

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 2/21-22/2022 *Revelation Chapter 2*

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

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OPENING PRAYER

Review of key verses in Chapter 1 – (Rev 1:1) *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

(Rev 1:3) Blessed is he *who reads and those who hear* the words of this prophecy, and *keep those things* which are written in it; for the time is near.

(Rev 1:7-8) Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. [8] "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

(Rev 1:11) saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

(Rev 1:19) Write the things *which you have seen*, and the things *which are*, and the things *which will take place after this*.

Rev 1:20 *The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.*

THE BIG PROPHETIC PICTURE:

As we compare the Book of Revelation with other biblical prophecies, these basic patterns emerge:

1. **The Church will continue to grow,**
2. **Satanic opposition will intensify.**
3. **Israel will return to the Promised Land.**
4. **The Church will be raptured to heaven.**
5. **Judgments of the tribulation period will follow.**
6. **The Marriage of Christ and the Church.**
7. **The Triumphal return of Christ.**
8. **The Millennial Kingdom.**
9. **The Final triumph.**
10. **Eternal state.**

Revelation Chapter 2 – The Loveless Church - (vs. 1-7); The Persecuted Church – (vs. 8-11); The Compromising Church - (vs. 12-17); The Corrupt Church - (vs. 18-23).

CHAPTER 2 - THEME: The Church in the world. Revelation chapter 2. John was to send the letters to the seven churches of Asia. He was commanded to write the **things which he had seen**, the **things which are** and the **things which will be after** these things. As he writes to the seven churches, actually Jesus dictates to John His messages to the seven churches. In each of the messages, there is a common format.



- **First, there is a description of Himself**, taken from Chapter 1.
- Then the letters **are each addressed to the angel** of the church. The word, angel, means messenger. It could be taken to mean the pastors of the various churches.
- To each church, **Jesus declares His knowledge of their works.**
- To each church, **there is a word of commendation as well as a word of condemnation** with the exception: **No words of condemnation to Smyrna, or to Philadelphia! No words of commendation to Laodicea.**
- To each of the churches, **there is an exhortation for the people who have an ear to hear what the Spirit would say to the church.**
- To each of the churches **there is a special promise to those who will overcome!** There is that common format, or thread, that we'll find running through the messages to the seven churches.

To the Church in Ephesus – Preoccupied, loveless! – Repent! Return! Repeat!

Rev 2:1 *"To the angel (messenger) of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:*

- **In the vision of Christ in Chapter 1, John sees Him walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands and holding the seven stars in His right hand.** In verse 20, the Lord explains that the *seven golden lampstands are the seven churches*, and the *stars are the angels (messengers) of those churches*, or the pastors of those churches. It is comforting to know He's holding them in His right hand! We find in Chapter 1 this description of Jesus, which He picks up, identifying Himself as the author of this letter to the church of Ephesus.

Rev 2:2 *"I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;*

- **The commendation to the church in Ephesus, is their works, their labor, their patience.** These are great traits within a church, a church that is working for the Lord! Now, we do understand that it is not by our works that we are made righteous. It's not by our works that we are saved. But it is also true that when a person is genuinely saved, the evidence of that salvation will be manifested in their works.
- **And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars. Another commendation!** There was **no compromise** in the Ephesus church. They **would not tolerate** those that were evil. One of the weaknesses of the church today is the fact that we have begun tolerating evil, evil practices! We are under tremendous pressure to accept and to receive ungodly, unscriptural practices by people, forcing us to acknowledge and to recognize their rights to be evil. Unfortunately, as we move down in the history of the church, we will find those churches that did compromise on this very issue.
- **You have tested those!** They are a **discerning church**, examining those who said that they were apostles and were not. They did not accept a person because of what they proclaimed to be but put them to the test to make sure that they were indeed what they proclaimed they were.

Rev 2:3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

- **From an outward observance, it was a well-organized, functioning church.** It seemed like everything was in order. Looking at it, one would say, "My, that is really a great church! Look at their works. Look at their labor, without becoming weary! Look at all that they are doing, their social work and the influence they are in the community.

Rev 2:4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first (best) love.

