

# THE SABBATH SCOOP

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## Satan's Conversation With Eve

*How Satan worked his way into Eve's mind using questions based on false premises, inuendo and bald-faced lies.*

By Gregory Dullum

Satan's goal was to get Eve to eat forbidden fruit. He didn't go about it as a parent who tries to make a child do something; *demand that she eat it*, and if she asked why, say, "Because I said so." No, he was *subtle* (Gen. 3:1a).

### Satan's Opening Question

Having approached Eve while she was alone and most vulnerable, Satan appeared as a beautiful serpent to get her attention, and asked her a question.

"And he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?' " (Gen. 3:1b).

Satan asked a question to draw her into the conversation. It was an easy question; if he had asked her something difficult (i.e., regarding quantum physics or why the sky was blue), she would have been less eager to answer and might have told him to take a hike. His question contained an OBVIOUSLY WRONG statement, so Eve was *eager* to correct him.

Notice what Satan didn't do. He didn't *deny God's existence*. That would have been futile. Eve probably had heard God's voice and may have seen Him walking in the garden. She knew her very existence depended upon God. From where else could she have come?

Today, 6,000 years removed from creation, when God no longer speaks supernaturally to humans, Satan can get a lot of people to fall for his argument that there is no God. King David called such people fools (Ps. 14:1, 53:1).

When talking with Eve, Satan also did NOT deny that *God had spoken*. This, too, would have been futile.

However, in today's world, Satan is able to convince many people that God did not *really* speak—that his Bible is not truly the Word of God, but is simply the works of men. God's church knows that the Bible is inspired by



NAPS photo

Satan lied and told Eve, "You will not surely die." In spite of all the evidence and cemeteries to the contrary, most people today still believe Satan's lie.

God—literally, "God-breathed" (1 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:21).

Satan's opening question contained a lie. There was an assumption that God had denied Adam and Eve access to the fruit of ALL TREES in the garden.

Jesus said this about Satan: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and he does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44).

"He did not deny that God had spoken; he simply questioned whether God had really said what Eve thought he had said. 'Perhaps you misunderstood what God spoke,' is Satan's suggestion. 'You owe it to yourself to rethink what he said.' It is worth noting that in this suggestion Satan is also questioning God's goodness. 'If God really loved you, he wouldn't keep something from you.' He tried the same approach with our Lord in the wilderness: 'If you are God's beloved Son, why are you hungry?' " (*The Strategy of Satan* by Warren W.

Wiersbe, 1979, pp. 7-8).

### Eve's Opening Response

Eve was eager to correct the serpent. Some people are so eager to correct others when they're wrong, that their correction is not *entirely* correct. Eve may have been like that. So eager was she to correct the serpent's error, her mouth started moving before her mind was totally in gear. Her reply contained three errors, none of which were corrected by Adam, indicating he was not there to hear this conversation. She *left out* part of God's instruction, she *added* to it and she *changed* a part.

"And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die' " (Gen. 3:2-3).

What did Eve leave out? The word "freely." God's commandment had been, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat" (Gen. 2:16).

Why did Eve leave out the word "freely"? Satan's question may have focused her mind upon what she could NOT do instead of what she COULD do!

"We get the impression that Eve caught Satan's subtle suggestion, 'God is holding out on you!' When you start to question or forget the grace of God and the goodness of God, you will find it much easier to disobey the will of God" (Wiersbe, p. 10).

How many people have left the Church of God because they focused on what they couldn't do on the Sabbath, instead of focusing on the positive aspects of the Sabbath, calling it a delight (Isa. 58:13)?

Eve's reply included the *added words*, "or touch it." God's original command

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## Adam and Eve

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did not include these words (Gen. 2:17). Why did Eve add these words?

There are several possible explanations. It is possible that God spoke those words, but they were not recorded. When God instructed Adam and Eve on the Sabbath, He may have added those words then, even if they were not in his original instructions to Adam in Gen. 2:17.

Perhaps, as mentioned in an earlier part of this series, Adam may have told Eve to avoid the tree, and he may have added the words, "Don't even touch it!" as a means of protecting his wife against harm.

Perhaps Satan was working his way into Eve's mind. "Not only did Eve make God's original word *less gracious* by omitting the word 'freely,' but she also made the commandment *more grievous* by adding 'or touch it.' His commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:3). Satan wants us to believe they are burdensome, and that he has something better to offer" (Wiersbe, p. 10).

