



Christian Ambassadors

3 P'S of Our Profession

God the Father, and His Son, Jesus the Christ, are running a business on earth. What is their business? Their business is to **SAVE THE WORLD!** But what does the world need to be saved from?

First, let's define the word "world". The "world" means every human being that has ever existed from Adam and Eve until Christ returns. Secondly, let's define the word "save". To "save" means to rescue from death and to give life. Now we can begin to understand that the phrase "**SAVE THE WORLD**" means *to rescue from death and to give life to every human being who has ever and will ever exist!*

With this in mind I'm going to repeat my question: what does the world need to be saved from? Answer: the world needs to be saved from death and everything that contributes to death. Then, and only then, can the world have life and have it more abundantly. No one can save the world except God. This is God's business; this is what God is working towards. You're probably familiar with this scripture I'm about to read, but perhaps you've never thought about it in the context of God running a business on earth. This scripture perfectly states the mission statement of God's business. (**Joh 3:16-17**) "**God loves the world so much that He gave His only-begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Yahshuah will not perish but will have everlasting life. God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to **SAVE THE WORLD** through His Son.**"

Notice what Jesus the Christ (Yahshuah ha Messiah) said about His own responsibility in the business. (**Joh 4:31-34**) "**Jesus' disciples asked Him if was He going to eat. But He said to them, I have food to eat which you do not know about. Therefore the disciples said to one another, No one brought Him anything to eat? Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who *sent Me* and *to finish His WORK*.**"

Did Yahshuah finish His work? Yes and no. Yes, Yahshuah has finished His work as God in the flesh because He did live a sinless / righteous life, meaning He kept His Father's commandments perfectly in the letter and spirit of the Law; and He did die to pay the penalty for humanity's sin. No, Yahshuah has not finished His work as God the firstborn from the dead because He has yet restored all things to its original sinless / perfect state. (**Act 3:18-21**) "**But the things which God announced by the mouth of all his prophets, that Messiah should suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, so that there may come times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Yahshuah ha Messiah, who was ordained for you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God spoke long ago by the mouth of his holy prophets.**"

3 P'S of Our Profession

RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS

For a deeper understanding of the phrase “restoration of all things”, please read [\(1Co 15:3-4, 20-28\)](#) “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again after the third day and night in the grave according to the Scriptures; ... Christ stands risen from the dead, the first one offered in the harvest of those who have died. Since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive. However, this will happen to each person in the proper order: first Christ, then those who belong to Christ when He comes. Later the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has done away with every [recalcitrant] ruler and [antagonistic] authority and [perverted] power. For He must rule until God puts all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be done away with is death, for "God has put everything under His feet." Now when Christ says, "Everything has been put under Him," this clearly excludes the Father who put everything under Christ. But when everything has been put under Christ, then the Son Himself will also become subject to the One who put everything under Him, so that God may be all in all.”

I'M EMPLOYED BY GOD

Not only is Christ still working in the family business, God the Father and God the Son have also hired other employees into the company. These employees are called “disciples”. [\(Mat 9:35-37\)](#) “Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion on them, because they were tired and scattered like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the laborers are few.”

Notice in the next verse that God wants to expand his company. God is advertising for job openings. [\(Mat 9:38\)](#) “Therefore *pray to the Lord of the harvest that He will send out more LABORERS into His harvest.*”

Would you like to work for God? You can become a professional Disciple of God. Your official job title would be Christian. As a Christian you would have 3 primary responsibilities --- I call these the “3 P’s of our Profession. The 3 P’s of our Profession are: Preaching; Preparing; and Providing.

1. Preaching the Gospel throughout all the world
2. Preparing disciples to be the best they can be
3. Providing for people in need

We can find these 3 P’s of our Profession mentioned in a verse we already read. [\(Mat 9:35\)](#) “Jesus went about all the cities and villages, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, teaching in their synagogues, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”

Whether you are a prospective employee or a new hire or a veteran co-worker, we can all benefit from an in-depth look at the 3 P’s of our Profession.

3 P'S of Our Profession

It's Time for Your Performance Review

The Book of Revelation is exactly that ... a book that REVEALS things. Yes, there are mysterious symbols throughout the Book of Revelation, but God gives us the key to unlock these mysteries in all of the previous books of the Bible. Plus, there are books of history that illuminate many aspects of the mysteries.