- **Yet, the Lord said that even though** they had all of the motions, they were lacking the vital, most-important emotion. *You have left your first love! (Jer 2:2) Thus says the LORD: "I remember you, The kindness of your youth, The love of your betrothal, When you went after Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown.*
- **You can be so busily involved in the things of the Lord.** You can be making such tremendous sacrifices, but Paul declares (1Co 13:2) *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*
- **The greatest characteristic of the Christian life is love!** There's nothing that excels love! God is love. God has commanded us to love Him with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength. He has commanded us to love one another even as He has loved us! In whatever service I render to God, what works I do for God, behind them all must be the motivation of love!
- **When we stand before Jesus Christ, as Christians, to be judged,** our works will be judged of what sort or manner they are. Basically, what we will be judged for is the motivation behind our works. Often, we do things, that from the outward, it looks very magnanimous. It looks like we're such wonderful, gracious people. But it could be that within our hearts as we are doing these things, with an entirely wrong motive! We may be doing it in order to receive glory and praise from man.
- **Paul said, (2Co 5:14) For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;** It is that compelling love of Jesus Christ so that I do not look upon the things that I do as sacrifice. I do not look upon them as work. I look upon them as a privilege, a joy, a blessing to be able to do things for my Lord, who loves me so much! We are exhorted in whatsoever we do in word of deed, to do all for the glory of Jesus Christ!
- **No longer motivated by love - that was the problem in Ephesus!** The works, the labor, the patience, it wasn't motivated any longer by love. Other motivations had crept in. The Lord speaks to correct this situation in Ephesus.
- **You have left your first love!** Notice, the Lord didn't say you have lost your first love. You don't lose it. You leave it.

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works (repeat), or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

- **First, we must remember,** literally "keep on remembering," what we have lost and cultivate a desire to regain that close communion once again.

- **Then we must repent** — change our minds — and confess our sins to the Lord, *(1Jn 1:9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- **Third, we must repeat** the first works, which suggests restoring the original fellowship that was broken by our sin and neglect. For the believer, this means prayer, Bible reading and meditation, obedient service, and worship. How much do I love the things of the world?
- **Or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.** In Chapter 1. "Jesus was walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands." What Jesus is threatening here is that unless they came back to that first love, again works motivated by love rather than the sense of duty.
- **A loving relationship with Him rather than a legal relationship** with Him. He wants nothing to do with a legal relationship. He never wants you to feel duty bound, that I've got to do this or that, for the Lord. But I desire to do this for the Lord because I love Him so much! Those are the works that the Lord is looking for, those that flow forth from the overflowing love of your heart and life for Him.

Rev 2:6 *But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

- **Just what are the deeds of the Nicolaitans?** Often a group gets its name, and the name describes the actions of that group. The word Nicolaitan is made up of two Greek words. *Niko*, which is the priest. Laity or *laitan*, which is the laity or the priesthood over the laity. The establishing of a priesthood, which separates the laity from direct access to God.
- **Now, the Lord said that they hated that. He said He hated it too.** The priesthood was a part of the Old Testament arrangement when God was not approachable by sinful man. The priest would approach God for the people with the sacrifices, then he would come out from the Holy of Holies to pronounce God's blessings upon the people. He was God's representative to the people. He was the people's representative to God. He was a mediator. He was a go between.
- **But Jesus by His death abolished the priesthood.** Now, *(1Ti 2:5) For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.* He died in order to give you direct access to the Father! Now, He hates anyone who would come in between you and the Father, that your approach to God would have to be through some person. *(Joh 14:6) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*
- **We see the priesthood had already begun to be established.** We'll find it when we get to the church of Pergamos. That early in the church this idea of special holy men who can and would intercede to God for you, becoming an intermediary between you and God. That is not to be! The Ephesians did not accept that. In fact, they hated that. Jesus said He also hated it!

Rev 2:7 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes (nikao -To win in the face of obstacles, be victor, conquer, prevail); I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

- **Then the special promise to the overcomers.** We have the definition of an overcomer in (1Jn 5:4) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith). Basically, any and every believer is an overcomer!
- **With each special promise to each of the seven churches, there is the Lord's promise, "I will!** Here, to the Ephesians, *To him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*
- **In Genesis, after Adam and Eve had sinned and were driven out of the garden,** God put the cherubim at the gate to protect the garden from Adam and Eve intruding back into the garden and eating of that tree that they should have eaten of, had they not sinned and been separated from God. But here we see that all believers (overcomers) will be granted to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. This is described further in Revelation, Chapter 20.
- **The seven churches represent periods of church history.** From a historic viewpoint, the church of Ephesus was the original apostolic church. It is interesting how that church history is not reflective of what God wanted His church to be. You cannot study the history of the church and find God's purposes being fulfilled by the church. The overall history of the church is a history of failure to be and to do what God would have the church to be.
- **John is writing in about the year 96 A.D.** He is the last surviving apostle. All of the rest of them had already been martyred. This is only around fifty years after the birth of the church. Already, we

see the problems that have begun to develop. To five of the seven churches, He's calling for repentance.

