

# Guarding against Apostasy

1. What apostasy is
2. Which biblical time we are in
3. What we need to do

# Apostasy

- **Desertion of one's faith or religion**
- **Forsaking of the belief to which one had previously adhered**
- **Rebellion against the truth**



# Apostasy

- **It's all around us**
  - Author and Former Pastor John Harris
  - Hillsong's Marty Sampson
  - Pro-choice Christians
  - LGBTQ
  - Etc.
- **It will increase as we approach the end of the church age**



# The Age of the Gentiles

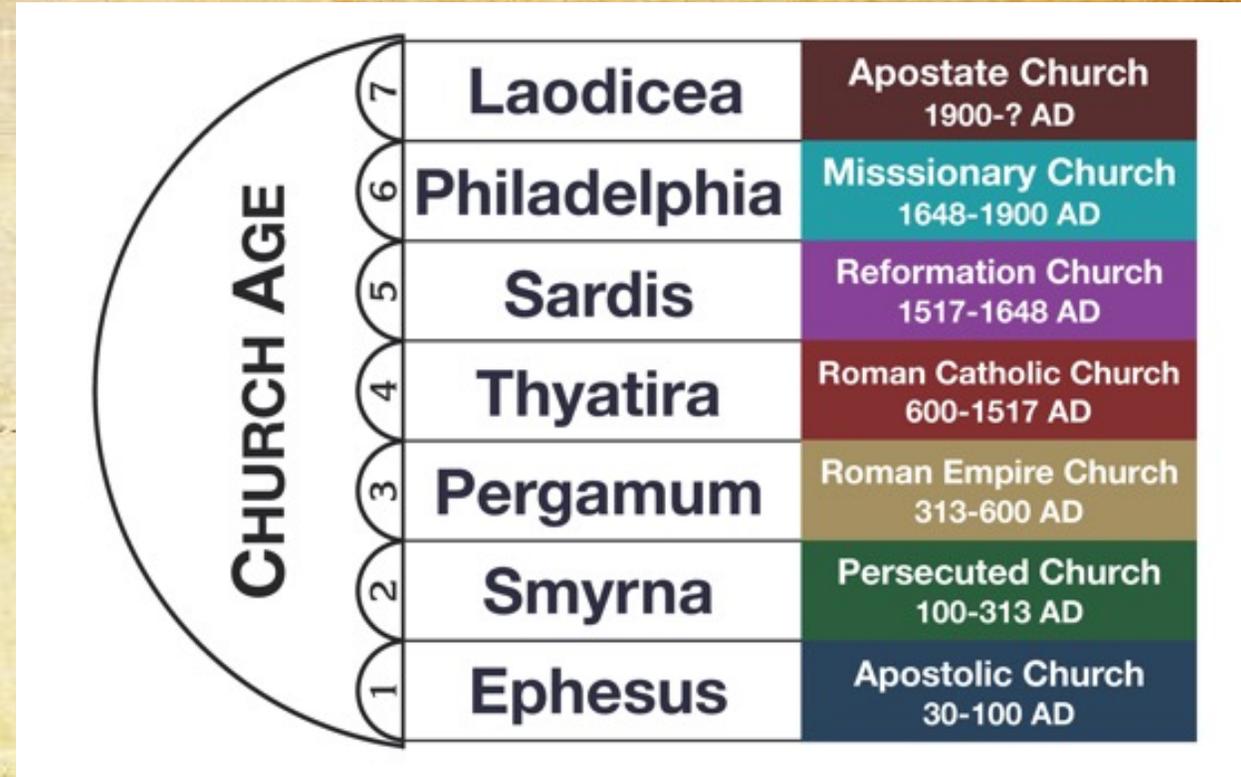
What caused it?

- **The Jews accepted the Mosaic covenant (Ex 19:5-8) which required absolute adherence**
  - Applied to current and all future generations
  - The Mosaic covenant was conditional (If / Then)
    - 613 laws and instructions
  - Blessings (Deut 28: 1-14) (**14** verses)
  - Curses (Deut 28: 15-68) (**53** verses)
- **The Jews did not keep the covenant and thus received the curses**
- **The Age of the Gentiles began when the Gentiles began to rule the Jews**



# When is the Church Age? Which Period Are We In?

- The Age of the Gentiles began in 586 B.C, when the Babylonians destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem
- It will end at the Second Coming when Jesus begins his reign on Earth
- The Church Age began at Pentecost
- The last stage of the Age of the Gentiles
- We are in the last period of the Church Age - Laodicea



The book of Revelation describes times from the Church Age to the new Earth

Rev 1:19 "Write, therefore, **what you have seen**, **what is now** and **what will take place later**

