

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Revelation 3:1-6**.
- B. Tonight's lesson will set forth five areas that will contribute to the death of a church (congregation). Of course, we want to omit these things.
- C. So, a little preventative medicine for the spiritual well being of our church family.
- D. The church in Sardis (see Rev. 3:1):
  - 1. One of the "seven churches of Asia."
  - 2. Having a name that it was alive, but in reality it was a "dead church."

## I. FIRST, **UNLIVED TRUTH** WILL KILL A CHURCH.

- A. God's Word is truth (Jn. 17:17).  
"Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth."
- B. We are to "walk by faith" which is the Word of God (2Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17).  
**(2Cor 5:7)** ...for we walk by faith, not by sight--  
**(Rom 10:17)** So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
- C. We are to live "soberly, righteously, and godly" (Ti. 2:11-12).  
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,...
- D. Because of unlived truth, the world will have reason to speak **evil** of the church (Lam. 2:16; 1Pet. 2:11-17; 1Th. 4:9-12).  
**(Lam 2:16)** All your enemies Have opened their mouths wide against you; They hiss and gnash *their* teeth. They say, "We have swallowed *her* up! Surely this is the day for which we waited; We have reached *it*, we have seen *it*."  
**(1Pet 2:11-17)** Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. **12** Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation. **13** Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, **14** or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. **15** For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. **16** *Act* as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but *use it* as bondslaves of God. **17** Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.  
**(1Th 4:9-12)** Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for *anyone* to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; **10** for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, **11** and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you; **12** so that you may behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.
- E. A little leaven will leaven the whole lump (1Cor. 5:6).  
Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump *of dough*?

## II. SECOND, **UNHOLY UNIONS** WILL KILL A CHURCH.

- A. A "union" is something bound to something **else**.
- B. Any union that would bind us to anything other than Christ is an "unholy union" (2Cor. 6:14-18; Mt. 12:30).  
**(Mt 12:30)** "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters."  
**(2Cor 6:14-18)** Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? **15** Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? **16** Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. **17** "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. **18** "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

- C. Notice the five questions that Paul asks in 6:14-16. He is setting up a contrast saying that faithful Christians will not put themselves in a situation to be unequally bound with those things that will hurt them spiritually:
1. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness?
  2. What fellowship has light with darkness?
  3. What harmony has Christ with Belial?
  4. What has a believer in common with an unbeliever?
  5. What agreement has the temple of God with idols?
- D. Brethren are to be with one another:
1. Encourage one another (Heb. 3:13).  
But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
  2. Stimulate one another (Heb. 10:24).  
...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,...
  3. Assembling to encourage one another (Heb. 10:25).  
...not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.
  4. Pray for one another (Jas. 5:16).  
Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
  5. Fervently love one another (1Pet. 1:22), John says this 5 times in 1John.  
Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,...
  6. Serving one another (1Pet. 4:8-10).  
Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. **9** Be hospitable to one another without complaint. **10** As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

### III. **THIRD, UNCONCERNED MEMBERS WILL KILL A CHURCH.**

- A. The body (church) is made up of many members (1Cor. 12:12).  
For even as the body is one and *yet* has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.
- B. The body (church) is compared to a physical body (1Cor. 12:12-27).
- C. Just as a physical body must have all of its members contributing to work properly, so also must the church (Eph. 4:16).  
...from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.
- D. We must be concerned about all of the members of the church;
1. Be devoted and give preference (Rom. 12:10).  
Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;...
  2. Be of the same mind not haughty or proud (Rom. 12:16).  
Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.
  3. Be not judgmental but pursue peace (Rom. 14:13, 19).  
Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way... **19** So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.
  4. Accept and admonish one another (Rom. 15:7, 14).  
Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God... **14** And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another.

#### IV. **FOURTH, THE UNCOMMITTED MAJORITY WILL KILL A CHURCH.**

- A. There were a few at Sardis who had “not defiled their garments,” yet the church was called a “dead church” (Rev. 3:4).  
*'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white; for they are worthy.'*
- B. We are to commit ourselves to the Lord (Psa. 37:5).  
*Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.*
- C. We must also carry through with our commitments (1Th. 5:13-22):  
*... Live in peace with one another. 14 And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men. 15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men. 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not quench the Spirit; 20 do not despise prophetic utterances. 21 But examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.*
- D. We must determine that we will serve the Lord (Jo. 24:15).  
*“...choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”*

#### V. **FIFTH, UN-CONFESSED SIN WILL KILL A CHURCH.**

- A. God is willing to forgive the sins of those who confess them (1Jn. 1:9).  
*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- B. God will not clear the guilty (Nah. 1:3).  
*The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished. In whirlwind and storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.*
- C. The story of Achan and “sin in the camp” (Jo. 7) should be a warning example to those in the church who will not confess and give up their sinful ways.
- D. The church has a responsibility to do something about those who will not repent (Rev. 2:20-21; 1Cor. 5:9-13).  
*(1Cor 5:9-13) I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; 10 I *did* not at all *mean* with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world. 11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within *the church*? 13 But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.*  
*(Rev 2:20-21) 'But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit *acts of* immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 'And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality.*
- E. If this is not done, shame will be brought on the church.

#### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. We have seen five areas in which we can kill the church.
- B. We review these things in the hope that such might be prevented.
- C. If you are involved in any or all of these, will you not repent so the glorious church of our Lord might live!
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.