When the Worldwide Church of God fell into apostasy in 1994-95, members were told they no longer had to keep the Sabbath holy, remove leaven from their homes before the Feast of Unleavened Bread, fast for Day of Atonement, and avoid unclean meats. Some members suddenly felt "free." One member told me he felt that burdens had been lifted from him. These people, like Eve, had allowed Satan to make God's commandments seem burdensome.

Eve also changed part of God's command. God did not say, "You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, *lest you die*." He said, "...you shall not eat, *for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die*" (Gen. 2:17).

Since Eve added to, subtracted from and changed God's command, she may NOT have been *as familiar* with God's command *as Adam had been*. This could be one reason why Satan approached her instead of Adam.

### Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. Whose strength was in his hair?
2. Who was Abraham's free-born wife?
3. Who was Abraham's bondwoman wife?
4. What is the 8th commandment?
5. What is the 6th commandment?

(Answers on page 6)

## Restoration

By Marcus Omer

Go lay the word upon the wind  
and pray that God His wisdom send,  
to stir the mind of those who teach,  
to melt the heart and heal the breach.

With humble heart man wouldn't stray,  
with teachable mind, learn the way;  
fulfill the purpose, for his life,  
then put away all grief and strife.

Yet they still war and stoke the fire  
of human nature's ill desire.  
For greed and gain the train they ride  
that kills the soul with hidden pride.

Will change e'er come to tarnished man,  
return him to when time began?  
Lived he and Eve before the lie,  
deceitful words — they wouldn't die.

A lump of clay; 'immortal soul'?  
A twisted being gains control.  
Now he directs the minds of men  
until the Christ has come again.

Having created some doubt in Eve's mind about what God actually had said, Satan was ready for a full frontal attack.

### Satan's Second Statement

Satan's next statement was a bald-faced lie. "And the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die' (Gen. 3:4).

This lie has been part of man's deception since that time! Most Christians do not believe they will *surely* die. They think they *are* IMMORTAL souls who live on after death, just in a different form and location! Others think we live life over and over on earth as *other types* of physical beings (reincarnation).

The teaching that *we will not die* is a Satanic LIE! God tells us, "The soul who sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20). Death is compared to sleep (John 11:11). There remains no consciousness after death (Ps. 6:5, 30:9, Isa. 38:18-19, Eccles. 9:5, 10).

Satan DENIED GOD'S WORD. "It is but a short step from questioning God's Word to denying it. Of course, neither Adam nor Eve had ever seen death. All they had to go on was the Word of God, *but this was all they needed*. If Eve had not listened to Satan's questioning God's Word, she would never have fallen into his trap when he denied God's Word" (Wiersbe, p. 8).

### Satan's Third Statement

Next, Satan substituted his own lie for

God's truth. He said, "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

By saying, "For God knows..." Satan insinuated that God was intentionally keeping something good from her.

Next, he told Eve that her eyes would be opened. This appealed to her vanity and pride. No one wants to be told that they are spiritually blind, ignorant, closed-minded or stupid. We all want to be wise, open-eyed and open-minded.

The *coup de grâce* of Satan's argument was "you will be like God." That was what *Satan wanted* when he rebelled as Lucifer! He said at that time: "I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:15). Now, *he passed this desire onto Eve*. And mankind has wanted to fulfill this desire ever since. All humanity has wanted to *rule themselves* instead of *submitting to God's laws*. We humans want to determine for ourselves what is right and wrong, instead of turning to God's instructions!

"Satan's lie, 'You will be like God,' motivates and controls much of our civilization today. Man is seeking to pull himself up by his own bootstraps. He is working to build a utopia on earth and possibly take it to outer space. Through education, psychiatry, religions of one kind or another (most of which ignore Jesus Christ, sin, and salvation), and better environment, men are defying God and deifying themselves. They are playing right into the hands of Satan" (Wiersbe, p. 9).

The Apostle Paul described most people in today's society when he wrote, "who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the crea-

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# JOHN THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

John writes letters to seven churches he had pastored that represent seven church eras from his day to ours.

By Gregory Dullum  
Part 23

Jesus Christ gave John a vision when he was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos. This vision was written down as our New Testament book called “The Revelation.”

