

A Lost Church

(Revelation 2-3)

- Introduction:
1. At one time, Paul had a close working relationship with the church of Ephesus, yet where is that church today?
 2. As a matter of fact, what happened to that church just 30 years later?
 3. The fact that a church is planted, does not mean that it will exist in perpetuity.
 4. Churches can be established, and churches can be lost.
 5. How do churches become lost, and what can we do to prevent it from happening?

I. Can A Church Be Lost?

- A. (Revelation 3:1) Sardis - Dead.
- B. (Revelation 2:16) Pergamos - Repent or I will fight against you with the sword.
- C. (Revelation 2:5; Acts 20:17-38) Ephesus - Repent or I will remove your candlestick.
- D. (Revelation 3:16) Laodicea - Lukewarm.
- E. Ills. Of newspaper ad "Attend the church of your choice, and feel good about it."
 1. What about the church of Satan?
- F. Is one church really as good as another?
 1. "Church Member's Handbook" by Joe T Odle, a Baptist preacher. "There are hundreds of denominations in the world today, teaching almost every conceivable kind of doctrine. They cannot all be right, for they do not all teach the same thing. Indeed, many of their teaching are in direct conflict, one church proclaiming a doctrine that another denies. Can both be right? If not, then the one that is right in its teaching must admittedly be better than the one that is wrong.
 2. A church established by man is not as good as a church established God.
 3. Churches that teach error are not as good as churches that teach truth.
 4. Churches that teach only part of the truth are not as good as those that teach all the truth.

II. How Can A Church Be Lost

- A. Indifference.
 1. One doesn't have to oppose the church to kill it. Neglect and indifference will get the job done just as well.
 2. Lack of evangelism (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21).
 3. Evangelism isn't a talent that one may or may not possess; it's a command.
- B. False Teaching.
 1. (1 Timothy 4:13,16).
 2. MDR, Worship, Terms of entrance into the church, etc.

3. (Matthew 15: 8-9).
- C. Worldliness
 1. (1 John 2:14-15).
 2. (1 Thessalonians 4:3).
 3. Ills. Of preacher who said to quit saying “no” to youth, and teach them forgiveness.
 4. (Titus 2:11-12).
 5. (Hebrews 12:14) Pursue holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

III. How Can We Prevent The Church From Being Lost?

- A. Realize what is at stake (Matthew 16:26).
- B. Love God more than life itself (Psalms 63:3; Revelation 12:11).
- C. Defend and Follow the truth (Jude 3; Philippians 1:17).

- Conclusion:
1. Whether the church in your locality is “lost” or not, largely depends upon you.
 2. What are you doing to keep it alive and healthy?