The first “mystery” we encounter is that of “the 7 Churches which are in Asia.” As we shall see, these 7 Churches represent Jesus Christ’s EVALUATION of how each Christian is doing in regards to performing the 3 P’s of our profession!

Rev 1:1-3 A Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to declare to His servants things which must shortly come to pass. And He signified *it* by sending His angel to His servant John, (2) who bore record of the Word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all the things that he saw. (3) Blessed is the one who reads and hears the Words of this prophecy, and the ones keeping the things written in it, for the time *is* near.

Rev 1:4 John to the 7 churches which are in Asia.

The 7 Churches named were those of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. But they were not the only named churches in that district, for there were at least three others: Colosse (Col 1:2); Hierapolis (Col 4:13); and Troas (Acts 20:6-7). These 7 Churches then must be representative of the complete characteristics of Christians in the Corporation of Christ.

In the Bible, the number seven is used by God to represent *completion*. For example, God created the Heavens and Earth in six days, then rested on the seventh day. Mankind has had the seven day weekly cycle ever since. God reveals His seven-step plan of salvation for all mankind in the seven annual festivals of Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day. The 7 Churches represent the complete body of Christ ... the complete corporation.

The CEO / President of the corporation is God, the Father. The COO / V.P. of the corporation is God, the Son. Rev. 1 gives us the qualifications of Jesus the Christ --- Yahshua ha Messiah --- to evaluate the 7 Churches.

3 P'S of Our Profession

Yahshua is qualified to evaluate His Corporation, i.e. the Church!

Yahshua's Qualifications:

REVEALER

(Rev 1:1) A Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to declare to His servants things which must shortly come to pass. And He signified *it* by sending His angel to His servant John.

ALPHA & OMEGA; ETERNAL (co-founder of the corporation)

(Rev 1:4, 8, 11, 17, 18) I am the Alpha and Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* Ending, says the Lord, who is and who was and who *is* to come, the Almighty. I AM the Living One, and I became dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever, Amen.

FAITHFUL WITNESS

FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD

RULER OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

(Rev 1:5) Jesus Christ is the faithful Witness, the First-born from the dead and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

CORPORATE TRAINER

(Rev 1:6) and made us kings and priests to God and His Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

HIRING & FIRING OFFICIAL

(Rev 1:18) I have the keys of hell and of death.

DIRECTOR

(Rev 1:13-16, 20) And having turned, I saw 7 golden lamp stands. And in the midst of the 7 lamp stands I saw *One* like *the* Son of man, clothed with a garment down to *the* feet, and tied around the breast with a golden band. His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire. And His feet were like burnished brass having been fired in a furnace. And His voice was like the sound of many waters. And He had 7 stars in His right hand, and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. And His face *was* like the sun shining in its strength. (Rev 1:20) Here is the mystery of the 7 stars which you saw in My right hand and the 7 golden lamp stands. The 7 stars are the angels of the 7 churches, and the 7 lamp stands which you saw are the 7 churches.

Yahshua holds the 7 Stars in His right hand. Stars are Angels. This teaches us that Yahshua is Directing what occurs in the spirit realm (Dan. 10: an angel --- perhaps Gabriel --- delivers a message to Daniel after being delayed for 21 days due to a battle with an evil angel having charge over the kingdom of Persia; God sent the angel Michael to win the battle for "Gabriel").

Yahshua is in the middle of the Lamp stands. Lamp stands are Churches. This teaches us that Yahshua is Directing what occurs in the Church. (John 1:1-9: Jesus is the True Light; Matt 5:15-16: Each Christian must let the Light shine through them).

The use of the figures Lamp stands and Stars, which are only used in the night, instructs us that we are living in a "dark" world, but Yahshua will light our path and guide us to victory.

3 P'S of Our Profession

Background on Ephesus

The 7 Churches in Asia were on a mail delivery route in the following order:

Ephesus (Rev 2:1-7)
Smyrna (Rev 2:8-11)
Pergamos (Rev 2 :12-17)
Thyatira (Rev 2:18-29)
Sardis (Rev 3:1-6)
Philadelphia (Rev 3:7-13)
Laodicea (Rev 3:14-22)

EPHESUS means “desirable”. It was first on the mail route, and rightfully so because it claimed as its title “the first and greatest metropolis in Asia.” Four factors gave it its preeminence:

1. It had the greatest harbor (financial)
2. It was a free city, due to its services to the Roman Empire (political)
3. It hosted an Olympic-style games that rivaled the ones in Greece, and was a haven for immorality (social)
4. It housed the Temple of Artemis, a.k.a. the Temple of Diana (Acts 19). This Temple was one of the seven wonders of the world (religious).

