *"The fruit of wisdom is better than fine gold."* [Proverbs 8:19](#) *Wisdom is superior to gold,* [Proverbs 16:16](#) There is also the reference to gold to our faith, *"These have come do that your faith- of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by the fire."* [1 Peter 1:7](#) Gold is likened somewhat to the law of God, the commandments of God, wisdom and to faith, but only to a point. Gold is vastly inferior to the things pertaining to God.

In the culture of those days, just like today, gold was the most sought after thing out of all things on earth. **The problem was that the Christians living in Laodicea had got caught up in the same fervor as the unsaved**; they had become lovers of money. This is exactly the same problem going on in most of the churches today in America. The seeking after wealth, shopping malls, credit cards, self-indulgence, wanton materialism are prevalent in the bulk of Christianity today, Yet it is all justified under the "prosperity gospel".

To refine is the perfect passive participle of *puroo*, the word for fire, where the ore is heated up so the impurities, the dross can be removed from it. The more it's refined the purer it becomes. The perfect passive participle shows that the gold that Christ has for us has already been completely and perfectly refined, that is, it is perfectly pure. This is a reference to **metabolized doctrine in the soul**. God wants us to receive the true wealth of heaven- doctrine metabolized by faith, not the wealth of gold that perishes.

One of the main differences of the preceding Christianity called the Philadelphian church and the Laodicean church is that the Philadelphia church was all about the Word of God and Christian service, while the Laodicean church is all about wealth and material possessions.

Addendum

Before we go any further in our study we need to see some points involved showing the relationship of the Laodicean Church to the Apostasy of the Church, the coming anti-christ, the rapture and the Holy Spirit being taken out of the way.

“Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the apostasy occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3 “Don’t you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:7,8

1. The “*revealing*” of the anti-christ, the apostasy of the church, the Laodicean church and the return of Christ are all interconnected.
2. The time or season of the anti-christ is the time when he arises and takes the power in running the world in a centralized world government. The closest thing we have to that today is the position of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
3. The last church of the Church Age is the Laodicean type of church. It describes an apostate church; the two are one and the same.
4. The Holy Spirit is the one who is restraining the man of sin **and** the mystery religions. He began this when he came to earth at Pentecost and he will continue to do so until he is “*taken out of the way*”. This will occur during the time of the anti-christ.
5. His “*restraining*” in this matter concerning the mysteries and the anti-christ will go on until the season of the anti-christ.
6. The Holy Spirit is not only preventing the anti-christ from coming forward, but he is **also restraining the “Mystery of Lawlessness”**, which has been operating ever since the time of Cush and Nimrod. It began in Babylon, branched off into Egypt, then Greece, Rome and over the entire world. It is found in Rome, Freemasonry and all other religions outside of Biblical Christianity.
7. There are two concepts that the Holy Spirit has been restraining for centuries, the **secret societies and the final world ruler**.
8. This shows that these two concepts are linked together.
9. This shows that the final world ruler, the anti-christ, will be the product of the mystery religion of Babylon, the secret societies.
10. The “*revealing*” of the anti-christ is actually the displaying of him as a deity. **Preceding this will be his coronation as a king, the king over Israel.**
11. It doesn’t say that the Holy Spirit will be restraining him and the operating of the secret societies up till the time of his coronation and revealing then be taken “*out of the way*”.
12. It simply says that the Holy Spirit has been restraining these two concepts for centuries and will continue to do that, up to the time of the “*season*” of the anti-christ, “*his time*”, then be *taken out of the way*.
13. “*Taken out of the way*”, or, “*out of the midst*”, simply meant to stop restraining, to prevent something from happening. The mystery religion was never stopped, it was only held back from attaining its goal by the Holy Spirit.
14. “*Times*”, *kairos*, doesn’t refer to a few days, weeks, months, or even years, but can encompass many years- even decades! It’s a period of time characterized by

- certain concepts or events taking place in it. The “*time*” of Christ’s visitation, Luke 19:44, was 33 years! There was a time when Christ was on the earth and there will be a time when the anti-christ is on the earth and that will be his time.
15. The Holy Spirit has been restraining these two concepts, the secret societies and their pagan messiah until the point in time that is in accordance with the plan of God.
 16. It’s like having a rebellious teenage son or daughter who wants to go out for that night, which you know will be to party. So you stand in the doorway employing various tactics to prevent them from going out. You know they’re still going to go out, but what you have done by restraining them is move it down in time so that it’s later on and fits your plans.
 17. *Eis* denotes an entry into a period of time; the Holy Spirit is restraining the secret societies and their pagan messiah right up to and into the time designated for him.
 18. The goal of the Holy Spirit in all this, a telic or final *eis*, is not to prevent the anti-christ from **ever** coming forward, but to hold him back until the right time in history according to **God’s plan!**
 19. So the concept of the goal of time is a major factor in this; the Holy Spirit is holding them back until the right time. **God does control history.**
 20. It is the secret societies, under Satan, that are bringing forth the anti-christ. The Holy Spirit has hindered the secret societies from doing this. Once the Holy Spirit stops restraining them, then they will be able to go forward in their plan.
 21. The question is, **“Do the secret societies, that is, free masonry, Big Brother, the New World Order appear to be being held back, or going forward without any opposition?”**
 22. If they are going forward unfettered toward their goals of world domination and a man to rule over it, then it can be attributed to one thing, that the Holy Spirit is no longer restraining them!
 23. So that would mean that all three things are occurring right now. We are in the apostasy prophesied for the Church Age; we are living in the time of the Laodicean church; and we are living in the time where the Holy Spirit has stopped restraining the Mystery of Lawlessness that has been operating for millennia!
 24. It has always been the push, the drive, the desire for Satan to have his man ruling over the entire world. He has had plenty of men doing this throughout the years from Nimrod, to Nebuchadnezzar, to the Pharaoh’s, the Caesars and so on, but all in localized areas, never to the extent of the whole world. And the one who has been preventing him from doing this is the Holy Spirit, and he will continue to do so, until he is taken out of the way. But has he been taken out of the way?
 25. The devil could not go forward with his secret societies and their plan to have a world government with one man ruling over it, as long as the Holy Spirit was preventing him and them from doing that!
 26. But once the Holy Spirit is “*taken out of the way*”, once he stops restraining him and them from doing that, once all opposition to their evil goals is removed, then they will be free to accomplish the devil’s ancient desire- the man of sin and world control!
 27. And we’re seeing this going on all around us. Every where you look you see the hand of the secret societies at work, from the international scenes, to the various nations, to the religions of the world, to the laws being passed, to the local