Early in the book, John was instructed to write messages FROM CHRIST to seven churches in Asia to which John had ministered. These seven churches were selected because they were *on a mail route* and because they had ATTRIBUTES that reflected *seven historical eras* of the Church of God between John’s day and the return of Jesus Christ in our day.

## The Church at Ephesus

Notice what Christ told John about the church at Ephesus and about the first era of God’s church:

“I know what you have done; I know how hard you have worked and how patient you have been. I know that you cannot tolerate evil men, and that you have tested those who say they are apostles but are not, and have found out they are liars. You are patient, you have suffered troubles for my sake, and you have not given up. But here is what I have against you: You do not love me now as you did at first. Remember how far you have fallen! Turn from your sins and do what you did at first. If you don’t turn from your sins, I will come to you and take your lampstand from its place. But here is what you have in your favor: You hate what the Nicolaitans do, as much as I” (Rev. 2:1-6 *Today’s English Version* throughout).

Christians at Ephesus—and the church as a whole—had lost its first love. Christ physically removed the lampstand A.D. 69 when the Jerusalem Church fled to Pella. He later removed the lampstand spiritually, A.D. 135, when the church’s authority and respect were stripped from it following a second Jewish war with Rome.

“The church congregation was a type of the entire church in apostolic times. The Ephesus church had let down. It had not continued in its work after A.D. 69 to all nations (Mat. 28:19)” (*Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, Lesson 49, 1968, p. 12).

On the positive side, the church at Ephesus—and the first era of God’s church—was not overly swayed by false ministers. The Ephesian church also had withstood persecution. And it had hated the doctrine



Map by Gregory Dullum

A primary mail circuit covered the seven cities John mentioned in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3.

of the Nicolaitans. Who were they?

This sect “held that it was lawful ‘to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication,’ in opposition to the decree of the church rendered in Acts 15:20, 29” (“Nicolaitans,” *Smith’s Bible Dictionary* by William Smith, 1967, p. 450).

It appears this sect used human reasoning to refute instructions from the headquarters church. It was a rebellious group, and God hates rebellion (1 Sam. 15:23).

Historically, the Ephesian era of the Church of God lasted about A.D. 31-135.

## The Message to Smyrna

Jesus’ next message went to the church at Smyrna (and to the church era which lasted approximately A.D. 135-325).

Smyrna was a port city, like Ephesus, which was 40 or 50 miles to its south (*Story of the Bible World in Map, Word and Picture*, by Nelson Beecher Keyes, 1959, p. 140).

Pagan mysteries prevailed in this city (Smith, “Smyrna,” p. 653). But it was “a splendid city, of rare beauty, on a fine bay, rival of Ephesus, with the proud tradition that it had been the birthplace of Homer.

“Its bishop, at the time, was the beloved Polycarp. Irenaeus, who had talked with Polycarp, said that Polycarp was appointed bishop of Smyrna by John.

“The church was composed of poor people, with nothing like the number or prestige that the church at Ephesus had. They were ‘poor, but rich,’ 2:9” (*Halley’s Bible Handbook* by Henry H. Halley, 1964, p. 580).

Jesus, in the vision given to John, told the church at Smyrna it was about to suffer persecution for “ten days” (Rev. 2:10). But He encouraged them: “I know your troubles; I know that you are poor—but really you are rich! I know the evil things said against you by those who claim to be Jews, but are not; they are a group that belongs to Satan!

“Do not be afraid of anything you are about to suffer. Listen! The Devil will put you to the test by having some of you thrown into prison; your troubles will last ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life... Those who win the victory will not be hurt by the second death” (vv. 9-11).

For the original church at Smyrna, the “10 days” could have referred to the persecution under Trajan. For the Smyrna era of the church, it may have referred to the persecution under Diocletian and Galerius A.D. 303-313 (*Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, Lesson 50, 1969, p. 5).

## The Message to Pergamum

The third church Jesus addressed was in the city of Pergamum (or Pergamos). It lay 50 miles north of Smyrna and was the political capital of “Asia”—i.e. Turkey today. Pergamum was a great, ancient city and literary center. It was a chief seat of Hellenic culture. It had the second largest library in the world (Alexandria’s was largest), containing 200,000 volumes. Parchment was invented there when a king of Egypt, jealous of Pergamum’s literary fame, prohibited shipping papyrus to that city. Parchment proved to be a better writing material than papyrus and its name was a form of the name “Pergamena.”