- **To see what God intended for the church, you have to study the Book of Acts**, where we see the church as God intended. It is interesting to note that the church of the book of Acts did reach the whole world with the gospel of Jesus Christ: Paul wrote to the Colossians about thirty years after the birth of the church, (*Col 1:6a*) *which has come to you, as it has also in all the world.*

To the Church in Smyrna – Persecuted Church, No Condemning! – Do Not Fear Persecution! Be Faithful to Death, receive Crown of Life!

Rev 2:8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

- **Moving on the church of Smyrna, historically** we are dealing with that period of great persecution that ended in the year 315 with Constantine's edict of toleration. From about 100 to 315 A.D., the church was under severe persecution by the Roman government. Foxe in his Book of Martyrs estimates that there were five million Christians who suffered martyrdom for their faith in Jesus Christ. Reading this yearly or so, is highly recommended. It reminds one of the glorious heritage that we have. Those men and women, and children, who gave their lives for their witness and testimony of Jesus Christ, in the threat of death and dying.
- **Smyrna is the modern-day Izmir, Turkey.** It has a beautiful seaport. It is about 35 miles north of Ephesus. It was and is today one of the great cities in Turkey. A great city, but the church in Smyrna was to undergo great persecution!
- **As Jesus addresses the church in Smyrna, He identifies Himself as *the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life.*** Because they are going to face martyrdom, with many being put to death for their faith, Jesus identifies Himself with them who was put to death, but the hope of the resurrection, was dead and is alive. He said to His disciples, "Because I live, you too shall live." (John 14:19) So, we to have that hope of the resurrection. This church that will under-go heavy persecution, martyrdom, is given the example and promise of Jesus, who is *the first and the last.* There was nothing before Him. There will be nothing after Him. *He is the First and the last! The Alpha and the Omega! The beginning, the end!*

Rev 2:9 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

- ***I know your works, tribulation, and poverty.*** Most of the Christians were slaves in the early church. If a wealthy person embraced Christianity, the government would take their property and their wealth from them.
- ***(but you are rich);*** You can't really measure your riches by your bank account. The true measure of riches are kept in heaven. The treasure that you've laid up in heaven. There are the true riches because they are the eternal riches. When we die we will leave everything of the material realm here. Some people who have been rich on earth will be paupers in heaven. (*Mat 6:19*) *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;*
- ***Much of the persecution of the early church came from and was prompted by the Jews.*** Paul the apostle was constantly being plagued by the Jews who stirred up all kinds of problems for him. Wherever he went with the gospel they would come. They would stir up dissent and disorder. But Jesus said, ***"They are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.***
- ***Paul said, (Rom 9:6b) For they are not all Israel who are of Israel.*** Just being an earthly descendant of Jacob doesn't make you true Israel. The word, Israel, means to be governed by God. Unless your life is governed by God, you're not really Israel, though you may be a descendant of Jacob. There are those Jews today that have rediscovered that Jesus is the Messiah. They are true Jews because they are following the promises and the prophesies of the Old Testament scriptures of the Messiah that would come and take away the sins.

Rev 2:10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

- ***Then Jesus' promise and commendation to the church at Smyrna! Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.*** This

tribulation for ten days is thought to refer to the ten emperors of Rome that instigated and carried out the great persecution against the church. There was Nero from 64 to 68. Paul was beheaded under his reign. There was Domitian from 95 to 96. This is the emperor that exiled John to the island of Patmos. There was Trajan, 98 to 117. During his reign, Ignatius was burned at the stake. There was Marcus Aurelius from 161 to 180. Under his rule, Polycarp was martyred. There was Severus from 200 to 211. Maximinus from 235 to 237. Decius from 250 to 253. Valerian from 257 to 260. Aurelian, 270 to 275. And the worst of all was Diocletian from 303 to 313, and of course, at his death there was the relief from persecution under Constantine.

