

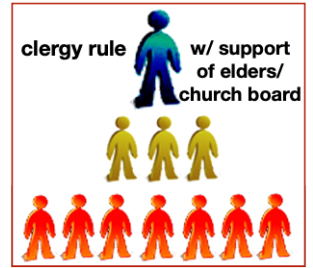
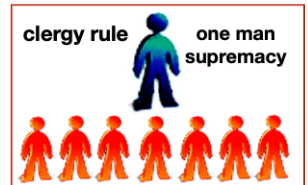
## Stop Living as the Gentiles Do, in the Futility of Their Thinking (Ephesians 4:17)

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Attached you'll find Spot On #21, *A Life Revolving Around Our Lord Jesus Is An Empowered Life!* Reliance on spiritual empowerment is one of the most distinguishing differences between the **Lordship-committed** and the **religiously-mired**. Spiritual empowerment is a key facet of our Lord's *division of labor* in His Kingdom. With the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit in a faith community, spiritual empowerment enables them to function as the body of Christ (1Corinthians 12:4-27; see also Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:24).

For a faith community to experience the body life of spiritual power, Nicolaitan domination must cease. Multiple centuries ago through the influence of the "Church Fathers", the preeminence of Nicolaitanism minimized or even eliminated the Lordship of Jesus in the life of His own. And today, the reality of spiritual empowerment that's given by the Holy Spirit has been erased from the daily lives of too many Christians. Consequently most do "Christian things" relying on their own effort — in other words, they are "**outcome-based**". Fixated on achieving a specific result, they're unable to be "**obedience-based**" under the Lordship of Jesus, guided and empowered by His Spirit each step of the way.

**Nicolaitan Domination**  
•abolishes Jesus's Lordship  
•quashes spiritual empowerment



*"How [we] wish [we] could change [our] tone...!"* (Galatians 4:20). This may sound strange, but there are times we wish we could just write "Christian fluff" – stuff that makes you feel good about your Christianity. But on our prayer walks each day the Holy Spirit never offers us ear-tickling pleasantries to share with you. These are sober and serious times for those who love and serve our Lord Jesus wholeheartedly. All we can do is ask you to confirm our writings with the Holy Spirit for yourself. What we've been writing in recent years may not seem compassionate to you. But we write what He tells us using the tone in which the message is given. We can feel the compassionate heart of our heavenly Father even in His sorrow over the widespread sin which so much of Christianity tolerates. We're saddened that so many often resist these Spirit-breathed revelations. Our Father is so willing to forgive *if* Christians would just repent – the most disagreeable action for most to take.

**Nicolaitan domination is vehemently opposed to spiritual power!**

*"having a form of godliness but having denied its power.*

*And from such people turn away!"* (2Timothy 3:5).

Consider this possibility. If spiritual empowerment had prevailed in Christianity from the time our Lord Jesus was on earth until now, how many more of the world's people would have repented and be living with Him as Lord of their lives? Why? Because every one of our Lord's followers would have been empowered to do their part as His body components! Sadly, though, the spiritual empowerment promised by Jesus to His followers for all generations is a key truth which Nicolaitan clergy have kept hidden from their "laity" (John 14:12; Acts 1:8; 2:38,39). Even many within the Charismatic/Pentecostal communities are as ignorant about knowing the gift(s) the Spirit apportions as are denominations who don't believe in them.

Not only does Nicolaitan dominance subvert spiritual power. The deceiving **spirit of religiosity** also keeps many Christians in the dark about how the Holy Spirit would empower them to serve. Consider the symptoms of the demonic stronghold of religiosity and ask yourself if these describe you, and/or, your faith community (from our book *Demolishing Strongholds*):

☠ **Religious Busyness** Intimate relationship with Jesus is non-existent; underlying attitude that you must earn God's love by what you do (Luke 10:38-41)

☠ **Knowledge Without Love** Extensive scripture expertise but no heart for those with whom you present biblical truths; "great zeal, no love" (Romans 10:2)