- schools, even to the retail sector and law enforcement, everything is being controlled by the secret societies in a direction toward a goal.
28. The good news is that none of this could happen unless the Holy Spirit has stopped restraining it! And that means it's happening according to the will and plan of God! And that means we're rapidly approaching the time when the anti-christ will be revealed! And once again we see that Jesus Christ controls history and that we're rapidly approaching the day when Christ returns to earth.
 30. How we know these things is by possessing a certain body of knowledge and by observation. You live in a small town and know everybody there. You know where they live, what they do for a living and their general behavior. Then one day you notice they are acting differently, suspiciously, with erratic and abnormal behavior. What's going on?
 31. Your knowledge combined with your observation tells you they are on drugs! You also know that the manufacturing of those drugs has taken place somewhere else and being distributed in your town.
 32. We study the Word of God, we study history, we study the history of America and the church. From this we see that Christianity has changed from its former and biblical position. We can see that it has changed into an apostate, Laodicean church.
 33. And by knowledge and observation we have seen in history the role of the secret societies, and we are seeing what they are doing now and something has changed! They are going full bore with no opposition. This couldn't happen if the Holy Spirit was still restraining them.
 34. Now as to the dates when these three things occurred, the Holy Spirit being "*taken out of the midst*", the beginning of the apostasy and the beginning of the Laodicean church concept, we don't know.
 35. Some have concluded that the Laodicean church concept began in 1901 in southern California with the Azusa revival of Pentecostalism. This may be true, but I think it would be the idea of the seed being planted, the tree grew and in the sixties we began to see the fruit of that tree really begin. Now, forty years later, we see it all over the place choking out the Philadelphian trees. (1901 was actually the beginning of the twentieth century, not 1900. But you can take your pick 1901, or 1960; the point is it is here).
 36. Now as when the apostasy began it's harder to say, just that we can see it presently going on. I would say that the groundwork was laid in the 60's, that's where the government took over the country from the people, there was the hippie movement, LSD, drugs, free love, no prayer in schools, franchises, big box retailers, the breakup of the homes, TV, movies being changed from pure entertainment to brainwashing mediums and Christianity began to change. Churches and Christians began to go away from the purity of the faith and the Word of God to glitzy programs that appeal to people's emotions. The apostasy might have begun earlier, but it was apparent back as far as the sixties and seventies. (49x40=1960).
 37. Now as to when the Holy Spirit stopped restraining, and remember there were two concepts to that: 1) **holding back the revealing of the anti-christ, and 2) holding back secret societies, freemasonry, etc**, we do not know exactly. We can look back in history and see that the secret societies came out in full public view

- to the point where you could see them. It was back in the sixties when we saw all the big companies adopting symbols as their logos. The use of symbols is a Masonic concept and most of the symbols are stylized Masonic symbols. There was the UN, the NOW, the use of the number 666 which is found everywhere, computers which are all 666 based, bar codes, the Masonic control of the world's governments, shipping, banking, insurance, the media, utilities, oil, education, the religions of the world, Catholicism, Protestantism, NASA, space, the militaries of the world including the US military; they've taken over it all! The secret societies are going full bore and this can be only because the Holy Spirit is no longer restraining the mystery of lawlessness!
38. There's another dynamic involved in the Laodicean church concept, the apostasy and the Holy Spirit being taken out of the way and that is this, with a weakened, non-doctrinal church, apostate Christianity and the Holy Spirit no longer restraining the activity of the secret societies, then **demonic activity will increase**. And this is something that we have been seeing go on ever since the sixties.
 39. **A weakened Christianity, due to the rejection of metabolized doctrine**, an increase in wickedness, an increase in demonic activity and the restraints on the mystery of lawlessness gone, means that the secret societies, (masonry, new age movement, etc.), **will be making inroads into a weakened church to influence it, control it and guide it into the goals of the secret societies**.
 40. This also means that with a weakened Christianity and an increase in demonic activity that attacks by Satan against biblical Christianity will greatly intensify. Satan is making his final, desperate push to rule the world through his man, the anti-christ, and he is not going to allow any opposition to him. **Therefore, he will be attacking the remnant elect of God's people with ferocious intensity.**

2. "So you can become rich"

Hina plus the subjunctive introduces a purpose clause. Christ wants them to buy from him his gold for the purpose that they can be truly rich! The price is free; it's all provided in his grace. What is his gold? The Word of God in our hearts! It's metabolized doctrine in our souls.

This is the true riches, not the riches that the world clamors for. They were materially rich, but spiritually destitute. And the reason why is that they had taken their eyes off the Word and the things of Christ and started to look to the things of the world.

3. "And white clothes to wear so you can cover your shameful nakedness"

Again *hina* plus the subjunctive introduces a purpose clause. Christ wants them to buy his gold, the Word of God, so that they can cover themselves with spiritual clothes of righteousness so they won't be spiritually naked.

With the money they had accumulated they were able to buy clothes made out of black wool from Laodicea; it's interesting that they were covered in black and Christ wants

them to be covered in white. Just as one is embarrassed over seeing someone physically naked, you can get embarrassed over meeting a believer In Christ who is spiritually naked.