Emperor worship was strong in Pergamum. The city also was a stronghold for Balaamite and Nicolaitan teachers. Thus this city, a “notorious center of heathenism and wickedness,” was called “Satan’s throne” (Halley, p. 581).

Pergamum “became a city of temples devoted to sensuous worship” (Smith, “Pergamos,” p. 512).

In the midst of this paganism God placed his church. Note what Jesus told this church (and the church era later to be called by its name) through the vision John

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recorded in Revelation:

"I know where you live, there where Satan has his throne. You are true to me, and you did not abandon your faith in me even during the time when Antipas, a faithful witness for me, was killed there where Satan lives" (Rev. 2:13).

Who was the martyr Antipas? Tradition says he was the bishop of Pergamum (Smith, "Antipas," p. 41).

Christ found some things wrong in the Pergamum church: "There with you are some who follow the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak how to cause the people of Israel to sin by eating food that had been offered to idols, and by committing immorality. In the same way, you also have people among you who follow the teachings of the Nicolaitans. Turn from your sins, then! If not, I will come to you soon and fight against those people with the sword that comes out of my mouth" (Rev. 2:14-16).

The church at Ephesus hated the works of the Nicolaitans. And fewer than 100 miles away, the church at Pergamum had people following in the way of the Nicolaitans—who held to false gods and committed idolatry and sexual immorality.

The doctrine of Balaam is to get as close to the world as one can and yet be considered "Christian."

Following the Catholic Council of Nicaea in 325, the true Church of God fled into the wilderness for 1260 years (Rev. 12:6). This began the era called "Pergamum" or "Pergamos." Most true Christians lived in the eastern Roman Empire at this time. When Constantinople became a headquarters of the Roman Church, "satan's seat" was established where God's church was located. The church fled into Armenia. In A.D. 654, God raised up a leader named Constantine of Mananali. This man taught against the Pope's authority, and is probably the "Antipas" or "anti-Pope" of the Pergamos era of God's church.

This era also included the works of people called "Paulicians," whose church was thriving in A.D. 800. The Pergamos era ended about A.D. 1100.

### The Message to Thyatira

The mail route that connected these seven churches reached its northernmost point at Pergamum. From there it headed southeast for about 50 miles until it reached the city of Thyatira.

There is evidence that Thyatira was home to a great amalgamation of races.

The principal deity of Thyatira was Apollo (Smith, "Thyatira," p. 695).

Thyatira was famous for its magnificent temple of Artemis (Diana).

"Jezebel, it is thought, may have been a prominent woman devotee of Diana, with a gift for leadership, who had a following of influential people in the city, and who, attracted to the growing cause of Christianity, attached herself to the church, militantly insisting, however, on the right to teach and practice licentious indulgence, claiming inspiration for her teaching.

"She was called 'Jezebel' because, like Jezebel the devilish wife of Ahab who introduced the abomination of Astarte worship into Israel, 1 Kings 16, she was introducing the same practices into the Christian Church.

"Not all of the Thyatira pastors accepted her teaching. But, trying to be liberal, and thinking that she might be a help in winning the whole city to the Name of Christ, they accepted her as a fellow pastor" (Halley, p. 582).

Jesus Christ, the ever-living Head of the Church of God, was very displeased with this situation:

"This is the message from the Son of God, whose eyes blaze like fire, whose feet shine like polished brass. I know your love and your faithfulness, your service and your patience. I know you are doing more now than you did at first. But here is what I have against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a messenger of God. She teaches and misleads my servants into committing immorality and eating food that has been offered to idols. I have given her time to turn from her sins, but she does not wish to turn from her immorality. Therefore I will throw her on a bed where she and those who committed adultery with her will suffer terribly. I will do this now, unless they repent from the wicked things they did with her. I will also kill her children, and then all the churches will know that I am he who knows men's thoughts and wishes. I will repay each one of you according to what you have done.

"But the rest of you in Thyatira have not followed this evil teaching; you have not learned what others call 'the deep secrets of Satan.' I say to you that I will not put any other burden on you. But you must hold firmly to what you have until I come" (Rev. 2:18-25).