☠ **No Spiritual Power** No presence of the nature, character, or power of Jesus even after many years of religious practice (Revelation 3:1)

☠ **Spiritual Blindness** Unable to know the will of God or to receive guidance by His Spirit (Matthew 13:14,15)

☠ **Hypocritical** Expressing truths that tell others how to live but not "walking the talk" yourself (Mark 7:6)

☠ **Legalistic Perversion** Attempting to justify yourself before God by keeping His laws (Galatians 3:2,3)

☠ **Presumes on Grace** Calling yourself "Christian" but living in lawlessness; no evidence of the Holy Spirit in your way of life (1 John 3:8-10)

The combination of Nicolaitan domination and the stronghold of religiosity has caused the vast majority of Christians to live religiously-mired. Too often clergy use the Bible like a historical textbook. They leave out the spiritual empowerment that's available to every follower of Jesus to live out God's commands and to make Christ known in their daily lives. And the demon of religiosity keeps people from trusting the promises of spiritual power in God's Word.

**"You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate"** (Revelation 2:6).

During our first 8 years of sharing the Hebraic foundations, we conducted numerous seminars in a wide variety of congregations. However, in 2002 our heavenly Father commanded us to stop any and all support of Nicolaitanism. It was then that the Holy Spirit inspired us to write articles about Nicolaitan clergy domination. If you haven't previously read the devastating effects of Nicolaitan clergy in spawning the religiously-mired, please read: **•I Hate Nicolaitanism**; and/or **•God's Clergy-less Kingdom**.

The Hebraic Restoration has had no more success in changing Nicolaitanism than Jesus did in changing the power structure of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin. Vested interests of those who seek prestige in the Nicolaitan system keep it from being challenged and changed. All too often Nicolaitan clergy rely on intimidation and false accusations against those who confront its unscriptural position. In our workbook, **Demolishing Strongholds**, we quote a lamentable reality that applies to Nicolaitanism and the religiously-mired: **"Once a person is deceived, he does not recognize that he is deceived, because he has been deceived!"** It's time for Christians and clergy alike to turn to the **"Spirit of truth"** for the truth and the power of His grace to help us rid ourselves of futile thinking.

The clergy system in this nation is disintegrating even as Christians at large are showing that they are no different morally in their values and behavior than unbelievers are. Please consider carefully several insights which pertain to the very thing our God says He hates, **Nicolaitanism**:

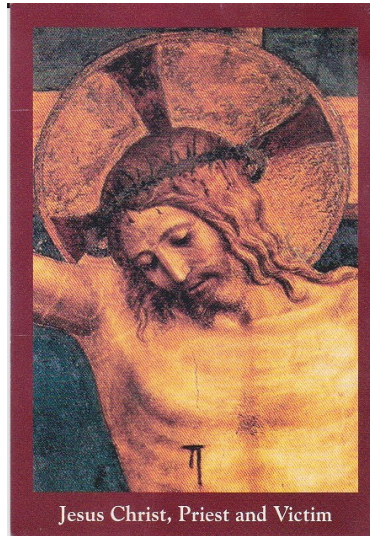
Here is the definition of Nicolaitanism in the Scofield Bible, 1967 edition: Nicolaitanism — from nikao, "to conquer;" and laos, "the people" or "laity." This [term] is referring to... a "priestly order" or "clergy" which divides Christians into "priests" and "laity."

The Southern Baptist convention, at that time representing nearly 10,000,000 members, demanded that the publisher of the Scofield Bible delete this particular footnote or they would withdraw their support of the Scofield Bible. For whatever reasons this footnote has been eliminated from subsequent editions. Presumably the "Nicolaitanism" whose practices and teachings God hates (Revelation 2:6,15) is deemed so unimportant by contemporary Christianity that it doesn't need to be

examined, defined, studied, or understood, much less "hated" by man... though it is very much "hated" by God. Something is very wrong here!