Rev 2:11 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."* (Rev 20:6, 14;21:8) *Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. [14] Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. [21:8] But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

- **If you're born twice, you'll die once** unless you're alive when the rapture takes place. Then you'll never die! **But if you're only born once, you'll die twice!** When we get to the chapter 20 of this book, we will see the great White Throne of God. Those, whose names are not found written in the book of life will be cast into Gehenna (Lake of Fire, Outer darkness). It says this is the second death. The final disposition of the unrighteous dead! But those who have been faithful to the Gospel will receive the crown of life. For those martyred for Jesus or those who die in Christ those who have been born again by the Spirit of God, the second death will have no power over them!

To the Church in Pergamum – Political, Compromising Church, No distinction between Religion and Politics – Repent, Don't Compromise!

- **The church of Pergamos is the state church that was developed by Constantine.** It was one of the most tragic periods of church history because here is where the world became a part of the church. They began to almost legislate Christianity making it a state religion. With that marriage came a lot of evil and a lot of problems.

Rev 2:12 *"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: has the sharp two-edged sword (ramphia-long, heavy, smiting sword - brings a fatal blow, in judgment):"*

- **This is a description of Jesus again in chapter one** and the word that went out of His mouth, a sharp two-edged sword. The word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. When He says the sharp sword, you know that we are going to be dealing with judgment, the cutting away.

Rev 2:13 *"I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells."*

- **I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is.** Pergamos was a very luxurious city, filled with temples to the pagan gods. Most of the pagan religions involved Satanic worship. After the conquering of Babylon by the Persians in 487 BC, the Babylonian religion of Satan moved to Pergamos and from there to Rome. Here, in the book of Revelation, we see mention that Satan's seat was in Pergamos, because Babylonian priests practiced their religion there. From Pergamos, the Babylonian religion came to Rome in 133 B.C.
- **And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.** There, we have commendations from Jesus. They held to the name of Jesus, even though persecution often drives religion to seek powers as a means of protection and self-preservation. **And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith.** They did believe in Jesus that He was the Son of God. These are pluses.

Rev 2:14 *But I have a few things against you, because you have there, those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. (Act 15:29 - first church council) that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.*

- **The doctrine of Balaam.** When Balaam could not curse the children of Israel who were coming through the land of Moab, the king of Moab, Balak said to Balaam, "I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the LORD has kept you back from honor." But Balaam greedy for rewards that the king was offering said to the king, "I told your servants to begin with that there was no divination or enchantment that I could bring against these people because they are God's people. They are blessed of God. But you can bring a curse on them."
- **Here is how to cause the people to turn from God and to begin to worship idols.** Let the people go down and meet them and invite them to their homes. When they come into the house, have the people bring out your gods, show them your gods. Invite them to worship your gods with them. Have the girls go down, flirt with the guys, get them all excited! When they get into bed have the girls bring out their little Aphrodite, their little fertility goddess and say would you like to see how we worship our god? The sexual rights that were involved with the worship of Aphrodite. When Israel turned and began to worship these other gods, their God, who is a jealous God will smite them.
- **Bring in idolatry. Cause them to worship God in unprescribed ways.** Develop the priesthood, which we find was developed here. Also, sadly, there were those in Pergamos, who were beginning to introduce, idols, icons, and sacred relics into the church. The **worship of relics, the doctrine of Balaam.**

Rev 2:15 Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Rev 2:16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

- **The call to repentance to the church of Pergamos** for their adopting the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans and worshipping icons and idols. Notice there wasn't that call in Smyrna. There was no call to repentance. Smyrna was a church that was going through heavy persecution.
- **Not only will the Lord remove His presence, but He will begin to fight against this system** because of their embracing of things that He hated. They attempted to use Christian liberty to justify their personal compromise with sinful paganism.

Rev 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

- **I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written!** You won't be blackballed, rejected. The white stone was the stone of acceptance. The new name. It is interesting how the Lord so often changed names. Abram to Abraham. Sarai to Sarah. Saul to Paul. So often a new name from the Lord that describe the new character. Jacob the name means heel catcher. His name was changed to Israel, governed by God. What a fabulous change! It appears that God has a new name for you that probably is associated with the future, what God has in store for you. The things that God has for you. A special name that the Lord has for you. I like that!

