

The Seven Churches

Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7)

Jesus, who holds the seven stars and walks among the seven lampstands, calls His church to love people, not just truth, even as it speaks out against evil. The sin is leaving its first love of Jesus!

Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11)

Jesus, who is the first and the last, who died and came to life, calls His church to be realistic, not pessimistic nor optimistic serving on the spiritual battlefield. The sin is being fearful and not fruitful.

Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17)

Jesus, who wields the sharp two-edged sword, calls His church to not corrupt its worship with the world's wisdom and ways. The sin is compromising the cross with comfort thru prosperity gospel.

Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29)

Jesus, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like burnished bronze, calls His church to boldly confess Him as the only Savior from God's wrath. The sin is inclusivity that is exclusive of Jesus.

Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6)

Jesus, who has the seven spirits of God and seven stars, calls His church to wake up and get to work serving in the Kingdom. The sin is living in the past but being spiritually dead in the present.

Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)

Jesus, the holy and true One, who has the key of David, calls His church to walk by faith thru the doors He opens to bear fruit for the Kingdom. The sin is disobeying Jesus' calling and commands.

Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)

Jesus, the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the source of God's creation, calls His church to repent of its contentment within the world. The sin is a lukewarm faith that is of no use to Jesus.

The Seven Letters

Purpose of the Letters

The seven churches faced specific temptations that could lead them away from their faith, especially in the time of trial. In these letters Jesus is preparing His church militant of the 1st century (and 21st century) for the spiritual battle, and promises His power, protection, and presence for the prophetic message of Revelation.

Each Letter from Jesus has a Similar Structure

1. Jesus addresses the church
2. Jesus describes Himself in meaningful ways
3. Jesus provides praise for good works (except Laodicea)
4. Jesus warns His church of deadly sin
5. Jesus calls His church to repentance
6. Jesus promises blessing to "the one who conquers"
7. Jesus calls His church to "hear what the Spirit says"

Other Features of the Seven Letters

- The number seven symbolizes completeness and signifies Jesus' message is for the church militant in all generations.
- The star symbolizes both the church's guardian angel as well as the local pastor who is the messenger of Jesus.
- The lampstand symbolizes the church as the vessel for Jesus' presence and light (Jesus is the light of the world)
- The sin cited in each of the seven churches is progressive in nature and builds upon each other: (1) leaving first love of Jesus; (2) fearful instead of fruitful; (3) compromise the cross with comfort (4) inclusivity that is exclusive of Jesus (5) spiritually asleep and dead; (6) disobey Jesus' call and commands to advance His Kingdom; (7) end up with a lukewarm faith of no use to Jesus...which He spits out!