4. *“And salve to put on your eye, so you can see”*

Here we have a reference to something else produced in Laodicea and that was eye salve made from Phrygian powder, which was good for physical ailments, but could do nothing for a spiritual problem. Seeing with the eyes, when used metaphorically, means to be able to understand spiritual concepts, to be able to comprehend what is really going on in spiritual matters.

The Babylonian religion (powder) and the world system cannot enable us to see spiritual concepts; only Bible Doctrine can. They were spiritually blind. A malady that they Phrygian powder couldn't cure. The reference to Phrygia would also imply the Babylonian religion, whose emphasis is on money and materialism. It is only the Word of God, under the filling of the Holy Spirit that opens our eyes so we can perceive spiritual phenomenon.

S. The Discipline of Love v.19

1. *“Those whom I love”*

We have the emphatic *I* used here emphasizing the fact that it is Christ speaking to the church and to all of us. He's coming to them with a **warning**; he's **chewing them out** and he's going to **discipline** them if they don't repent, but he begins it with a statement that he loves them and this sets the tone for the whole letter. It is the love of Christ for his people that is his motivation for chewing them out and disciplining them. What a shock it must have been to find out their true status before the Lord, which wasn't good, and to be chewed out.

I can't imagine in these new, slick, “love everybody”, we're all wonderful churches Pastors chewing out their congregations because they're not walking in the Word. Most of the newer brand of Christians today have an incorrect perception of the love of Christ because they have never been exposed to Bible Doctrine, and as such, have an incorrect understanding of the definition for love.

Their beliefs are that Christ's love is always gentle, tender, compassionate, kind and never harsh. They don't believe that the Christ they belong to can also chew them out and discipline them whenever they go astray. *“Those whom I love”* singles out a specific group of people; it does not include the whole world, neither does it refer only to the church at Laodicea, **but refers to all believers in Christ and only believers in Christ.**

Toward the world Christ has an *agape* love, a relaxed mental attitude, a spiritual mental attitude, toward his people he also has an *agape* love, but he also has a *phileo* love. *Phileo* is not superior to *agape*, neither is it inferior; it's just different. *Phileo* brings in the concepts of the soul; it covers everything from affection to friendship. It describes a

deeper, more intense personal type of love. While *agape* would be an **impersonal love**, *phileo* would be a **personal love**.

Christ's love for us sustains us; it encourages and protects us as we walk with him in faith and righteousness. But if we want to be friends with the world and conform to the world, then his same love with all its righteous integrity and intensity will **warn us, rebuke us and even discipline us**, James 4:4-6, for it's a jealous love. Note the pattern: Observation> Evaluation> Chew Out> Warning> Corrective Discipline.

2. "I rebuke and discipline"

The word for rebuke is *elencho*; it refers to verbal communication. It is not a soft encouragement, nor is it just speaking; it's the word for a harsh chewing out. Christ has been observing the church **and isn't it ironic that the ones he loves are on the inside, but he's on the outside of it! They have him on the outside because they have rejected the doctrinal teaching of his Word!**

Christ is speaking to the Apostle John in his apocalyptic vision telling him what to say to the Pastor there at Laodicea and he starts with an evaluation and condemnation of the church's activities. After stating their problem he chews them out telling them what they really are, then he goes on to warn them what will happen if they don't repent!

This is where the *paideuo* comes in. *Paideuo* deals with corporeal discipline; the kind of discipline that a father would give to an erring child. Physical pain and all sorts of suffering come under this concept. The chew-out is the warning that occurs before the discipline. If it is heeded, by repentance in this case, then **the discipline that will be coming** can be avoided.

Chew-outs are a proof of love, not of rejection. If you don't care anything about them you wouldn't waste your words on them. But if a chewing out doesn't correct the matter, then the discipline comes. Rebukes are what are used to correct attitude and behavior before corrective discipline is employed. That's what the essence of *elencho* is, a chewing out for the purpose of changing the heart. What else can you do? These believers were so wrapped up in their smug self-righteousness and worldliness something had to be done to get through to them.

But I'm afraid today chewing believers out for not being under the teaching of the Word, and its application to life, wouldn't work in the majority of the churches. The Pastor would simply be labeled as someone who is negative and unloving. So many Christians today are caught up in their self-righteousness, human good, morality, pride and their own prosperity, that they know there's nothing wrong with them. To them the problem, obviously, has to lie with the Pastor.

3. "So be earnest and repent"

Oun, translated as *so* and *therefore*, really speaks of a doctrinal conclusion after hearing the facts with the goal of application. Therefore, because Christ has been watching them,

evaluating their lives and disapproving of their Christian walk, and because he has chewed them out warning about coming to them in discipline, they are to be zealous and repent.

The word *zeloo*, to be *earnest or zealous*, deals with the total commitment of the mind, body and spirit toward an action; it involves the whole person. While *spoudazo* would look at the effort one would exert toward a goal, to really put oneself out for something, *zeloo* would look at the whole person. No “*You honor me with your lips, but your hearts are far from me*”, no mental reservations, no holding back, no going through the motions, where the heart is not in it. *Zeloo* involves the whole person body, soul and spirit.

The imperative mood tells us this is a command. Christ commands the Laodicean church, the end time apostate church to be zealous and repent. The active voice tells us that they can do this and he holds them volitionally responsible to do it. The use of the word *zeloo* is significant because it involves the whole person, which isn't the case with them. About the only thing going on with them is Old sin Nature activity and lust gratification.

Zeloo entails the will; it means that one needs to make certain choices according to the revealed will of God. It also involves the human spirit, the new nature inside us. As Christ said, “*They that worship God, (a function of the will), must worship him in spirit and truth.*” **So to be zealous the believer must be fully committed toward the action of repenting, it will entail the will, Bible Doctrine, faith, putting off the OSN, with the whole person focused toward that goal.**

4. “*And repent*”

It too is a command and a command to begin an action that they have not been doing. In the active voice it tells us that they can do it and are held volitionally responsible to do it. When we studied the doctrine of repentance in 2 Timothy 2:24-26 we saw that the Apostle Paul told Timothy to be patient and to keep on teaching with the hope that the believers who had been opposing him might repent. We had seen that it was possible but highly doubtful that they would, and **that repentance had to be granted by God!**

The problem was that they had opposed a Pastor-Teacher to his face out of their arrogance and it was doubtful that they would ever humble themselves and repent. But in this case Christ commands them to repent telling us that it was possible for them to have a change of mind, if they chose to.