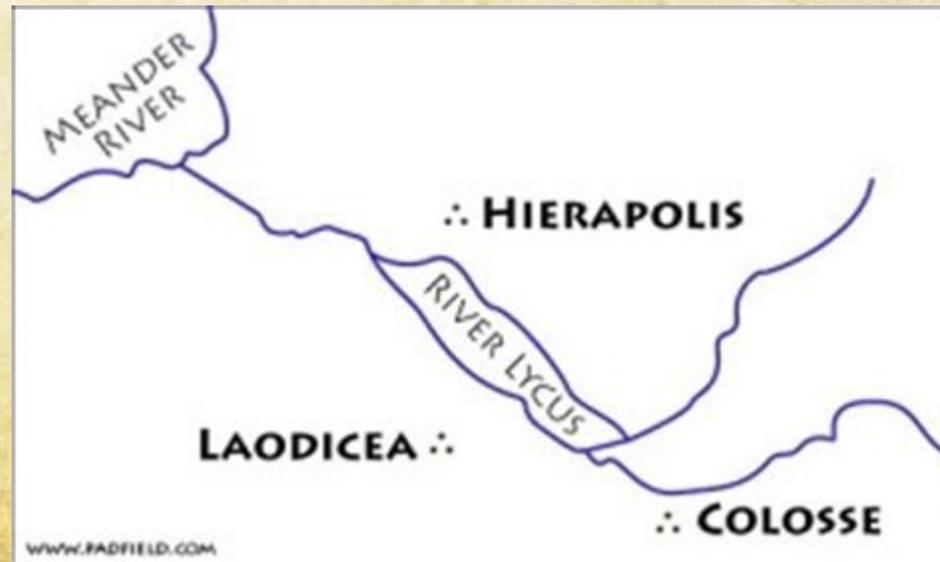
# Letters to the Churches

- Revelations records letters to the 7 churches
- Each church represented both a church types and a church periods
- Each church received a letter

