



LOVE OTHERS

Revelation 2:1-3:22 / 7 Letters to 7 Churches

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Homework

1. This past week, did you read Revelation 2 & 3 out loud? (40 points)
2. This past week, did you share what you learned from the study with someone else? (60 points)
3. This past week, did you read Revelation 1-22 out loud? (extra credit = 100 points)

Easy warm-up question (which is strangely might be related to the text and topic...)

1. What is one thing you are looking forward to?

As you move through the passage, consider each church in order by reading the text and answering the questions before moving to the next church. First answer the general questions and then the specific question given below each church.

General discussion questions for each church:

1. What stands out to you in Jesus' description of Himself?
2. What is Jesus' message to the church?
3. These days, in what ways can you relate and/or not relate to where the church is spiritually at?

Ephesus (2:1-7) - the backsliding church

What would you say characterizes your relationship with Jesus: backsliding neglect or passion?

Smyrna (2:8-11) - the persecuted church

In the drama of your life are you living by fear or by faith in Jesus?

Pergamum (2:12-17) - the compromising church

Is God's Word the One authoritative truth that dictates how you live your life?

Thyatira (2:18-29) - the seduced church

Does your life look increasingly like the culture around us or increasingly like Jesus?

Sardis (3:1-6) - the complacent church

Are you resting on what was or are you desiring what more Jesus may have for you to do for Him?

Philadelphia (3:7-13) - the favored church

How are you doing at holding fast to your faith in Jesus?

Laodicea (3:14-22) - the lukewarm church

Is the door to your heart open to Jesus?

Bonus Questions

1. In thinking through your responses to the specific questions (listed under each church) what might the Holy Spirit be saying to you about your relationship with Jesus?
2. How will you respond to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you?
3. How might today's study help you to become more dependent on Jesus?

Homework

1. This week, share what you've learned from this study with someone else.
2. Extra Credit: Read ahead - Revelation 4:1-11 (out loud)
3. Extra Extra Credit: Read Revelation 1-22 (out loud)

SEVEN LETTERS TO SEVEN CHURCHES / Revelation 2-3

CHURCH	CHRIST	COMMENDATION	CONDEMNATION	CHALLENGE	CONSEQUENCE	COVENANT	CHURCH PERIOD*
EPHESUS 2:1-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding 7 stars in right hand • Walking among churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows their works • Patient endurance • Cannot bear with those who are evil • Tested false apostles • Hate Nicolaitans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandoned first love 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember from where fallen • Repent • Repeat first works • Hear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and Jesus will grant to eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God 	<p><u>The Backslidden Church</u> 70 to 170 AD Loss of first love</p>
SMYRNA 2:8-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and last • Resurrected • Guarantor of resurrection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual wealth in midst of tribulation and physical poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not fear • Be faithful to the end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and not be hurt by the second death • The Crown of Life 	<p><u>The Persecuted Church</u> 170 to 312 AD Persecuted by Judaizing teachers and rulers</p>
PERGAMUM 2:12-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two edged sword 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding fast to Christ's name • Not deny faith 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idolatry • Sexual immorality • Hold teaching of Nicolaitans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War against them with sword of Christ's mouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and receive hidden manna, white stone, with new name 	<p>A Licentious Church 312 to 606 AD Union of Church and state under Constantine</p>
THYATIRA 2:18-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyes like flame of fire • Feet like burnished bronze • Judge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love and faith and service and patient endurance • Increasing good works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerate Jezebel (teachings & practices, tolerate heresy) • Sexual immorality • Idolatry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold fast to what you have until Jesus returns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children struck dead • Payment according to their works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and receive authority over the nations, rulership, the morning star 	<p>A Lax Church 606 to 1520 AD Permission and practice of pernicious doctrines that seduce God's servants</p>
SARDIS 3:1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Seven Spirits of God and the Seven Stars • Wise and sovereign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation for being alive but spiritually dead • Incomplete works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wake up / watch • Strengthen what remains • Remember and keep what received and heard • Repent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come like thief against them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and walk with Jesus in white • Name never blotted out of Book of Life • Jesus will confess name before the Father and angels 	<p>A Dead Church 1520 to 1750 AD The form of godliness without the power of godliness</p>
PHILADELPHIA 3:7-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy • True • Has key of David • Sovereign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kept Christ's word • Not denied Christ's name • Fidelity with little 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold fast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Judaizers bow before them • Humiliation of enemies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and be made a pillar in God's temple • Honor and identity 	<p>A Favored Church 1750 to 1900 AD Highly favored in evangelistic and missionary work</p>
LAODICEA 3:14-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Amen • Faithful and True witness • Beginning of God's creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lukewarm service • Delusional about true spiritual state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find true riches in Christ - go to Him for what you need • Be zealous • Repent • Let Jesus in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spit out of Jesus' mouth • Reproof and discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquer and sit with Jesus on His throne 	<p>A Lukewarm Church 1900 to ??? Christ outside the church Spiritually neither hot or cold</p>

* The interpretation of these seven churches as being symbolic of periods of Church history is dispensational in origin. The seven churches are seen as having characteristics typical of the character of the Church of Christ from the end of the First Century down to the time of Christ's return for His Church. They are seen as descriptive of "the things which are" (Revelation 1:19). While only God can be certain as to the veracity of this interpretation, it is intriguing and carries weight which makes it worthy of consideration and response. For a more detailed discussion of the subject (text and charts), please see: Rev. Charles Larkin, *Dispensational Truth or God's Plan and Purpose in the Ages* (Charles Larkin Estate, Glendale, PA, 1920), pages 128-132.