Repentance has nothing to do with the emotions, remorse, regret, or feeling sorry. In fact, the word repentance is the wrong choice of words for this dynamic, for it has the idea of feeling pain of soul and is derived from Catholicism. Biblical repentance deals with the changing of the mind; it comes from *metanoeo*, *meta*, to change, and *noeo*, the mind; it's to have a total change of mind toward the Word of God, faith, doctrinal teaching, biblical Christianity, the true Christian way of life, the true filling of the Holy Spirit, grace, sitting under the teaching of a Pastor-Teacher under a local church ministry, the faith-rest life, etc.

Repentance entails, and has as its goal the ideas of faith in the Word of God, resulting in *epignosis* doctrine. So when repentance is mentioned it deals with the believer getting back into the faith-rest dynamic. Which also implies that whatever error the believer has been caught up in must be left behind, abandoned and to start living life by faith in the Word under the filling of the Holy Spirit in the new nature.

Whether they are involved in crass commercialism, materialism, pursuing after money, worldliness, as they are here, or off into ritualism, emotionalism or any of the other offshoots of Babylon, they must turn their backs on them and be completely given over to the life of faith in the Word and nothing else.

T. Outside the Church v.20

1. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock”

This sentence is so dramatic, so intensive, so full of concepts going on in the church’s relationship to Christ- **Christ is outside the church!** *Idou, behold*, is the aojist middle imperative of *eidon, to see*. We notice that it is a command to do something that they are not presently doing.

The Greeks were a people of “the eye”, that is, seeing, to behold, or having insight into a matter was very important to them. It meant to recognize something, to consider a matter, to be conscious of something. It was normally used in matters of spiritual perception, **understanding spiritual concepts**, even matters of prophecy. It was also used of paying attention, concentrating, and **having understanding into a spiritual matter to follow**, which in this context is fellowship with Christ.

In the aojist imperative it tells us that they have not been doing this, that is, being attentive to spiritual matters, because their spiritual faculties have become dulled due to their involvement in the world system and chasing after money. This is obvious because that’s how these Christians had ended up in this place to begin with; they had ignored the spiritual dynamic in their frantic pursuit for wealth, human happiness and material possessions. Hence the command to use one’s spiritual mind and start paying attention.

Hence the command to behold, to start using their minds in connection with the revealed Word of God and to start paying attention to what Christ is saying to them. The same thing would apply today toward those believers who have become involved in churches who pander to their emotions under the guise of spirituality. *Idou* tells us that they’ve got to start putting their emotions aside and start using their minds to think about what Christ is saying, about the things that are revealed in the Word of God.

“*I stand at the door*” is *epi ten thuron, at the door*, tells us that by the use of the accusative with *epi* we have an action taking place close to something else. Christ is *standing*, the action, at the door of their church. The first thing we notice is that he is **outside**, not **inside**! The next thing we notice, by the use of the perfect tense, is that he has been **standing outside the church for a very long time**, so long that it has become a permanent situation!

All this tells us that they didn't want Christ in their personal lives and in their church life. They had some kind of religious activity going on in there, this is denoted because of a church context, but it did not center around Christ. To center around Christ there must be the teaching of the Word of God. How sad this is and how tragic because of the discipline that would be coming. **And how many churches fit this scenario today?** They have a brand or form of religious activity going on inside of them, a religious activity that they have concocted, but Christ is not in it! Where is he? Standing outside their church wanting to get in!

And **he's standing outside knocking on the door.** *Krouo* meant to rap with the knuckles, not pound with the fist on the door. A soft rapping with the knuckles versus a hard pounding with the fist tells us something about the Lord. It tells us that he's a gentleman with class. He doesn't kick the door down stating that he has the right to be there, (which he does); he doesn't pound on the door with his fists demanding to be admitted, but gently knocks on the door waiting for it to be opened.

So they've kept Christ standing outside their church waiting and it's become a permanent thing, and all the while he still keeps on knocking. But the knocking is in the present tense, not the perfect, **which tells us that this is not a permanent condition**, only an ongoing condition of experience. **It tells us that Christ standing outside the church is a permanent condition, but the knocking will not go on forever!** Like all of us, after knocking for awhile, we give up and walk away. As Christians we need to beware how we treat Christ in our lives and in our churches. We put Christ out of our churches when we reject the teaching of his Word; he'll stand there and knock, but not forever!

Can we not see how much Christ loves his church, even though they're not interested in him? It boggles the mind to realize just how much Christ loves us and pursues us. This is what Paul is talking about when he says that he prays that all believers would realize how wide, long, deep and high is the love that Christ has for us, Ephesians 3: 14-19. He pursued us in the Garden; he's pursued us ever since and here he's pursuing his church even to the point of standing outside the door knocking and waiting. Why would he do that? The only answer is that he loves with a love that we do not comprehend! But we can comprehend it through faith, the Word, growth, prayer and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Yet he stands outside the church, not inside where he should be. How ironic. Christ is to be the center attraction of the church, the only attraction of the church, but instead he's outside gently knocking on the door for them to let him in. You see it's about free will. Christ is not going to force himself on them. They must choose him. He's standing there on the outside knocking, but they must decide to open the door.

But perhaps they don't hear anybody knocking at the door because they're all congratulating themselves and talking about how rich they are! Perhaps they're making so much noise on the inside with their "worship" services that they don't hear Christ knocking at the door! Obviously they didn't hear Christ knocking at the door because had to tell the Pastor that he was standing outside.

