



## The Nicolaitans

Who are they? Where do you read about them in the Bible? How much do we know about these people? As far as I am concerned, I knew nothing about them. I only find them mentioned by name in one book of the Bible and that is the Book of Revelations. I know it was not an accident but one day I was reading the letters to the churches and I just thought I would study these people out and find out about them. I believe it was the Lord directing me.

Please remember that according to II Timothy 3:16-17 *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."* One may not like it but the Message translation states it like this, *"Every part of scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another - showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way."*

In Revelation Chapters Two and Three, you find our Lord addressing the seven churches in Asia. They are as listed in order of writing: (1) Ephesus, (2) Smyrna, (3) Pergamos, (4) Thyatira, (5) Sardis, (6) Philadelphia, (7) and finally Laodicea. In these letters, He commanded, corrected, encouraged, exhorted, reprimanded and openly rebuked. Five of them He corrected, one He encouraged to be faithful because of the tremendous tribulation and poverty they were going through, and one (Philadelphia) he openly praised and told them that He would keep them from *"the hour of temptation."* Is He talking about the Great Tribulation? If so, does He mean they are the only ones who will not have to go through the tribulation? I don't know, I think I will just let you think about that. In Matthew 24, Jesus said *"Be ye ready."* One church, Sardis, He said was



already dead. And then, one church, Laodicea, made Him sick. He was ready to spue them out of His mouth.

I know that there were seven distinct churches that were in Asia. They also may very well mean that there are seven stages of development in the church ending with the age of Laodicea. Warning!! Warning!! Warning!! These letters are not politically correct. And what is political correctness? *It is a demanding of others to not say anything that may offend me by telling me what I believe is wrong or what I have done is wrong or what I am doing is wrong.* An example of this is the way some people hate the people who are pro-life. Their hatred is evident. It is visceral (intensely emotional). And, this abortion mentality stemmed from the 60's generation. The free love society, pot smoking, drug culture who were as rebellious as they come. They detested any form of moral law and openly called established authority "Pigs". I remember that generation very well because I was one of them and was pretty messed up my self. And the women from that generation have invented this Pro Choice movement or the legal right to kill babies. They don't want anybody telling them that they are killing babies and if you do you are not politically correct. Now that generation of people are running most of this country and screaming for their rights. Likewise, homosexuals don't want anybody telling them that their lifestyle is wrong. They try and tell us they were born that way but common sense, normal people, the Bible, and God tell us different. It is an abomination to God. It has always has been and always will be. Now political correctness has taken over much of the church and they call it love. Today, the majority of the church does not want anyone telling them they are wrong, either. (Please check in next month for our new update on Straight Shooting when I talk about, "The Obsolete Office".

In writing to the church at Ephesus, the Lord says in Chapter 2, verse 6, " *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans,*



*which I also hate.*" Then in writing to the church at Pergamos, in verse 15, He also states, *"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."*

Somewhere in our mind we have left no room for the Lord to hate anything. Someone said, "God is love in its purest form," and I agree with that. But He tells us in Proverbs 6:16 that there are 6 things which He hates and a seventh one is an abomination to him. Most Christians don't read it that way. What is the one that is an abomination? The last one reads, *"He that soweth discord among the brethren"*. Let me explain that one to you. He is talking about the talebearers who pull you aside and try to get you to take their side and get offended with their offense. Or we could say it is someone who tries to cause problems, strife, and division in the family.

God also said, *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* Does He actually hate Esau or is it the fact that Esau had no faith and that is what the Lord detested? I think it was Esau's refusal to believe. Now, when it comes to the Nicolaitans, it is their **"deeds"** and their **"doctrine"** that He hates. God hates lying, but not the liar. He always graces us with a way out.

Why does He hate their deeds and what is their doctrine? In my study of this subject, this is what I came up with and I quote, *"The Nicolaitans were a sect of base antinomians which had arisen in those early days of Christianity."* Before we go any farther, what does "base antinomian" mean? According to the dictionary, the word base means ***morally bad or inferior in quality or value***. Then it also means to be ***badly mistaken*** or ***inaccurate***.



Whether we like it or not, we all miss God at times. Most times we don't want to, but we do fall. Thank God for 1 John 1:9. That's Grace. But, there are those who are badly mistaken and run off as a know it all and try to teach everybody else their new pet doctrine. And all the while, they are badly mistaken in their belief. Frankly, I will teach nothing new unless I check it out with other ministers in the body. I really try to be balanced in my teaching. Anybody can get deceived, and that is why we need coverings and Godly counsel. In the multitude of counsel there is safety. Get it? Get a multitude of counsel before you go around spreading your new doctrine. Sadly though, most people don't. Many times it is the blind leading the blind and both fall into the ditch. Then once again the body gets split and receives another black eye, so to speak.

The word antinomian is a new word to me. It means, according to the dictionary, "**opposed to or denying moral law.**" In other words, people who embrace this doctrine promote their badly mistaken interpretation of scripture to mean there is no moral law that applies to them. Now, let's get back to the description of the Nicolaitans. *"The Nicolaitans were a sect of base antinomians which had arisen in those early days of Christianity. They contended that since we are saved by grace and are free from the law, nothing is evil. They made every excuse for lewdness and licentiousness. The Nicolaitans committed fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness and had their wives in common. All this evil was practiced and promoted in the name of Christian liberty. All true believers, like the Ephesians and like Christ Himself, despise those who promote ungodliness in the name of grace."* (Traditional explanation by John Gill.) Another definition for antinomian is "a Christian who believes that faith and divine grace bring about salvation and that it is therefore **not** necessary to accept established moral laws which apply to everybody." Once again let me say that it is their deeds and their doctrine that we should hate. We could say it simply – they are teaching that because of



grace we have a "license to sin" – or it's just another wrapping on that old teaching "once saved, always saved" or that "physical and moral sins don't matter." That's not what Paul the apostle was teaching in the book of Galatians. That is gross misinterpretation of scripture.

Listen folks, grace is amazing, but you can go too far and even be badly mistaken in your beliefs. I know most of us are not into sharing our wives, nor have we gone to some of the extremes of the Nicolaitans, but we need a warning. Wake up church! This doctrine is slowly creeping into the church. Bring in balanced teaching and let the pendulum swing back to the right or the left, until it ends up right in the center where it belongs. There is some great teaching on grace out there and thank God for it. But if you've learned something new don't get in an all fired hurry and run off and say "well, I'm just going to teach it anyway." I know a lot of us were raised in the *"thou shalt not"* religion that put us under the law. I am not advocating that and you know it. Grace has set us free from that. But, listen to your conscience, your spirit is always a safe guide. Don't get in a hurry. Let's take our time. You may be right. God's word tells us that iniquity will abound in the last days. And, you have to admit that the Lord hates that doctrine of the Nicolaitans in any form. But, thank God He also says, *"Where sin abounds, grace does more abound."*

A final thought along these lines is to just stay on your toes spiritually. Deception is out there. Don't be too quick to swallow everything that comes from the pulpit or the television or someone's book. The Spirit of Grace be upon you until next time. Hasta luego, or later Dude.

**Pastor Jim**