Yes, Christ was angry at the spiritual whore who was seducing some in Thyatira. She pretended to utter inspired messages but they were nothing more than disguised calls to libertinism, fornication and eating of idol meats professed by the Balaamites and Nicolaitans.

The reference to her children meant not her physical progeny but those born spiri-

tually by her. This Jezebel and her followers were Gnostics, proclaiming to have deep, hidden knowledge.

"Thyatira was just the reverse of Ephesus. There, much zeal for orthodoxy, but little love; here, activity of faith and love, but insufficient zeal for godly discipline and doctrine, a patience of error even when there was not a participation in it" (*Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Faussett and David Brown, 1964, p. 1535).

The situation is somewhat reminiscent of that in Corinth 40 years earlier (1 Cor. 5). At that time the church was filled with love and felt the best thing to do was ignore a man living in sin with his stepmother. Now Thyatira, filled with love, was allowing this spiritual whore the freedom to seduce all the members she wished. But Jesus Christ said He was about to step in and strike her and her followers with either plague or death.

The Thyatira era of God's Church began about 1104 with the work of Peter of Bruys in the southern France. The world called these people Petrobrusians. After 20 years, Peter was burned at the stake, and Henry took over. His followers were called Henricians by others, but they called themselves the Church of God.

A much greater work was performed by a man named Waldo, who began preaching in 1161. His followers were called, at first, the Poor Men of Lyons, and later the Waldenses. The great false Roman church persecuted God's true church with Inquisitions during this time. The Roman Church acted much like the Jezebel of ancient Israel, who sought to kill God's prophet, Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-2).

Throughout the latter part of the Thyatira era, God's people fled north and west into Europe. Many ended up in England.

### The Message to Sardis

About 35 miles southeast of Thyatira lay the city of Sardis, home of the fifth congregation to receive a message from Christ through John's vision of Revelation.

Sardis was two miles south of the Hermus River and lay below the Tmolus mountain range. In its early days the city was a great commercial center. It is said the art of dyeing wool began here. From the time of its invasion by Alexander the Great, Sardis began to lose its commercial importance but was still a famous city in Roman times (Smith, "Sardis," p. 606; Halley, p. 583).

The church at Sardis has a history similar to that of its city. At one time the congregation was vibrant. But by the time of John's writing the members were falling asleep spiritually. Jesus, through John's

vision, warned the church:

“I know what you are doing; I know that you have the reputation of being alive, even though you are dead! So wake up, and strengthen what you still have, before it dies completely. For I find that what you have done is not yet perfect in the sight of my God. Remember, then, what you were taught and how you heard it; obey it, and turn from your sins. If you do not wake up, I will come upon you like a thief. But a few of you in Sardis have kept your clothes clean” (Rev. 3:1-4).

The name “Sardis” means “Those escaping.” Like the church at Ephesus, the congregation at Sardis had a good start and a bad ending. When the city of Sardis was dying, it held to its past glory. So did the congregation of God’s church there. Perhaps only three out of a hundred in this congregation made it into God’s kingdom. This message could be considered an obituary (Donald Prunkard, sermon to Worldwide Church of God, Minneapolis West, June 21, 1975).

Historically, the Sardis Era of God’s church began about 1585, as the 1260 years in the wilderness came to an end. It was based, at first, in England, and later came to America. It was known as the Church of God Seventh Day. A splinter group was called the Seventh Day Adventists. Members of this era will continue to exist when Christ returns (Rev. 3:4)!

## The Message to Philadelphia

Another 35 miles to the southeast of Sardis lay the town of Philadelphia, home of the sixth church to receive a message from Christ in John’s vision.

This town lay on the lower slopes of the Tmolus mountains, 952 feet above sea level. There is still a town on this site but it is called Allah-Shehr (City of God). “The original population of Philadelphia seems to have been Macedonian: but there was, as appears from Rev. iii.9, a synagogue of Hellenizing Jews there, as well as a Christian church. The locality was subject to constant earthquakes, which in the time of Strabo rendered even the town-walls of Philadelphia unsafe. The expense of reparation was constant, and hence perhaps the poverty of the members of the Christian church (Rev. iii.8)” (Smith, “Philadelphia,” p. 523).