Consider this possibility. The Scofield Bible is probably the most widely used translation in the "Bible Belt." The most predominant denomination in that region is the Southern Baptists, who defrock clergy who teach the need for the Holy Spirit's power. Might there be a connection between the Nicolaitan support by the Southern Baptist religious leaders and the divorce rate in the Bible Belt which is 50% higher than the national average? We think there is.

As we were preparing the attached Spot On we came across a Roman Catholic prayer card that was entitled, "*Prayer for the Sanctification of the Clergy*".



Jesus Christ, Priest and Victim

"Divine Savior, Jesus Christ, who has entrusted the work of your redemption to priests as your representatives, I offer you through the hands of your most Holy Mother Mary, this present day, whole and entire, with all its prayers, works and sacrifices, its joys and sorrows, for your bishops, priests, deacons and those preparing for the priesthood. I pray especially for (N); protect him, Lord, and make him holy.

"Give us truly holy priests, inflamed with the fire of your divine love, who seek nothing but your greater glory and the salvation of souls. And you, Mary, good Mother of priests, protect all priests, bishops, deacons, and seminarians from dangers to their holy vocation, and with the loving hand of a mother, lead back to the Good Shepherd those unfortunate priests who, unfaithful to their exalted vocation, have gone astray. Amen."

Think about how this prayer represents an entire system of Nicolaitan dominance and idolatry. Over 30 years ago we reported a Roman Catholic survey of its various seminaries. At that time from 25% up to 75% of seminarians were practicing homosexuals preparing for the priesthood. Three decades ago the Catholic Church in the US had already spent over \$400 million in out-of-court settlements for sexual abuse by its clergy.

Notice that this prayer card describes our Lord as a "Victim", not as God's Son Who willingly died for us and triumphantly rose and is coming again in glory. And nowhere in God's Word is anyone to be prayed to except God. Quite the opposite, as praying to anyone besides God is idolatry which He detests! Picture this: An ecclesiastical system ordains a homosexual and then asks you to pray to Mary, the "good Mother of all priests", to lead back the "unfortunate priest" who may have sodomized and sexually abused countless numbers of vulnerable youth.

We wish we could say that Protestantism in general fares any better. By the late 1980s over 50% of Protestant clergy were actively involved in pornography, adultery or homosexuality. (We don't know what this statistic is today.) But when Mike counseled religious leaders back then, a number of their denominations covered over the sins of their clergy, stating, "If this got out, we would defame Jesus!" "If this got out people would leave us in droves!" And after meeting with the denominational leadership, Mike often found himself heading to the retreat center pasture, holding onto a fence post while he cried over their hypocrisy and self-serving posturing of Nicolaitanism.

Today, clergy sexual misconduct, past and present, headlines the news. Is there a connection? Sexual misconduct is the surface symptom of a deeper *spiritual adultery* in which God's Word has been altered to keep a particular class in power, lording over His people. This evil thing that God hates is now waning in influence — and rightly so! It's time for the priesthood of all who follow our Lord Jesus to take their place, empowered by His Spirit. Peter twice emphasizes that each follower of Jesus is part of a "holy priesthood", a "royal priesthood" (1Peter 2:5,9). For it is Jesus Who has made each of His own to collectively be "a kingdom, priests to God His Father" (Revelation 1:6).

A final thought for you to prayerfully consider: An essential criterion of Jesus for those who would serve His people in leadership is a servant's heart of humility. In sharp contrast, Nicolaitanism prizes clergy dominance over the "laity." Can it be that as our Father restores the Hebraic foundations of our Lord's first followers, He's allowing public exposure of the pornography/adultery/homosexuality among Protestant clergy and the pedophilia/homosexuality of Roman Catholic priests? We believe that the disclosure of these particular sins are signs of the unfolding judgment on the Nicolaitan system.

Please, if you're even a novice in being Lordship-committed, don't let yourself live deceived like the religiously-mired. We who purpose to live Lordship-committed by His grace live under the Lordship of Jesus, not under the dominance of man. We who live with Jesus as Lord of our lives realize that the Bible, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, tells us how to live. If it's commanded in God's Book, then we do it with the grace and empowerment of the Holy Spirit!

Mike & Sue