Scarcely could a more uncompromising soil be found for the spreading of the Gospel. Yet, Paul stayed three years in Ephesus, probably longer than any other city (Acts 20:31). Paul asked Timothy to dwell in Ephesus, perhaps to become its first Bishop (I Tim. 1:2-3; 3:1-15). Aquila, Priscilla and Appollos spent time there preaching the Gospel. There can be few places that better prove the conquering power of the Christian faith.

Unfortunately, there is little left of Ephesus today besides ruins. The coast is now a harborless line of sandy beach, unapproachable by a ship because the harbor is a marsh dense with reeds. It was ever a fight to keep the harbor open because of the silt that the Cayster river brings down. The fight was lost and Ephesus not only lost its preeminence, but also vanished from the scene. It's light was turned off!

3 P'S of Our Profession

There are 5 elements of evaluation to each of the churches:

- **Qualifications of Supervisor** – why the Lord has authority to evaluate
- **Praise** - what the Lord is pleased with
- **Criticism** - what the Lord is upset about
- **Advice** - how to get back on track
- **Challenge** - to the true believers within the group: hold fast, overcome and be blessed

EPHESUS (Rev 2:1-7)

Qualifications of Supervisor – why the Lord has authority to evaluate

(Rev 2:1) To the angel of the church of Ephesus write: He who **holds the 7 stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the 7 golden lamp stands**, says these things.

(Rev 1:20) Here is the mystery of the 7 stars which you saw in My right hand and the 7 golden lamp stands. The 7 stars are the angels of the 7 churches, and the 7 lamp stands which you saw are the 7 churches.

Yahshua holds the 7 Stars in His right hand. Stars are Angels. This teaches us that Yahshua is Directing what occurs in the spirit realm. Examples are:

Dan.10. An angel --- perhaps Gabriel --- delivers a message to Daniel after being delayed for 21 days due to a battle with an evil angel having charge over the kingdom of Persia; God sent the angel Michael to win the battle for “Gabriel”.

Job 1; 2 Satan could attack Job only as much as God allowed. First it was Job’s family, then it was Job’s own body; but never did God allow Satan to kill Job.

Heb 1:5-7, 13-14 “For to which of the angels did He say at any time, “You are My Son, this day I have begotten You?” And again, “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?” **(6)** And again, when He brings in the First-born into the world, He says, “And let all *the* angels of God worship Him.” **(7)** And of the angels He says, “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.” **(13)** But to which of the angels, did He say at any time, “Sit on My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool?” **(14)** Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Yahshua is in the middle of the Lamp stands. Lamp stands are Churches. This teaches us that Yahshua is Directing what occurs in the Church. (John 1:1-9: Jesus is the True Light; Matt 5:15-16: Each Christian must let the Light shine through them).

The use of the figures Lamp stands and Stars, which are only used in the night, instructs us that we are living in a “dark” world, but Yahshua will light our path and guide us to victory.

3 P'S of Our Profession

Praise from the Supervisor

Praise - what the Lord is pleased with

(Rev 2:2) I know your **works** and your **labor** and your **patience**, and how you **cannot bear** those who are evil. And you **tried** those pretending to be apostles, and have found them to be liars. (Rev 2:3) And *you* have borne, and have patience, and for My name's sake you have labored and have not fainted.

~~~~~  
“Works” has the connotation of good deeds that are appreciated. “Labor” has the connotation of hard work that’s draining because it brings criticism and persecution. “Patience” has the connotation of endurance with assurance (hope).

(Mat 26:6-10) When Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him, having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He reclined. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for very much and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, He said to them, Why do you *trouble* (“labor”) the woman? For she has done a good *work* (“work”) on Me.

(Rom 5:2-5) Through Yahshua we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing God's glory. Not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces *endurance* (“patience”), patience produces character, and character produces hope. Now this hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.

(1Th 1:2-3) We give thanks to God for you always, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.



### 3 P'S of Our Profession

Praise from the Supervisor

**Praise** - what the Lord is pleased with

(Rev 2:2) I know your **works** and your **labor** and your **patience**, and how you **cannot bear** those who are evil. And you **tried** those pretending to be apostles, and have found them to be liars. (Rev 2:3) And *you* have borne, and have patience, and for My name's sake you have labored and have not fainted.