“Philadelphia was distinguished from the other cities by several characteristics: first, it was the missionary city; secondly, its people lived always in the dread of disaster, ‘the day of trial’; thirdly, many of its people went out of the city to dwell; fourthly, it took a new name from the Imperial god [during the reign of Vespasian (A.D. 70-79), Philadelphia called itself Flavia]”

(*The Letters to the Seven Churches* by William M. Ramsay, 1985, p. 398).

The Church of God at Philadelphia was a humble but faithful church that was “content to exemplify the Life of Jesus in the midst of a pagan and corrupt society.” This congregation loved God’s Word and was intent on keeping it. This church was greatly loved by Jesus and receives no reproof from Him in John’s vision (Halley, p. 584).

Notice Christ’s words recorded in that vision: “I know what you do; I know that you have a little power; you have followed my teaching and have been faithful to me. I have opened a door before, which no one can close” (Rev. 3:8). “False Jews” or false Christians (spiritual Jews) will fall down and worship true Christians, Christ promised in verse 9. “They will all know that I love you,” He added.

“Because you have kept my order to be patient, I will also keep you safe from the time of trouble which is coming upon the whole world, to test all the people on earth. I am coming soon. Keep safe what you have, so that no one will rob you of your victory prize” (vv. 10-11).

These people, some of whom left the city for fear of earthquakes, will be given a new city to dwell in (in the world tomorrow): the new Jerusalem. And they will never have to leave that city! (vv. 12-13).

The Philadelphia era began in 1934 when Herbert W. Armstrong began to preach the gospel on the radio. His followers were sometimes called “Armstrongites” by detractors, but they called themselves, at first, the Radio Church of God, and after 1968, the Worldwide Church of God.

After Mr. Armstrong’s death in 1985, the church fell into apostasy and the truth was carried on by several breakaway groups, most notably the Global Church of God (now the Living Church Church of God) and the United Church of God. People from this church era will exist at Christ’s return and are promised escape from the end-time great tribulation (Rev. 3:10-11).

## The Message to Laodicea

The seventh and final message went to the Church of God at Laodicea, a city 50 miles southeast of Philadelphia (Keyes, p. 140). Laodicea lay in the valley of Maeander, on the small river Lycus.

Under the Roman government, Laodicea grew to be a city of importance. A great road ran through it and it was the seat of a “conventus.” It was a city of great wealth (Smith, “Laodicea,” p. 333).

The city also had its own school of medicine. Apparently Laodiceans developed an ointment from the spice nard that

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## Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

Originally the word cynic was a name for a student at a school for philosophers called Cynisarges, which is Greek for white dog.

## Witerature

*Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.*

*Fighting the Flying Circus* by Capt. Edward V. Rickenbacker, The Lakeside Press, 1997, p. 49.

## Friends Can Hurt You

“Suddenly I saw the French pilot zoom up over me and attempt to get on my tail. Whether joking or not, I couldn’t permit such a maneuver, so I quickly darted under him and got the best position myself.... But to my amazement the fellow kept circling me continually trying to bring his guns to bear upon me. I began wondering then whether he was some idiot who did not know an ally when he saw one, or was he a real German flying over our lines in a captured French machine? The former was evidently the correct solution, for as soon as I came by him again I turned flat over in front of him and let him have a long look at my American white center corcades on my wings. This performance apparently satisfied my persistent friend, for he soon swerved off and went home.... This little episode taught me another lesson. Since that day I have never taken any chances with any aeoplane in my vicinity, whether it was friend or foe. Some friends are better shots than are casual enemies.”

Ps. 55:12-14, 21; 118:8; Mat. 10:34-36

## Quotable Quotes

“Never look back unless you want to go that way.”

—John C. Maxwell

## Memory Scripture

“But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.”

—Gen. 19:26

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strengthened the ears. This region of Phrygia also developed a medicine for the eyes, which was made from stones ground to a fine powder. The first recorded use of this powder was in Laodicea (Ramsay, pp. 416-419).

“There is no city whose spirit and nature are more difficult to describe than Laodicea. There are no extremes, and hardly any strong marked features. But in this even balance lies its peculiar character. Those were the qualities that contributed to make it essentially the successful trading city, the city of bankers and finance, which could adapt itself to the needs and wishes of others, ever pliable and accommodating, full of the spirit of compromise” (Ramsay, pp. 422-423).