To the Church in Thyatira – Prosperous Corrupt Church, No persecution, but social acceptance (Trade Guilds) was the temptation. No consideration of Great Tribulation!

- **Thyatira is located 40 miles SE of the city of Pergamos.** It is surrounded by beautiful countryside. It was a small city and not important to Rome or the worship of the Emperor. It was on the main trade route and was often conquered. It was best known for the establishment of trade guilds (unions), such as potters, tanners, weavers, robe makers, and dyers.—the center of the dyeing industry. These guilds often had pagan feasts which involved a great deal of sexual immorality. The Christians were facing a serious problem of job security if they did not participate, and there was a strong tendency to compromise. (*Acts 16:11-15, 40*) tells us of Lydia, a seller of purple from Thyatira. The city was known for their beautiful cloth and special dyes
- **Now, we move into the period of history with Thyatira** that goes from 500 A.D. to the present time. When we get into the next four churches, they all are still existing. They started earlier in history, but all exist to the present time. We're going to be seeing some things that Jesus said that may be upsetting to any of you who have a Catholic background. But don't worry. Next week when we get to the church of Sardis, we'll really be laying it heavy upon the Protestant reformation and its failure. By the time we get to Laodicea, the last and final church, there's nothing good to say about it.

Rev 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:

- **Back in (Rev 1:14-15) His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; [15] His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters.** Brass in the scriptures is a metal that symbolizes judgment. The altar upon which the sacrifices were burned was a brazen altar. Brass--symbol of judgment.
- **When the plague came upon Israel, in the wilderness because of their murmuring,** these fiery serpents began to bite the people. They began to die as a result of these serpents biting the people. The Lord commanded Moses to make a brass serpent. Put it on a pole and put it up in the middle of the camp. It shall come to pass that whenever a person is bitten, if they will look upon this brass serpent they shall live. Moses did as commanded. The brass serpent on the pole was a symbol that their sin had been judged. If you'll look upon this brass serpent, your sin has been judged and you will live. Jesus said, **(Joh 3:14-15) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, [15] that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.** It became a symbol of Jesus dying for our sins upon the cross. Our sins were judged there on the cross. So, *His feet like fine brass* would be speak of the judgment that He is going to speak against this system.

Rev 2:19 "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.

- **Thyatira was and is a church that emphasizes good works.** It is a church that emphasizes love and loving works. We think of Mother Theresa and her tremendous work in the slums of India. Think of how many have dedicated and devoted their lives in Christian service working among the poor and all of the marvelous works that have been done by the church. Jesus said I know them, the service, the faith. Of course, the people are taught a tremendous faith in God and in Jesus Christ the Son of God. Their strong faith in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Those were the pluses but yet there were some problems too.

Rev 2:20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

- **Jezebel was the Old Testament wife of King Ahab.** She was the one that brought the worship of Baal unto the northern kingdom of Israel and all of its results and evils that came as the people worshipped Baal, to commit spiritual fornication. The church is to be married to Jesus Christ even as Israel was to be married to God! And married to Jesus Christ, we're to be totally faithful to Him and worshipping Him.
- **To teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.** The Thyatira church had this same problem as did the Pergamos church. The worship of anything else, other than the one true and living God, constitutes spiritual fornication. God said to the children of Israel, you shalt have no other gods before me. You are not to make any graven image or likeness of things that are in heaven or things that are on the earth to bow down to them, to worship them. In other words, the prohibition of icons under the law. Now, with Jezebel she brought in all of these little idols of Baal. People had them in their homes. We see the introduction of images, idols that are set up within the church, around the church. There are likenesses of Jesus, likenesses of Mary, likenesses of the saints venerated by the people.

Rev 2:21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

Rev 2:22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

- **Notice the profound call for the Thyatira church to repent!** Unless there is a repentance and a turning from their deeds, they will enter into the Great Tribulation period! **Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.** Notice **the inference is if they do repent, they'll escape the Great Tribulation.** That's the definite inference here. I do not believe that the true church will go through the Great Tribulation! As we move into Revelation a little further, in fact next week, in Philadelphia and then in three weeks as we get to chapter five, we will see where the church is, when the great tribulation comes upon the earth. So here though the warning. But yet the inference in the warning, unless they repent they'll be cast into the great tribulation. A repentance will allow them to escape the great tribulation.