~~~~~

“Bear” has the connotation of putting up with something.

(1Co 5:1-13) It is actually reported that sexual immorality exists among you, and of a kind that is not found even among the gentiles. A man is actually living with his father's wife! (2) And you are being arrogant instead of being filled with grief and seeing to it that the man who did this is removed from among you. (5) Hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the Day of the Lord. (6) Your boasting is not good. You know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough, don't you? (7) Get rid of the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough, since you are to be free from yeast. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. (8) So let us keep celebrating the festival, not with the old yeast or with the yeast of vice and wickedness, but with the bread of purity and truth that has no yeast. (9) I wrote to you in my letter to stop associating with people who are sexually immoral- (10) not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or greedy people, robbers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. (11) But now I am writing to you to stop associating with any so-called brother if he is sexually immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunk, or a robber. With such a person you must even stop eating. (12) After all, is it my business to judge outsiders? You are to judge those who are inside, aren't you? (13) God will judge outsiders. "Put that wicked man away from you."

(1Ti 1:12-20) I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who gives me strength, that he has considered me faithful and has appointed me to his service. (13) In the past I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in my unbelief, (14) and the grace of our Lord overflowed toward me, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. (15) This saying is trustworthy and deserves complete acceptance: To this world Christ Jesus came, Sinful people to reclaim. I am the worst of them. (16) But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the worst sinner, Christ Jesus might demonstrate all of his patience as an example for those who would believe in him for eternal life. (17) Now to the King Eternal-the immortal, invisible, and only God-be honor and glory forever and ever! Amen. (18) Timothy, my child, I am giving you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may continue to fight the good fight (19) with faith and a good conscience. By ignoring their consciences, some people have destroyed their faith like a wrecked ship. (20) These include Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I handed over to Satan so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

3 P'S of Our Profession

Praise from the Supervisor

Praise - what the Lord is pleased with

(Rev 2:2) I know your **works** and your **labor** and your **patience**, and how you **cannot bear** those who are evil. And you **tried** those pretending to be apostles, and have found them to be liars. (Rev 2:3) And *you* have borne, and have patience, and for My name's sake you have labored and have not fainted.

~~~~~  
"Tried" has the connotation of testing. Christians should encourage people to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. False Christians tempt people to worship God in spirit and in lies.

In his farewell speech to the elders of the Church at Ephesus, Paul warned them that grievous wolves would invade the flock (Acts 20:29). These evil men were of many kinds. There were emissaries of the Jews who sought to entangle Christians again in the Old Covenant mentality and methodology of relating to God by using "works of the Law" as the way to become righteous and garner God's favor. They followed Paul everywhere, trying to undo his New Covenant teaching that Salvation comes through faith, i.e. faith that we have been forgiven of our sins because Christ died for us; faith that we have been given righteousness without works of the law because Christ lived a sinless life for us; faith that we have been given eternal life because Christ has been resurrected for us; and faith that Christ is writing the Law upon the two tables of our hearts and minds through the Holy Spirit so that we can live for God by loving God with all our hearts and minds, and loving our neighbors as ourselves. On the other hand, there were those who tried to turn liberty into license by teaching that, since the Old Covenant was done away with, the 10 Commandments were done away with. They obviously never understood what Paul taught when he wrote: "So indeed the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good." "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Rom. 7:12, 14).

Paul is upset because people have evaluated his apostleship as phony, whereas the fake apostles were accepted as real.

(2Co 11:1-15) I would that you were bearing with me a little in foolishness; but indeed bear with me. (2) For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy. For I have espoused you to one Man, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. (3) But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, so your thoughts should be corrupted from the simplicity due to Christ. (4) For if, indeed, the one coming proclaims another Jesus, whom we have not proclaimed, or if you receive another spirit, which you did not receive, or another gospel, which you never accepted, you might well endure these. (5) For I judge myself to have come behind the highest apostles in nothing. (6) But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet not in knowledge; but in every way I have been clearly revealed to you in all things. (7) Or did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge? (8) I stripped other churches, taking wages for the serving of you. (9) And being present with you, and in need, I was not a burden to anyone. For the brothers from Macedonia made up completely my need. And in every way I have kept myself from being burdensome to you, and I will keep myself. (10) The truth of Christ is in me that this boasting shall not be silenced in me in the regions of Achaia. (11) Why? Because I do not love you? God knows. (12) But what I do, that I will do, so that I may cut off occasion from those who desire occasion; so that in the thing in which they boast, they may be found even as we. (13) For such ones are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. (14) Did not even Satan marvelously transform himself into an angel of light? (15) Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.

### 3 P'S of Our Profession

Praise from the Supervisor

**Praise** - what the Lord is pleased with

(Rev 2:2) I know your **works** and your **labor** and your **patience**, and how you **cannot bear** those who are evil. And you **tried** those pretending to be apostles, and have found them to be liars. (Rev 2:3) And *you* have borne, and have patience, and for My name's sake you have labored and have not fainted.