What is it that determines whether Christ is inside a church or on the outside? The Word! Christ is the Logos, the living Word, and Truth incarnate, the son of the God of Truth! If the Word of God is in our churches, then Christ is in them. If it isn't, then he's standing outside wanting to come in. Many of the churches today, (Laodicean), say that Christ is in their churches because their worship services are centered around the Holy Spirit, but this isn't true because the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Truth, centers his activities around the Word of God. If a church rejects the Word of God in their services do they honestly expect for the Holy Spirit to be there when they don't want the Word?

2. *"If anyone hears my voice and opens the door"*

Ean plus the subjunctive mood introduces a 3rd class condition of *if*. *"If anyone hears my voice"*, maybe they do, maybe they don't. Maybe they're distracted with things, like making money and shopping and they're not listening for his voice. Maybe there's so much noise in their lives, (or in their services), that they can't hear his voice! And maybe they just don't care. Obviously the church at Laodicea didn't care about the voice of Christ because that's how they got into this predicament in the first place. The voice of Christ is the word of Christ; it is the truth; it is the Word of God.

What we have is a picture of the Word of God outside the church not in it. This is the characteristic of the Laodicean church, and this is what is happening in America today in so many of the churches. Christ is outside of them because they have put the teaching of the Word of God outside them!

"Opens the door" is also in the subjunctive mood with *ean* telling us maybe they'll open the door and maybe they won't. If they don't hear his voice, or hear him knocking on the door, they probably wouldn't open it. But we still have a double condition, in that, if they do hear his voice, it's still another matter as to whether they will open the door, maybe they will and maybe they won't.

It's sad to think that Christ's people could treat him that way, but many of them do. They would deny it, why all of them "love the Lord", but then why does Christ speak this way. The 3rd class condition tells us that it is all potential; they could hear his voice and open the door to sup with him, or have fellowship with him, at least that's what he wants, but you have to ask yourself, "Why is he on the outside in the first place"? The reason why is because they were negative to his Word, but even so, there is still the potential to change their minds (repent). **But again, he stands outside the door knocking only for a period of time; it's not a fixed condition.**

3. *"I will come in and eat with him, and he with me"*

Erchomai, to come, and *eis*, into, *"I will come in"*, is a reference to Christ being outside the church to enter into it for the purpose of fellowship with them. The picture once again is Christ standing outside the entire church at Laodicea knocking and wanting to enter in. Some people think that it only applied to some people in the church, but, as we see, he was standing outside the entire church.

If they wanted to walk with the Lord and get the Word **they could have traveled just a few miles away to the church at Philadelphia** where the Word was being taught and the believers there were living the true Christian life. But, as it were, they stayed there at the church in Laodicea. Why? Because **it suited their goals of making money and materialism**. They wanted to hear the “prosperity gospel” and not the Word of God. **They could have gone seven miles south down to the church at Colosse**, if they were really positive to the Word and wanted to please the Lord.

But they weren’t positive to doctrine! How do we know? Because they stayed there in Laodicea and attended the church there! They could have done one of two things about their situation. One, they could have **moved** to another town that had a good doctrinal church, but then they wouldn’t have the same lifestyle or money. And two, they could have **traveled** to another town on Sunday to take in the Word. But to do that they would have had to put themselves out for it, something they obviously did not want to do.

To put it into geographical context, it’s like Redding with the City of Shasta Lake seven miles to the north, the City of Anderson ten miles to the south, the City of Cottonwood thirteen miles south of Redding and Palo Cedro ten miles east of us. If the people in this area really want doctrinal teaching, they can travel, at least on Sundays, to get it!

But the Laodiceans chose to keep on attending the church there at Laodicea, not only because it was close and convenient, but also **because the ministry there suited their worldliness and materialistic goals!** It accommodated them giving them validity. They had the money and the things that money buys, but they needed something else; they needed to have the appearance that God was blessing them, that their wealth was the result of God’s blessings on them, so that is why they went to the church there. They had to keep up appearances, **so the church acted as their religious front!**

One of the evil side effects of the “prosperity gospel” is how it negatively impacts those believers who are still in the Word and walking with God. They say, “If God loves me, then why doesn’t he bless me?” “After all, these other believers have money.” They continue to reason, “He isn’t blessing me, so it must be because I’m doing something wrong, or, I’m in the wrong church, or, because he doesn’t love me.” Those who go after money get money, and **they look for churches to tell them it’s OK**. But one thing is still evident, with all their money and material possessions, with all their smugness, self-satisfaction, boasting and backslapping, with all their religiosity; they are not fellowshiping with Christ and he is still standing outside their churches.

To eat, deipneo, referred to the main meal of the day, which for the Oriental was the time for fellowship and affection with one’s family members and close friends. In America we do the “scarf and barf”, grab what we can while we’re on the go making money. But in countries like Spain, Mexico, Italy and many other countries they take three hours off for lunch, then work and have a late dinner with their friends and families. To them it’s all not about making money, or sitting down to fancy place settings, where proper manners must be observed, but a prolonged time of relaxing, eating and socializing. This is the idea behind *deipneo* and the reason why we refer to it as fellowshiping with the Lord.

“*I will come to him*” is the preposition pros which emphasizes the personal relationship between Christ and the believer, and the term “*eat with him*” is the preposition meta emphasizing Christ being in their company. You can be sure these believers in Laodicea had their banquets, with all their fancy silverware and linen, and probably trying to observe the proper etiquette of the day, after all, moneyed people must show forth the class of their station in life, but Christ was not there fellowshiping with them. This is a call to fellowship with Christ through the spiritual dynamic of faith in the Word under the filling of the Holy spirit, and to not get caught up in the custom and formality of society. The issue is not food- but fellowship with Christ!

U. The Reward For Overcoming v.21

1. “*To him who overcomes*”

Nikao referred to the conqueror, the victor, the one who overcomes, and spoke of superiority or achievement in physical or spiritual combat. In the present active participle we would render it as, “*The Overcoming One*”. The present participle would cover the entire time of living there in Laodicea. They need to overcome it and remain at that level of victory.