To this church John wrote a warning message he had received from Christ:

“I know what you have done; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! But because you are barely warm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth! ‘I am rich and well off,’ you say, ‘I have all I need.’ But you do not know how miserable and pitiful you are! You are poor, naked and blind. I advise you, then, to buy gold from me, pure gold, in order to be rich. Buy also white clothing to dress yourself and cover up your shameful nakedness. Buy also some medicine to put on your eyes, so that you may see. I reprove and punish all whom I love. Be earnest then, and turn from your sins. Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and eat with him, and he will eat with me. To those who win the victory I will give the right to sit by me on my throne, just as I have been victorious, and now sit by my Father on his throne” (Rev. 3:14-21).

The final era of God’s church has yet to be identified. It will be a church that has a predominantly lukewarm attitude. It will exist at the time of Christ’s second coming, but unlike the Philadelphia era, it will not escape the tribulation.

### Attitudes for All Ages

In addition to being churches on a mail route, and predominant attitudes of seven church eras throughout history, these seven churches exemplified attitudes and problems individual church members have *in any age*. It behooves us then, to strive to overcome bad traits and to become like the Philadelphians, to whom Christ found no reason for reproof!

*To be continued!*



### Polio Returns

“Alarmed by the spread of polio to several fragile countries, the World Health Organization declared a global health emergency on Monday [May 5]....

“Pakistan, Syria and Cameroon have recently allowed the virus to spread—to Afghanistan, Iraq and Equatorial Guinea, respectively—and should take extraordinary measures to stop it, the health organization said” (“Polio’s Return After Near Eradication Prompts a Global Health Warning” by Donald G. McNeil Jr., *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, May 5, 2014, p. 1).

“Pestilences” are prophesied to be one sign we are nearing the time of Christ’s return (Mat. 24:3, 7-8).

### Quake Hits Mexico

“A magnitude-6.9 earthquake on the Pacific Coast jolted a wide area of southern Mexico and Central America Monday [July 7], killing at least three people while damaging homes, hospitals and churches” (“Quake slams Guatemala, Mexico; at least three dead” by Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, July 8, 2014, p. 7A).

“Earthquakes in various places” also are a sign we are in the “beginning of sorrows” leading up to the return of Christ (Mat. 24:3, 7-8)

### Germany Upset With U.S.

“The German government on Thursday [July 10] demanded the removal of the top American spy in the country, the strongest evidence yet that mounting revelations about widespread American intelligence operations in Germany have gravely damaged relations between once close allies.

“The decision...to publicly announce the expulsion of the Central Intelligence Agency’s Berlin station chief was seen as a[n]...expression of deep anger and hurt that German officials have felt since the exposure of the American espionage operations” (“Germany Demands Top U.S. Intelligence Officer Be Expelled” by Alison Smale, Mark Mazzetti and David E. Sanger, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, July 10, 2014, p. 1).

A rift between Germany and the U.S. could lead to a German-led European invasion of the U.S. and national captivity as punishment for our nation’s sins.

## Adam and Eve

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ture [himself] rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever” (Rom. 1:25).

### Conflict in Eve’s Mind

At this point, the conversation ends. Satan departed, leaving Eve alone *to mull over his words*.

Satan works the same way today. He offers temptation to us. We have the option to *reject* his temptation *immediately*. James tells us, “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7). Or, James tells us, we can dwell on Satan’s temptation until it leads to sin and to death! “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death” (Jas. 1:14-15).

Satan’s lies appealed to Eve’s desire to

become like God—to be out from under authority—to *be her own boss!* The more she thought about it, the more appealing it became. A hunger burned inside of her to try that forbidden fruit!

We don’t know how much time passed between the end of the conversation and Eve deciding to eat the forbidden fruit. Perhaps, as we suggested in an earlier part of this series, the temptation occurred on Sunday following the Sabbath of creation week (Tishri 8, according to Jewish tradition), and she ate the forbidden fruit two days later, on Tuesday, Tishri 10, the day that would be set aside as the Day of Atonement—a day when God’s people DON’T EAT—and a day marking the END of *Satan’s rule!*

*(To be continued!)*

### Know Your Bible Answers

1) Samson. 2) Sarah. 3) Hagar. 4) You shall not steal. 5) You shall not murder.