Rev 2:23 *I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.*

- **God said He searches the innermost part of a man and his heart**, while man looks on the outward appearance.
- **David said, (Psa 139:1,6, 23, 24)** *O LORD, You have searched me and known me. [6] Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. [23] Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; [24] And see if there is any wicked way in me And lead me in the way everlasting.*
- **Through Jeremiah, the Lord said, (Jer 17:9-10)** *"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? [10] I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.*
- **Here, the Lord again is declaring that He searches our hearts.** He knows our thoughts. He knows our innermost anxieties. He knows the motives that prompt the things that we do. **And I will give to each one of you according to your works.** The judgment of God will be absolutely fair because the motives will be judged more than the actions.

Rev 2:24 *"Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.*

- **This period of church history did produce many wonderful saints.** Savonarola, Augustine, Eusebius, Tertullian and so many other glorious saints. Men of God. We are blessed because of these men of God that lived during this period. Not all were corrupted.
- **It was also one of the blackest periods of church history.** Some of the vilest men bought their way into power by purchasing the position of pope. At one time it was auctioned off to the highest bidder. These things are all a part of church history. Yet, there's the contrast. There are those wonderful saints that love to do Lord completely.

Rev 2:25 *But hold fast what you have till I come.*

- **Notice, once again a reference to His second coming.** We see this church does exist to the present time.

Rev 2:26 *And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—*

- **Again, there is a blessed promise to the overcomers!**

Rev 2:27 *'HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON; THEY SHALL BE DASHED TO PIECES LIKE THE POTTER'S VESSELS'—as I also have received from My Father;*

Rev 2:28 *and I will give him the morning star. (Rev 22:16)* *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."*

- **Unto Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.** The promise is that we will be a kingdom of priests. We read how the church will live and reign with Him for a thousand years upon the earth. Hear the promise to the overcomers to rule with the Lord over the earth during that thousand-year millennial reign of Christ! The power that will be given to enforce righteous rule upon the earth.

Rev 2:29 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

- **Once again, listen to what God has to say.** There are many lessons in these messages for us. Going back to Pergamos, the Lord said He knew where they dwelt, even Satan's throne. It seems at times, that Satan has moved his throne to Washington D.C. We can learn a lot of things in this area of scripture.

SUMMARY POINTS:

	Jesus Christ	Commends	Condemns	Corrects	History Period
Ephesus	Walks among lampstands	Works and perseverance	Left first love	Repent, return & repeat	A.D. 31-100
Smyrna	The first and the last	Tribulation and poverty	None!	Be faithful	A.D. 100-315
Pergamum	Sharp two-edged sword	Did not deny the faith	False doctrine – Balaam, Nicolaitans	Repent	A.D. 313-538
Thyatira	Eyes like a flame of fire	Love and Ministry	False doctrine – sexual immorality, idolatry, social acceptance	Hold Fast	A.D. 500 - Present

- **May we careful take note of what Jesus** commends, condemns, corrects and calls in each of the churches, as it applies to each of our lives!
- **May we be like the church in the book of Acts - led by the Spirit**, filled with the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, doing the work of God, motivated by love.
- **May the Lord help us! May we listen to Him, as He speaks to our hearts.** And may we walk in obedience, close to Him as He shows us His ways!
- **Jesus is coming soon! Even so come.** Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a **Church** ready for You

CLOSING SONG:

JESUS IS COMING SOON! EVEN SO COME - Hillsong (3:51/2:04)

All of creation All of the earth Make straight a highway A path for the Lord Jesus is coming soon Call back the sinner Wake up the saint Let every nation shout of Your fame Jesus is coming soon Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a **Church** ready for You Every heart longing for our King We sing "even so come" Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come
 There will be justice, all will be new Your name forever, faithful and true Jesus is coming soon Oh, like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a **Church** ready for You Every heart longing for our King We sing "even so come" Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come

So we wait We wait for You God, we wait You're coming soon
 So we wait We wait for You God, we wait You're coming soon
 Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be at **Church**, ready for You Every heart longing for our King, we sing
 Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be at **Church**, we'll be ready for You Every heart longing for our King, we sing "even so come" Lord Jesus, come
 Even so come Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come Even so come Lord Jesus, come

CLOSING PRAYER:

Read Chapter 3 for next week!