In the mystery religions the adherents aligned themselves with superior deities who were worshipped as victorious powers. (It’s always a good thing to be on the side of winners). In the NT it presupposes the conflict between God and his Son against the opposing demonic powers under Satan. In the Gospels we see that Jesus is the “*Strong Man*”; **the one who conquers or is victorious over these demonic powers.**

The believer’s struggle against these demonic forces is guaranteed by Christ’s victory over them! Which is to say that because Christ has conquered them by faith, we also can conquer them by our faith and our positive volition toward the Word and the will of God. As powerful as Satan’s forces are there is one man who overcame them all, the Conqueror, Jesus Christ.

Now when we get down to the letters to the seven churches in Asia Minor they were having problems with all different kinds of temptations and testing put to them by the demonic powers in those areas as manifested in the cultures of the communities that they lived in. Yet, regardless of the type of problem that they were confronted with, and perhaps succumbed to, such as money, materialism and worldliness in Laodicea, **there still was the potential for victory over it!**

What this tells us is that these worldly concepts are not just a cultural thing found in the area in which they live, **but are in truth a stratagem employed by various demonic powers under Satan to get believers away from Bible doctrine, faith living and a holy lifestyle.** One needs to go back through the other six churches and uncover the strategies used by the devil to get those believers away from living the faith-rest life. Once having seen the hand of Satan operating in even pursuing after the prosperity,

success lifestyle, the believer, then, can overcome it by doctrine, commitment to God's will, the filling of the Holy spirit, faith living and personal contentment in their lives.

2. *"I will give the right to sit with me on my throne"*

We have a condition that is laid out before us. If one does something, then Christ will do something for them. **The condition is based upon being an Overcomer.** It's based upon, in this church, overcoming the spiritual situation in their town, upon overcoming the activity and desire of making money, getting ahead and acquiring material possessions. It can be different situations in different towns.

To give, or to grant, didomi, puts it this way, To the believer in Laodicea who overcomes the allure of going away from the Word to go after money and things, I will grant the right to sit with me on my throne. **Ruling in Christ's kingdom is not an inherent right that comes with our salvation, but is a right conferred by Christ, that is dependent upon our overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil.**

To sit, kathizo, is a figure of speech referring to sit or function as a ruler in the kingdom of Christ. It's not to see what it feels like, or what the view is like from up there, but is a reference to ruling. When Christ went back up into heaven after his resurrection he was exalted to God's right hand on his throne. Which is to say that Christ has been ruling over heaven and earth ever since his ascension into heaven. Sitting on the throne is the term that expresses that. **And for us to be granted the right to do that means that we will be sharing in Christ's reign, if we are Overcomers.**

The opportunity, privilege and honor to be able to share in this is offered to all Church Age believers in Christ, but it is based upon overcoming. Not all Christians will be sharing in Christ's reign. They will be there in his kingdom, but will not be having a ruling position. To put this into perspective, when Christ went back to heaven, the Father placed him as Lord and King over all his creation and he has been reigning over all creation since then. When he returns to earth he will destroy all earthly powers raised up against him, the anti-christ and all demonic powers including Satan himself, and establish the Father's reign here on earth.

Even though Christ controls history, the devil, as the ruler of this world, has been ruling the world and its people for over 6,000 years. He does this from the top down in every nation on earth through politics, religions and economics. This will continue on through the Tribulation until Christ returns at his 2nd Advent. **The Battle of Armageddon will be the military victory that destroys Satan's reign over the earth.** The cities of the earth will lay in ruins; the political structures of the nations will be gone; the world's economies will be nonexistent; the military machine of the world's armies under the UN will be devastated; the Beast and the False Prophet will be thrown into the Lake of Fire; the devil will be chained to the sides of the pit **and Jesus Christ will be set up as the only king and ruler of the world!**

God, once again, has a man on earth ruling over the earth for him to do his will. Where the man, Adam, failed, the last Adam, Jesus Christ will succeed, for in the beginning God

gave the earth to man. This begins the second phase of Christ's reign as king. The first phase is presently going on in heaven; the second phase will be here on earth, and we have the opportunity to reign with him. (See the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6). *"To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations."* Revelation 2:26; 3:21 *"You have made them to be kings and priests and they will reign upon the earth."* Revelation 5:10 *"I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge" ... They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.* Revelation 20:4-6

Christ taught this in the Gospels in Luke 19:11-19 in the Parable of the Ten Minas concerning ruling over the cities in his kingdom. Paul also taught this in 2 Timothy 2:12, *"If we endure, we also will reign with him."* These and other passages clearly teach that believers in Christ will have the opportunity to reign with Christ, that is, have a position in his administration in the millennial kingdom, but it is based upon overcoming.

3. *"Just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne"*

Notice how these two concepts are connected together; the concept of overcoming is linked to positions of rule in the government of God. The one doesn't come without victory in the other area. So what does overcoming mean? And in what area for those believers living in Laodicea?

To overcome meant to prevail, to not succumb to a situation, to be stronger than the temptation or allurements of the adversary. For Christians it deals with applying spiritual principles concerning the world, flesh and the devil. It means to choose for God, his Word and his will, and not for those other things, to be faithful to Christ and his Word.

The believers in Laodicea had been overcome by the culture of the area. They, too, along with the unsaved of the area became wrapped up in the pursuit of money and material possessions. They had become "worldly", compromising and accommodating setting aside biblical principles so they could blend in with the community. How could they be overcomers in their situation? By recovering the filling of the Holy Spirit through confession of sins, by having a total change of mental attitude toward God, his Word and his will, and by turning their backs on the entire concept of and things they had been following after, by purifying their hearts and by making the Word of God the first priority in their lives.