~~~~~

What evidence would you use in your trial to determine whether someone is a false or a true Christian?

You must examine what a person SAYS and what the person DOES.

More than once God insists on the necessity of testing. John in his First Letter insists that the spirits who claim to come from God should be tested by their willingness to accept the Incarnation of The Word in all its fullness (1 John 4: 1-3). Paul insists that the Thessalonians should test all things and then hold on to that which is good (1 Thessalonians 5: 21). He insists that, when the prophets preach, they are subject to the testing of the other prophets (1 Corinthians 14: 29). Jesus demanded the hardest test of all: "By their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 1:15-20).

What People Say

Deu 13:1-5 If a prophet rises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, (2) and the sign or the wonder which he foretold comes to pass, that doesn't mean you should follow him. Listen to what else his is saying. If he says, "Let us go after other gods which you have not known, and let us serve them", (3) you shall not listen to the words of that prophet. For Jehovah your God *is* testing you to know whether you **love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul**. (4) **You shall walk after Jehovah your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments**, and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. (5) And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken to turn *you* away from Jehovah your God.

What People Do

Mat 7:21-23 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven. (22) Many will say to Me in that day, Lord! Lord! Did we not prophesy in Your name, and through Your name throw out demons, and through Your name do many wonderful works? (23) And then I will say to them I never knew you! **Depart from Me, those working lawlessness!**

Mat 15:1-9 Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, (2) Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread. (3) But He answered and said to them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? (4) For **God commanded, saying, "Honor your father and mother".** (5) But you say, Whoever says to his father or mother, Whatever you would gain from me, It is a gift to God; (6) this person in no way honors his father or his mother. What you end up doing is *making void the commandment of God by your tradition*. (7) Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, (8) "This people draws near to Me with their mouth, and honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. (9) But in vain they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

3 P'S of Our Profession

Praise from the Supervisor

Praise - what the Lord is pleased with

(Rev 2:6) This you've gotten right: you hate the deeds of the **Nicolaitans**, which I also hate.

Nicolaitan means "conqueror of the people". It is taken from "Niko", meaning to conquer or overthrow, and "Laos", meaning the people or laity. *The Nicolaitans were church leaders that abused their authority.* Let me give you two examples of the "deeds of the Nicolaitans" so that you can recognize them and take the appropriate action.

1) The Catholic Church claims that its authority supercedes God's authority in matters of doctrine. Cardinal Gibbons, in Faith of Our Fathers, pg. 111, wrote, "You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify." Then, in the Catholic Mirror, 9/28/1963, Cardinal Gibbons writes, "The Catholic church, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday." Listen to a Doctrinal Catechism, by Stephen Keenan, pg. 174. "Question - Have you any other way of proving that the {Roman Catholic} church has power to institute festivals of precept? "Answer - Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her - she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the 1st day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the 7th day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority." On page 50 we find: "Question - Which is the Sabbath day? "Answer - Saturday is the Sabbath day. "Question - Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? "Answer - We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 364), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." [The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, third edition]. Also in writing is this: "The Bible says, 'Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.' The Catholic Church says, No! By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day, and command you to keep the 1st day of the week. And lo, the entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church!" [Father Enright, Redemptoral College, Kansas City, Mo., as taken from History of the Sabbath, pg. 802].

