

DAY 10: IDENTIFYING THE CHURCH'S THREE GREAT PITFALLS

The seven letters were most applicable to the seven churches at the close of the first century; however, these letters also contain a statement “to he who has an ear to hear...” which universalizes the letters for all believers. This means that the letters are applicable today as well. The Book of Revelation is primarily concerned with the seven years leading up to Jesus’ return. There are three significant errors that the church has always wrestled with and that Jesus seeks to call attention to in the Book of Revelation.

I. THE ERROR OF THE PHARISEES

- A. Having good, solid doctrine but lacking love
- B. Jesus praises the church for testing apostles ([Revelation 2:2](#))
 - 1. Calling out those who call themselves apostles yet are not
- C. Jesus challenges the church for having forgotten their first love
 - 1. Refers to both love for God and for brothers, they’re intertwined
 - 2. One of the most repeated statements in the New Testaments is “love one another”
- D. Correct doctrine regarding the Jews will lead to correct treatment of the Jews

II. THE ERROR OF BALAAM IN THE NICOLAITANS

- A. Essentially the error of gnosticism
- B. The incorrect belief that if our spirits are saved, what we do in the body doesn’t matter
- C. Hyper-grace movement, overly-realized eschatology were issues in the first-century church and are still issues today
- D. Speaks to Ephesus about this error ([Revelation 2:6](#))
- E. Speaks to Pergamum about this error ([Revelation 2:14](#))

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III. THE ERROR OF GENTILE ARROGANCE AND IGNORANCE (ANTISEMITISM)

- A. Ignorance is not generally bad, you can't help what you are not aware of
- B. When it comes to Israel's special calling, it is particularly important that we not be ignorant ([Romans 11](#))
 - 1. If you are arrogant towards the natural branches, you are in danger of being cut off
- C. There are harsh statements spoken to the Jews ([Deuteronomy 32](#)) but these are in-house rebukes
 - 1. When these statements are then taken out of context and mixed with conspiracy theories, it becomes dangerous ground
- D. Synagogue of Satan ([Revelation 2:9](#), [Revelation 3:9](#))
 - 1. Likely refers to temple rituals carried out by Gentiles who said they were Jewish, but were not

IV. THE RAPTURE AND THE TRIBULATION

- A. "I will keep you from the hour of testing" ([Revelation 3:10](#))
 - 1. Often used as a pre-tribulation proof text
- B. Jesus asks "keep them from the evil one" ([John 17:14-15, 20](#))
 - 1. Not that we would be taken away, rather kept safe
- C. The church in Philadelphia was not raptured and neither will the church be raptured in the final days
- D. In the end, we who are His followers will be preserved from the wrath of God, we will not be cast into the lake of fire