Christ wants us to overcome the world, as it is found in the areas in which we live, just like he overcame the world. As he told us all, *"In this world you will have much tribulation (pressure). But take heart! I have overcome the world."* John 16:33 What's interesting is that this is found in the perfect tense showing that he had already overcome the world prior to this statement and that it was a completed act all before his crucifixion. When he did this would have had to been at the temptation by the devil when he offered him the kingdoms of the world and rule over them. (The devil always has something to offer the people of God to get them away from the Lord's will for their lives). But Christ rejected Satan's offer choosing rather to trust the Father to fulfill his purpose for him.

Notice the tactics that the devil uses against the family of God. He'll try to sidetrack us with desires that we might have for money, success, acceptance, approval, love and many other things, even a substitute for God's plan for your lives. Or, he'll try to "blow us out of the water" with tremendous pressure and suffering, a push or pull concept. He may know what the desires of our heart may be and come up with his own satanic substitute, a cheap satanic counterfeit for the real thing from God. Or, he may know about God's plan for an individual and come up with his own offer. Concerning Christ, the devil knew about God's plan to have Christ rule the world for God and under God, so the devil offered him the position of ruling the world under him. An offer that Christ promptly and emphatically rejected. Matthew 4, Luke 4.

So what does Satan offer believers today to get them off track and away from the rewards that God has for them? It varies from individual. Some of the believers in Pergamum were involved in false teaching and sexual immorality, probably due to the eastern influence, Revelation 2:12. In Thyatira some of the believers there had been influenced by a woman posing as a prophet, Revelation 2:18. For others the allure of what the world has to offer, money, success, position and material possessions pulls them away. For others power, fame, glory and being recognized in the limelight get them out of the will of God. For still other believers it may be financial security, retirement and medical insurance so they can live securely without faith is their price. And then there are those concepts of pressure, deprivation, suffering, persecution and fear for one's person keeps them out of the picture. Unlike the Lord who rejected Satan's offer for world rule choosing instead to continue on in the Father's plan for him, even though it included suffering. The believers in Laodicea chose to go Satan's route through involvement in the world system and pursuing after money, not believing that in time God would prosper them in time with many wonderful things.

4. The faith that overcomes 1 John 5: 4,5

There are two concepts concerning overcoming, a positional overcoming because of our faith in Christ, and a practical overcoming that deals with our day to day overcoming of the world through faith and the spiritual dynamic of the Holy Spirit and the Word. Positionally we have overcome the world because we have believed in Christ. But practically overcoming the world is accomplished through metabolized doctrine under the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is by the believing of the Word of God and its teachings and their application to life that we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

"For everyone born of God overcomes the world." "Born of God" is in the perfect passive participle showing a permanent act, state and condition that we have entered into because God saved us! His act of regenerating us changed our natures so that we are no longer are a part of this world system, the flesh nature and Satan's dominion. This becomes the basis for our positional overcoming of the world, which is in the present tense. We could render it as, *"Everyone born of God has permanently overcome the world."*

"This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith." This is the victory overcoming the world, the faith of us." Christ, as the Super-Conqueror, overcame the

world, and he did it by faith! He believed his Father and he believed in the Father's plan. And out of that faith there was his obedience. *"Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God."*

Salvation, our position in Christ and the new nature is the basis for our overcoming of the world. It is also the basis for our overcoming the world on a daily basis in its insidious pressure to keep us from walking with the Lord. How this is accomplished is through the same principle- the new nature. **As we live by faith in the Word, with the power of the filling of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual dynamic of metabolized doctrine in the soul, we will have the mind, will, power and victory over the world each day.**

V. The Holy Spirit Speaks to the Churches v. 22

1. *"He who has an ear"*

The ear is the organ by which we can hear things; hearing things is was the means by which one could acquire knowledge.

It refers to having the ability to understand what God is telling us, that is, to be able to understand spiritual concepts.

2. *"Let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches"*

To *hear* is that arist active imperative of *akouo* and is a command to do something that one is not presently doing. They haven't been listening to the Holy Spirit, at least not in this area, so they're commanded to start. And the Holy Spirit is always directing us toward the intake and application of the Word of God. As it says in the Book of John, *"But when he, the Spirit of Truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth."* John 16:13

We notice that this command is directed at the churches, but what churches does he have in mind? From the context it would have to be the seven churches in Asia Minor that he has addressed. He ends each letter with the same command. But we need to revisit the seven churches again. Why seven churches and why these seven churches?

There were many other churches in existence at this time. There was the church at Colosse just a few miles south; there was the church at Rome and Philippi, and there was the first church to exist outside of Jerusalem in Glastonbury in the British Isles. So why these seven? It can't be just because these seven churches are characteristic of all the churches extant for the past 2,000 years, although that's true, but the churches at Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica, Rome and Glastonbury has their characteristics as well.

The reason why these seven churches were singled out is because they show different characteristics of Christ's church on earth for the past 2,000 years beginning with Ephesus and ending with Laodicea. A lot had happened in the past 66 years from the time that Christ began his Church and John had written this letter. Jerusalem had been destroyed and Israel ceased to exist as a nation for over 25 years. The Church had been scattered to other nations. Rome, under Claudius, had attacked Britain

to destroy it and the Christians living there, along with the Druids, around 25 years earlier. So by the letters to the seven churches the Lord is letting us know where the Church is at in the Age of Grace we call the Church Age. We are now in the final phase of the Church Age known as the Laodicean Church, the church of apostasy! He's letting us know, basically, what the Church was like in its beginning and what it will be like at the end when he returns.

We leave the narrative of the seven churches in chapters two and three to go into chapter four which is connected to chapter five. The Apostle John was in the Spirit when the Lord spoke to him. He saw the seven stars in his hand and the seven lamp stands. Christ then explained to him what they stood for, and then he went on to talk about the seven churches. The action here is observing the seven churches; there's no idea of beginning or ending, nothing that says that this has to happen before that something else happens. We can say that they're chronological ending at the Laodicean church; we can't say that the Laodicean church has to end before something else takes place. The picture at the end is one of **looking at the Laodicean church, not the ending of the Laodicean church**. The next thing we are looking at is the scene in heaven covering chapters four and five.