For more details, please read our online article entitled "Who or What is the Beast?"

2) I used to attend services with a group that split off from the Worldwide Church of God after the WCG went into apostasy in the late 1980's. Occasionally, I would visit congregations affiliated with a different group that had also split from the WCG. Unfortunately, the administration of the organization I was affiliated with, from the presiding elder in San Diego, CA all the way down to the local minister in Atlanta, GA, practiced the "deeds of the Nicolaitans". The local minister in Atlanta, GA actually forbid me, under threat of being disfellowshipped, from visiting my brothers and sisters in Christ in the other splinter group because he wanted to control my life as well as the lives of every other member. When I told him that he was causing division amongst the brethren --- and that he needed to be disfellowshipped, he questioned my allegiance to the organization. I promptly --- and politely, told him that my allegiance had always been, and would always be, with God --- not an organization!

Whenever you encounter a Pastor who abuses his authority, look him straight in the eyes and say, "Pastor **Nicolaitan**, God hates your deeds!"

3 P'S of Our Profession

Criticism - what the Lord is upset about

(Rev 2:4) But I have this against you: you have **left your first love**.

The Church at Ephesus had faithfully applied its tests and had weeded out all evil and misguided men; but the trouble was that something had gotten lost in the process. "I have this against you," says the Risen Christ, "that you have left your first love."

"First" has the connotation of being "foremost in time, place, order or importance". The "first love" is lost when we don't seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. In other words, our minds and hearts aren't into it anymore. It is not our priority mentally or emotionally. Leaving our first love is characterized by when we pray without joy, when we sing without enthusiasm, when we do evangelistic work that looks good from the outside, but inside aren't done with deep commitment, and when we attempt to maintain doctrinal purity at the expense of loving the brethren. In other words, we either do things by routine or we do things with coldness.

Let's read about an example of "first love" to see what we might have left.

(Act 4:1-35) While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the commander of the temple guards, and the Sadducees came to them. (2) They were greatly disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that Jesus had been resurrected from the dead. (3) So they arrested them and placed them in custody until the next day, since it was already evening. (7) They made them stand in front of them and began asking, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" (8) Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people! (10) you and all the people of Israel must understand that this man stands healthy before you because of the name of Jesus from Nazareth, whom you crucified but God raised from the dead. (16) The rulers and elders said amongst themselves, "What should we do with these men? (18) They decided to forbid Peter and John from teaching in the name of Jesus. (19) But Peter and John answered them, "You must decide what you're going to do, (20) but we cannot stop talking about what we have seen and heard." (21) With fury the rulers and elders threatened Peter and John even more and then let them go. Later, Peter and John were praying, (29) Lord, pay attention to their threats now, and allow your servants to speak your word with all boldness (30) as you stretch out your hand to heal and to perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." (31) When they had prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken, and all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. (32) Now the whole group of believers was one in heart and soul, and nobody called any of his possessions his own. Instead, they shared everything they owned. (33) With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was on them all. (34) For none of them needed anything, because all who had land or houses would sell them and bring the money received for the things sold (35) and lay it at the apostles' feet. Then it was distributed to anyone who needed it.

3 P'S of Our Profession

Advice - how to get back on track

(Rev 2:5) Therefore **remember** from where you have fallen, and **repent**, and **do the first works**, or else I will come to you quickly and will remove your lamp stand out of its place unless you repent.

First, he says *Remember*. He is not here speaking to someone who has never been inside the Church; he is speaking to those who are inside but have somehow lost their way. Memory can often be the first step on the way back. Remember the story of the Prodigal Son? He ran away from the comforts of home to sow his wild oats, but while he was in the uncomfortable position of working in a pig-pen, he suddenly remembered his home (Luke 15:11-17). And that was the first step in his journey home.

Second, he says *Repent*. When we discover that something has gone wrong, there is more than one possible reaction.

There is the reaction of Judas Iscariot: **Mat 27:3-5** "When Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, he became sorrowful, **(4)** saying, I have sinned, betraying innocent blood. **(5)** And he threw the pieces of silver down in the temple and departed to hang himself."

There is the reaction of the Prodigal Son: **Luk 15:18-20** "I will get up, go to my father, and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and you. **(19)** I don't deserve to be called your son anymore. Treat me like one of your hired men.'" **(20)** "So he got up and went to his father. While he was still far away, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him affectionately."

