



CHRIST'S CHURCH  
OF THE CANYON

Mid-Week Devotion  
October 25, 2020

***That dirty double-crosser...***

According to Revelation chapter 2 the church at Ephesus had some very real problems with people coming into the church as imposters. Some were evil men and some even called themselves apostles!! But there was a whole bunch of these less-than-honest folks not only in the church at Ephesus but the church at Pergamum as well. How did the church at Ephesus deal with the bad guys who were liars too? The Apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Thessalonica, 1 Thessalonians 5:20,21 reads,

***"...do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good abstain from every form of evil."***

Exactly! They examined everything carefully just like the Berean church mentioned in Acts 17. But, what about this other group Jesus mentions in Revelation 2? The group that He Himself says, "I hate their deeds!" They were Nicolaitans, followers of Nicolas. An early church father named Irenaeus mentions that Nicolas who was made a deacon in Acts 6, was a proselyte from Antioch who apostatized and left the faith. It seems that Nicolas may have used his reputation as a close "insider" with the disciples to make inroads to churches like Ephesus and Pergamum where he led the people astray into gross immorality and wickedness. Those who followed him were called Nicolaitans. Cult leaders are really nothing new. Take for example Vernon Howell. He lived in La Verne, California from 1989 to 1990 and eventually moved to Waco, Texas. He claimed initially to be a follower of Jesus Christ and ultimately proclaimed that he was the Messiah. You probably know him as David Koresh.

As the 1<sup>st</sup> century church was growing in numbers and spreading throughout Asia Minor some nefarious folks were taking advantage of the new churches filled with new believers and passing themselves off as Jesus' apostles! I'm sure that as one of the fake apostles made his way into the 9AM service at the First Church of Ephesus and began calling attention to himself the conversation between him and the Elders of the church may have gone like this, "We know of the original 12 Apostles. We know that Paul later became an Apostle after he saw the error of his ways. And, we know that Matthias replaced that dirty double-crosser Judas who saw fit to hang himself following the arrest of our Savior, Jesus Christ. But who are you??"

The believers in Ephesus did some really really great things. The problem was, it was all for naught. They had left the One who gave them life. Not only physical life but eternal life as well. They got "sideways" in what they thought was important without consulting the "giver of life", *their first love*.



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**Upcoming**

Communion Sunday, November 1

100 pumpkins given to Wrightwood Elementary

Clocks go back

See you Sunday,

Pr. Wayne