But chapters four and five are to be taken as one event where we have the Father seated on his throne surrounded by the elders and his angels with a scroll in his hand. One of the angels asked, "*Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?*" No one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth was worthy to open the scroll, no one but Jesus Christ. So the entire scene around chapters four and five center around the opening of the scroll, which brings us to the seven seals.

So to recap this, we have the seven churches chronologically unfolding as the Church Age goes on, the last one being characteristic of the Laodicean church. We have the Laodicean church; the event of the opening of the scroll in heaven and the very next thing we see is the first seal and the anti-christ! **What this indicates is that the anti-christ will be conquering the world during the time of the Laodicean church! My friends this is going on today!**

In Revelation 4:1 where it says, "*After this I looked*", would refer to the entire vision of the seven churches, not just after the Laodicean phase. This ties in with the other passages, such as 2 Thessalonians 2, where it says that **the Lord will return after the apostasy takes place first and the revealing of the anti-christ**. The apostasy, (Laodicean church), the anti-christ conquering the world and being crowned as the king of Jerusalem in Jerusalem, then the Lord returning. When he does return will he find the faith on earth? The answer is no and is a reference to Christ coming back to an apostate church, which we have today, even among those legalistic believers who are so sure that they're not apostate, but their legalism is apostasy.

Think of it, if you will, as a graph with peaks, or mountains with one mountain being higher than the others. This will help us understand this. During the entire Church Age all seven types of churches will be found on earth at the same time, but the Church itself will be predominantly like the characteristics of one type of church. So during the phase of the Philadelphian church you would find churches like the one at Laodicea, and during the

phase of the Laodicean church you will find churches like the one at Philadelphia, but generally speaking the Church of Christ will be like the one described in Laodicea worldly, compromising, money oriented, materialistic and negative to doctrine.

Things to look for, possible scenarios and some latest International reports

As we know, the end times preceding the return of Christ will have an international government, a one-world currency and religion. The governmental structure for one-world rule already exists in the United Nations. Presently it is located in the USA, but the centuries old desire is to have it located in the City of Jerusalem. Proposals are all ready underway to internationalize the City of Jerusalem and to make it the capital of the emerging world government. The UN would be the political body that will assume jurisdiction of the city. The Secretary-General of the UN will become the “mayor” of Jerusalem, which indicates that he would move there. When this occurs Jerusalem will become the world headquarters of the United Nations.

The Pope and the Vatican are calling for all nations to embrace the UN as the only vehicle for world peace. He is also calling for new international laws to stop wars through the vehicle of the UN stating that only the UN can bring about “peace and safety”, and is making a massive push for all people to follow and obey the dictates of the UN and has given 100% backing to establish these issues, which were brought about on the UN’s World Peace Day, January 1, 2004.

The “Mayor” of Jerusalem is an interesting title, for it is derived from the 13th century Latin, maior, and referred to the chief executive officer and administrator of a city. So the Secretary-General of the UN is being directed toward being the chief executive officer (CEO) of the City of Jerusalem, which will be the world headquarters of the UN making the entire world government a city- the City of Babylon.

In 2 Thessalonians 2 it says that the anti-christ will be displaying himself as a god. Without the definite article, *the*, which would be “the God”, it means that he will be **displaying himself as a god**. “A god” fits very well for the secret societies teach that there is no supreme god, but that all men can become gods. So this will be telling u that the anti-christ will be displaying himself as a perfected, deified man.

“*Displaying*”, *apodeiknumi*, also has the idea of the finale at the end of a processional for a king or ruler, often used in the coronation process. We know that it definitely is referring to the event where the anti-christ is crowned as king of Jerusalem, but it could also have in it the idea where he is installed as the Mayor of the City of Jerusalem. We do know that his rule over the world in the original is reign, which is the rule of a king, so we know that he will be a king.

Trampling on the holy city, Jerusalem, is a reference to a foreign military presence by UN troops for 42 months, or moons, which would be less than 42 of our months; the same period of time that the anti-christ will be ruling over the world from Jerusalem. In Daniel 9:27 where it says that, “*He will confirm a covenant with the many*”, the word for

confirm has the idea of force behind it telling us that the anti-christ will force a covenant on the nation of Israel. More than likely, it will be a covenant to make Jerusalem an international city, under the jurisdiction of the UN and being governed by the Secretary- General of the UN. When this occurs the Secretary-General will bring in UN troops to ensure the peace and safety of the area. **UN troops on the land is the trampling down by the gentiles.** This pattern and process is already going on in nation after nation all around the world.

The **anti-christ** concept already exists today in the person of the **Secretary-General** of the United Nations. The **False Prophet** exists in the person of the **Pope**. The papacy had transferred its ruling powers of the world over to the UN some forty years ago when U Thant was the then Secretary-General. Every nation on earth, every ruling body, including America is already under the rule of the UN.

The False Prophet, the Pope, will direct all men to submit to the UN and obey the Secretary-General, which as we have seen, took place this year! The Presidential Decision Directive #25 (PDD #25) was signed on May 3, 1994 by President Clinton and this directive calls for the handing over the command and control of the US military to the Secretary-General of the UN in a time of “national emergency”. That, by the way, is when the “terrorist alert” hits red on the scale.

Now what major event could call for both the moving of the headquarters of the UN from the US shores to another country, say Israel, and placing America under a state of national emergency? There is a scenario where this could take place, as America is so painfully aware of in the 911 tragedy in New York, and that is if terrorists blow up the UN building in New York! A tragedy of those proportions would be devastating to all of us, but it would serve to do three things; one, they would want to move the UN to Israel, the city of peace, two, UN troops would take over our military and country under a state of national emergency, and three, UN troops would be brought into Israel where we would then have Israel being trampled on by the gentiles. It could also be the crisis where the Secretary-General would force Israel to sign a treaty with the UN. The nature of the treaty would probably be more toward the idea of transferring the title of the site of the city of Jerusalem over to the UN.