Paul gives us a stark contrast of the two different reactions to sin in **2 Cor 7:9-10**. "Now I am happy, not because you had such sorrow, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you were sorry in a Godly way, and so you were not hurt by us in any way. **(10)** For having sorrow in a Godly way results in repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regrets. But the sorrow of the world produces death."

Third, he says *Do*. The sorrow of repentance is meant to drive a man to two things. First, it is meant to drive him to fling himself on the grace of God, saying only: "God, be merciful to me a sinner." Second, it is meant to drive him to action in order to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. No man has truly repented when he does the same things again. The proof of repentance is a changed life by the power of God!

Eph 4:22-32 "Regarding your former way of life, you were taught to strip off your old man, which is being ruined by its deceptive desires, **(23)** and instead to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **(24)** and to clothe yourselves with the new man, which was created according to the likeness of God in righteousness and true holiness. **(25)** Therefore, stripping off falsehood, "let each of us speak the truth to his neighbor," for we are members of one another. **(26)** "Be angry, yet do not sin." Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, **(27)** and do not give the devil an opportunity to work. **(28)** The thief must no longer steal but must work hard and do what is good with his own hands, so that he might have something to give to the needy. **(29)** Let no filthy talk come out of your mouths, but only what is good for building up as the need may be. This way you will give grace to those who hear you. **(30)** Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. **(31)** Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, quarreling, and slander be put away from you, along with all hatred. **(32)** And be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another just as God has forgiven you in Christ."

3 P'S of Our Profession

Challenge - to the true believers within the group: overcome and be blessed

(Rev 2:7) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who **overcomes** I will give to eat of the **Tree of Life**, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Traditional Christianity preaches a false gospel that I call “once saved always saved.” It goes something like this: once you repent of your sins and accept Jesus as your Savior you have Salvation and it can never be forfeited no matter what you do. This false gospel is taught as a reaction against another false gospel that teaches you can have Salvation by works. While it is true that Salvation is a free gift from God that we receive by faith (that’s called Grace) and cannot be earned in any way (that’s called Works), it is also true that a person can decide to throw God’s grace in His face (that’s called the Unpardonable Sin). An “overcomer” is one who repents of their sins, accepts God’s gift of Salvation by faith, and continues to walk by faith until the day they die. So it is about faith, but does faith *exclude* works? What is God’s answer to that question?

Jam 2:14-26 “What good does it do, my brothers, if someone claims to have faith but does not have any works? **THIS KIND OF FAITH CANNOT SAVE HIM**, can it? (15) Suppose a brother or sister does not have any clothes or daily food (16) and one of you tells them, “Go in peace! Stay warm and eat heartily.” If you do not provide for their bodily needs, what good does it do? (17) In the same way, faith by itself, if it does not have any works, is dead. (18) But someone may say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without any works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (19) You believe that there is one God. That’s fine! Even the demons believe that and tremble with fear. (20) Do you want proof, you foolish person, that faith without works is worthless? (21) Abraham was justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar, wasn’t he? (22) You see that his faith was active with his works, and by his works faith was made complete. (23) And so the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” And so he was called God’s friend. (24) You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. (26) Just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.”

Heb 10:23-39 “Let us continue to hold firmly to the hope that we confess without wavering, for the one who made the promise is faithful. (24) And let us continue to consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another even more as you see the day coming nearer. (26) *For if we choose to continue sinning after we have received the full knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but only a terrifying prospect of judgment and a raging fire that will consume the enemies of God* (28) Anyone who violates the law of Moses dies without mercy “on the testimony of two or three witnesses.” (29) How much more severe a punishment do you think that person deserves who tramples on God’s Son, treats as common the blood of the covenant by which it was sanctified, and insults the Spirit of grace? (31) It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God! (32) But you must continue to remember those earlier days, how after you were enlightened you endured a hard and painful struggle. (35) *So do not throw away your confidence*, since it holds a great reward for you. (36) *For you need endurance*, so that after you have done God’s will you can receive what he has promised. (37) For “in a very little while the one who is coming will return and will not delay; (38) but my righteous one will live by faith, and *if he turns back*, my soul will take no pleasure in him.” (39) Now, we do not belong to those who turn back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.”

The challenge that Christ gives to each Christian is: return to your first love and you’ll be with the love of your life forever!