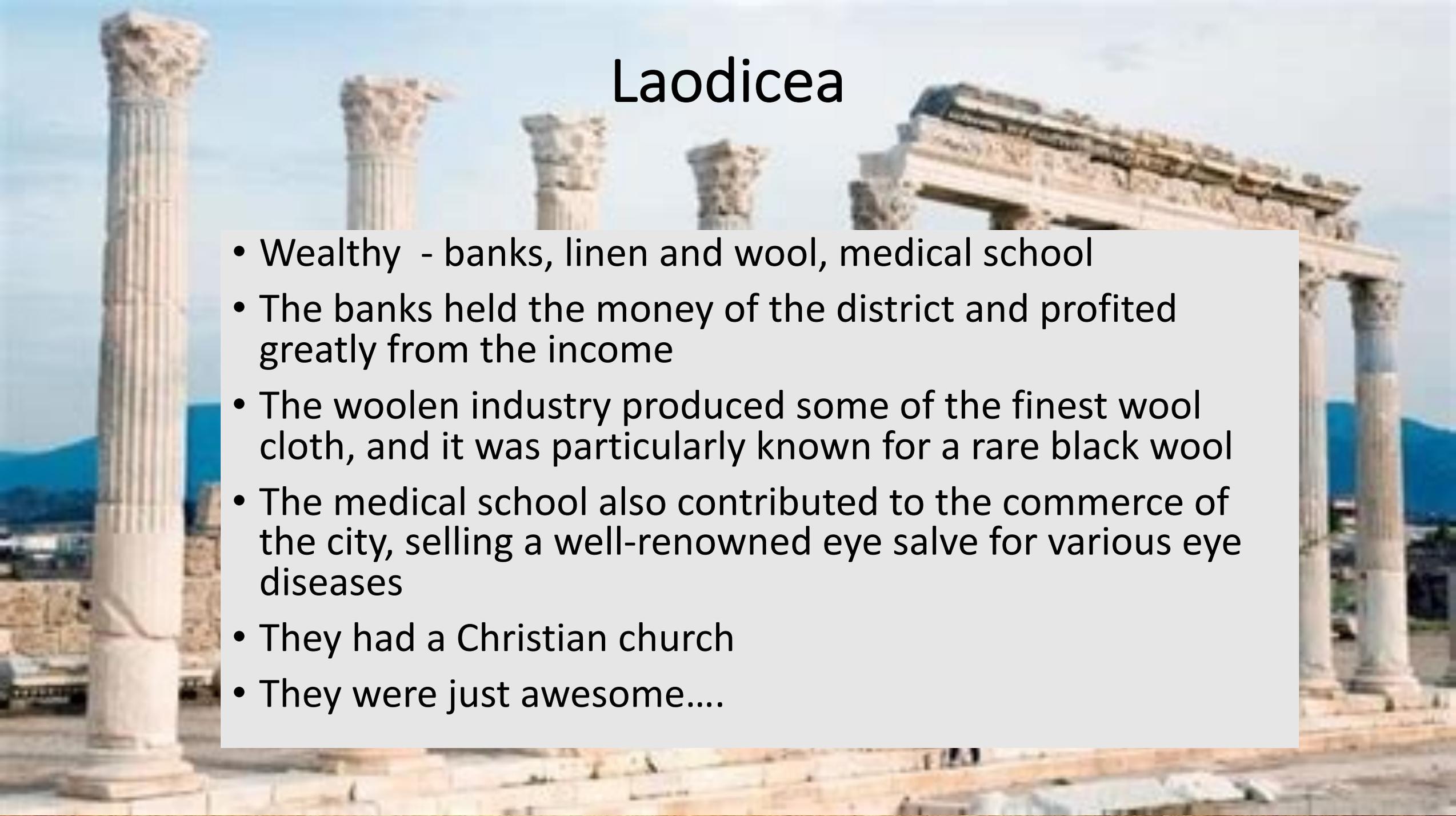


# Laodicea

- The last letter to the churches was for Laodicea
- Located in a valley where a freshwater river and sulfurous water river joined. The water downstream was undrinkable – it made one vomit.



# Laodicea



- Wealthy - banks, linen and wool, medical school
- The banks held the money of the district and profited greatly from the income
- The woolen industry produced some of the finest wool cloth, and it was particularly known for a rare black wool
- The medical school also contributed to the commerce of the city, selling a well-renowned eye salve for various eye diseases
- They had a Christian church
- They were just awesome....

# Revelation 3:14-22

**<sup>14</sup>“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:**

**These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. <sup>15</sup>I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! <sup>16</sup>So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup>You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. <sup>18</sup>I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.**

**<sup>19</sup> Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. <sup>20</sup>Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.**

**<sup>21</sup> To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. <sup>22</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”**



# Laodicea

(This is the church in our time)

- **The only letter that has no commendation**
- **Jesus looks at their works; says the people (not their works) are neither hot nor cold**
- **He spits (vomits) them out of his mouth**
- **He admonishes them for thinking they are rich and need nothing**
- **He says they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked**
- **Wake-up call!**



# Laodicea

(This is the church in our time)

- **Wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked**
- **Naked = lacking Christ's atoning covering (wool and linen)**
- **Blindness = inability to see spiritual truth (eye salve)**
- **Wretchedness = unclean state of unbeliever**
- **Spiritual poverty = Failure to share in the riches of Christ in the Kingdom (wealthy)**
- **Jesus says the church is full of unbelievers**



# What to do to guard against apostasy

- Jesus commended the church in Philadelphia for keeping His word and not denying His name
- ***Rev. 3:8: I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.***
  - **Keep His Word**
  - **Do Not Deny His Name**



# What to do

- **Spiritual faithfulness:** illustrated by Paul's last-days exhortations (1 Thess. 5:8-11, 15-24).
- **Patient endurance:** during trials and tribulations (1 Cor. 9:24-27, 10:5-8, 11-13; Heb. 10:23-27).
- **Determined devotion:** "But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God while you are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which leads to eternal life" (Jude 1:20-21).



# Primary Essentials

**Nature and work of Christ – Cannot deny and be Christian since they are explicitly stated as required in scripture.**

1. Jesus is both God and man ([John 1:1,14;8:24](#); [Col. 2:9](#); [1 John 4:1-4](#)).
2. Jesus rose from the dead physically ([John 2:19-21](#)).
3. Salvation is by grace through faith ([Rom. 5:1](#); [Eph. 2:8-9](#); [Gal. 5:1-5](#)).
4. The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus ([1 Cor. 15:1-4](#); [Gal. 1:8-9](#)).
5. There is only one God ([Exodus 20:1-3](#); [Isaiah 43:10](#); [44:6,8](#))



# Secondary Essentials

**Nature of God - Cannot deny and be Christian.**

**1. God exists as a Trinity of persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

**2. Virgin Birth of Jesus – relates to the incarnation of Christ as God and man.**



# Primary Non-Essentials

**Bible, Church ordinances, and practice – Denial does not void salvation, yet principles are clearly taught in scripture. Denial suggests apostasy.**

- 1. Male eldership and pastorate ([1 Tim. 2:12-13](#); [3:15](#); [Titus 1:5-7](#))**
- 2. Fidelity in marriage in heterosexual relationships ([1 Cor. 6:9](#))**
- 3. The condemnation of homosexuality ([Rom. 1:26-27](#))**
- 4. Inerrancy of Scripture ([2 Tim. 3:16](#))**

# Secondary Non-Essentials

**Does not affect one's salvation relationship with God. Debated within Christianity. Denial or acceptance does not suggest apostasy. Baptism for adults or infants**

- 1. Predestination, election, and free will**
  - 2. Communion every week, monthly, or quarterly, etc.**
  - 3. Saturday or Sunday Worship**
  - 4. Worship with or without instruments, traditional or contemporary.**
  - 5. Pretribulation rapture, mid-tribulation rapture, post-tribulation rapture.**
  - 6. Premillennialism, amillennialism, and postmillennialism.**
  - 7. Continuation or cessation of the charismatic gifts**
  - 8. Etc.**
- 