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Dear Friend:

What is "the synagogue of Satan"? Many readers have sent us this question. You read of the "synagogue of Satan" in Revelation 2:9: "I know," spoke Jesus Christ, "the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN."

The common idea is that this verse is referring to so-called "International Jewry" -- that is, Gentiles masquerading as Jews.

This is not true!

Let's notice the Bible's own interpretation of this mysterious verse, not Hitler's interpretation as found in Mein Kampf, which so many want to believe.

Notice, this is a synagogue of Satan. A "synagogue" is merely the Hebrew word for "church." Then Jesus is NOT speaking of a race, but of a church that belongs to the Devil!

This church claims that its members are spiritually Jews. Why? Because Jesus said: "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

"He is a Jew," wrote Paul, "which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:29). Prior to conversion, Jews and Gentiles are both of their father, the Devil. That does not, however, mean that they are necessarily part of the church or synagogue of Satan.

So here is a church made up of Gentiles, falsely claiming salvation, falsely claiming to be Jews inwardly, masquerading herself as a "Christian" Church. And notice, this false church was already developing in the days of the Apostle John -- it had its congregations already in the city

of Smyrna and in Philadelphia, in Asia Minor (Rev. 2:9; 3:9) -- beside congregations in many other cities as we read in I John 2:18-19: ". . . you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come . . . They went out from us, but they were not of us . . . (R.S.V.). Notice that the spirit of antichrist -- the teaching of the synagogue of Satan -- was found in those who left the true Church of God, who departed from the faith, who claimed they were still Jews inwardly but who LIE. The synagogue of Satan refers to the great apostacy that occurred at the close of the apostolic age, the apostacy which gave rise to the host of denominations we have today -- a great mother church and her daughter churches (Rev. 17).

This is not speaking of the Jews who rejected Christ long before the book of Revelation was written. They were never a part of the true Church of God. But the synagogue of Satan -- the church that follows the teachings of antichrist -- that church or synagogue DID DEPART OUT OF THE TRUE CHURCH!

Even though those who are Jews by birth (Gal. 2:15) have made proselytes from the Gentiles (Esth. 8:17), that is not what the synagogue of Satan refers to. Many Gentiles are made citizens of America and Britain (the descendants of the house of Joseph), the same as many Gentiles have been brought into Judah -- but that does not make them part of the "synagogue of Satan." That is not what Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 are referring to. The "synagogue of Satan" is not referring to a race but to that great church and her daughter churches who falsely profess to be "Christian" -- Jews inwardly!

LETTER ANSWERING DEPARTMENT