The Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

Summary

Revelation 2 condemns something called “the doctrine of the Nicolaitans” — and this short study argues it’s still happening today, just under different names.

- The Greek roots of “Nicolaitan” (“nikao,” to conquer, and “laos,” people).
- The doctrine read as the historical rise of a clergy/laity hierarchy over the congregation.
- That pattern traced forward into the Roman Catholic hierarchy of priests over laity.
- The same man-made pattern identified across Protestant, non-denominational, and Jewish institutions alike.
- A closing call to recognize any such hierarchy as a mark distinguishing an artificial substitute from the “Natural” congregation Yahweh designed.

The full article begins on the next page.

The Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

The doctrine of the Nicolaitans was mentioned in the Revelation of John to the Congregations of Pergamos and Ephesus of the seven Congregations of Asia *(Revelation 2)*. It was a symbolic name of a party that represented those who established a ruling class over the rest of the people in the "Congregation" *(ekklesia)*, by exalting fleshly leadership and developing a "pecking order."

Yah'shua stated clearly that He hated this and warns the people to repent or else He "will come upon you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." The same stern warning illustration is applied to those which were led to licentiousness from the example of Balaam, which was by seducing His faithful believers to fornication and tampering with idolatry.

The root of the word through historical evaluation shows us that the word Nicolaitans comes from Greek "nikao", to conquer or overcome, and "laos", which means people, and which the word laity comes from. The two words together in this context means the "conquering, or destruction of the people" and refers to the earliest form of what we call a priestly order or clergy, which later on in the history of the Congregation divided people by condoning leadership other than that ordained of Yahweh.

A good translation of Nicolaitan would be "those who prevail over the people." This clerical system later developed into the papal hierarchy of priests and clergy over the laity. In fact, the Council of Trent admittedly stated, and continues to hold that, "If anyone shall say that there is not in the Catholic Church a hierarchy established by the divine ordination, consisting of bishops, presbyters and ministers, let him be anathema."

Yahweh clearly renounces the Roman Catholic Church, calling it the great "Harlot", and as many Bible students are aware, Yahweh also refers to the Roman Catholic organization as "Babylon the Great".

The word "Babylon" in Bible usage is synonymous with "Sin" and only once when making this one reference to the Roman Catholic Church, does Yahweh use the Phrase "Babylon the Great"!

This very idea was taken over by all of the Protestants and subsequently by all non-denominational professing *Christian* churches, with the deceptive corruption of the congregation by the institution of their own artificial leadership, even if it includes just one "Pastor".

This same manner of man-made hierarchy prevails in all man-made "churches" including Jewish synagogues, and indeed is a revealing "sign" of this very thing. The Congregation that the Messiah

founded, is the one and only true Congregation that remains unadulterated by man; or otherwise, it remains in its "Natural" state as designed and built by its Founder!

The Congregation of Ephesus was commended for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans. The separation of clergy from the laity is a great evil in Yahweh's sight and by His words, He hates such lust for religious power.

There is an ungodly spiritual authority in the organised man-made *Churches* and synagogues today, which is nothing more than the prideful spirit of control, manipulation, domination, intimidation and a rebellion of the rightful authority of Yahweh.

Many, and indeed most professing *Christian churches* and Jewish synagogues today, have instituted authoritarian bodies to govern their membership, having at their core, all manner of rules and regulations for the proper conduct and potential "eviction" of their members from their *church or synagogue*! If, as the Messiah clearly states, that membership in His Congregation is "registered in heaven", then one must wonder how and by what authority they access heaven to change the records!

Indeed "almost the whole world" has been deceived as prophesied; blinded by man's own arrogance regarding this very issue. How obvious it should be to those led by the Spirit of Yahweh, that no man or group of men can by any means take leadership precedence over our One and only High Priest, ordained by Yahweh as our "High Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek" *(Heb. 5:6)*. Any formal organization of an hierarchy of men within a *church* has at its core and by definition, the essential premise that it is man-made, or un-natural.

Why else were we commanded: "But you, do not be called 'Rabbi' *[Father, Reverend, Teacher, Priest, Minister, Pastor]*; for One is your Teacher, the Messiah, AND YOU ARE ALL BRETHREN. Do not call anyone on earth your father *[with spiritual reverence]*; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Messiah" *(Matt. 23:8-10).*

Clearly, in the true Congregation of Yahweh, there must be no man-made hierarchy. Within the book of Revelation chapters 2 and 3, "the deeds of the Nicolaitans" are revealed solely for the purpose of pointing out this very thing. These verses clearly set forth that we are to look for this artificial or man-made hierarchy of men within the *churches and synagogues*, as a "sign", and that we are to compare these un-natural "deeds of the Nicolaitans" to the Natural ordinances of Yahweh, to ensure that we are indeed following our true Leader, and thereby avoiding this deceptive trap with all of its many false teachings and beliefs.

Our Bibles hold Yahweh's revelation of the "deeds of the Nicolaitans" for good reason. The Godly purpose for revealing this sign, cannot be made to serve any other purpose, than to allow us to distinguish between the Natural or Yahweh-made, and the un-natural or man-made, no matter how noble the effort to try may be.

← Return to the Articles Index