

SERIES: THE ELEVENTH HOUR

Title: THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION Pt. 2

Text: Rev 1:19; REV. 2-3

To Each Church Jesus repeats a formula

- He names the church.
- Jesus states a description of Himself.
- He begins with I know your works; I know your hurts, I know where you live.
 - He sees you. You cannot hide from him. He knows where you live.
 - There is no place you will ever be where He does not see you.
 - He knows your pain, your troubles, and your afflictions.
 - He has not gone from you when trouble finds its way to you
 - He knows your deeds, your works, your practices.
 - All things that have been done are known to God.
 - The good things and the bad things. The ledgers are filled and each of us will be held to the account of those books. There is no error. There are no duplicate books.
- He ends with he who ears to hear let him hear.
- He shares a commendation.
- He shares a condemnation.
- He gives them a solution.
- And he tells them the reward for obedience.

The Church in Ephesus – The Loveless Church - Rev. 2:1-11

The Church in Smyrna – The Oppressed Church - Rev. 2:8-11

The Church in Pergamum – The Corrupt Church - Rev. 2:12-17

The Church in Thyatira – The Carnal Church -Rev. 2:18-29

The Church of Sardis – The Dead Church Rev. 3:1-6

- **The City** -- the modern town of Sart
 - Herodotus recounts a legend that the city was founded by the sons of Heracles, This city was the Ancient capital of the Lydian empire. It became the capital of the Satrap of Persian Empire.
 - It was situated on the top of a high plateau. It had been conquered by many empires over the centuries; had been occupied over 3500 times.
 - After Greece conquered it, new buildings included a *prytaneion*, *gymnasion*, theater, hippodrome, as well as the massive Temple of Artemis still visible to modern visitors.
 - Columns high, and there is a church still there.

- **The Church**

- Rev. 3:1-4**

- ¹ “I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. ³ Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. ⁴ Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy.”*

- **Commendation** – None

- Reputation in a sinful world means nothing

- **Condemnation** – Nominal Christianity is dead.

- When He comes, He is against you.
 - The reference of the thief places these dead people with the lost.
 - Two tired city – higher and lower class
 - Acropolis – high society
 - Lower class on lower shelf
 - In war – lower class dies first.
 - When Cyrus came into Sardis he looked up and he offered a reward to anyone who can find a way to get up there.
 - There is one watchman soldier who drops his helmet, goes through a door and comes out a stairwell to get it. So Cyrus attacked and wins.
 - Vultures – where the dead are ... so they attack because no one is watching - Thief

- **Solution** – Wake Up, Get Strong, Turn away

- Wake up! Your sleep is dangerous.
 - Strengthen and keep (hold fast) to what the Scriptures say.
 - Turn away from the deadness.

- **Reward** – Walk with Jesus

- ...People who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. (v. 4)*

- They will walk in white – Look at the garments of the true Bride of Christ.

The Church of Philadelphia – The Faithful Church

- **The City** -- Rev. 3:7-13

- Known as the “Gateway to the East” was known for its grapes, textiles and leather goods.

- Second least impressive ruins after Thyatira
 - The remains of the church of Saint John built in A.D. 600.
 - The arch looks like an open door.
 - The whole area is about the size of an acre.
- Kingdom of Pergamum built the city of Philadelphia at a road juncture to serve as a doorway to connect the roads.
 - Had an earthquake (end of first cent.) that destroyed the city, so they built vineyards to raise revenue.
 - Domitian had them destroy half the vineyards.

- **Jesus** – Holy One who opens and shuts doors

- **The Church**

Rev. 3:8-12

⁸ *“I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.”* ⁹ *Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.”* ¹⁰ *Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.*

¹¹ *I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.* ¹² *The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.*

- **Commendation**- Little but Loved
 - They kept His word with patient endurance.
 - They did not deny His name.
- **Condemnation** - None
- **Solution** - Hold fast, receive your crown.
 - Know that a little lived out faithfully is great in the eyes of the Lord.
- **Reward** - Open doors, a pillar, named with God
 - *“I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.”* (v. 12)
 - Named with God

The Church of Laodicea – The Lukewarm Church

Rev. 3:14-22

- **The City**

- The ancient capital of Phrygia. It was renowned for its creation of banking. It was also known for its medical school and costly fabrics.
- There is a church there that you are not allowed to go into.
- On a hill, and you can see all these other cities in the valley.
 - They see armies coming. “We can go, so we have to bury our gold.”
 - There is a 25 year prison sentence if you take a rock from the ground, and it is likely under that church.
 - Banking city, dye wool black, a medical school, ear salve and eye salve
 - You are poor in the way that it matters
 - Gold – poor
 - Clothed – naked
 - Salve – blind
- Between two locations – hot springs and cold spring water
 - You can see the pipe systems with ancient silt and minerals.
 - By the time the water gets there, it is lukewarm and tastes horrible.
 - Hierapolis – the water is like carbonated water, refreshing.
 - There is a tunnel called the “gateway to hades.”
 - If you go in, you will die because the “lime gas” (CO₂) would kill you.
 - If you could survive, you could call yourself a God because you survived.

- **Jesus:** the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

- **The Church**

Rev. 3:15-19

¹⁵ “I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot!
¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷
For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.”

- **Commendation** – None
- **Condemnation** – “You make me sick!”
 - Neither hot nor cold – indifferent

- He spits us out of his mouth
 - Thinking we are rich, but we are poor.
 - Thinking we are clothed, but we are naked in our shame.
- **Solution**
 - Be Pure – Be refined.
 - Buy His treasure, His gold refined in fire – purity.
 - See the truth - Anoint our eyes with the salve that will allow us to see the truth.
 - Hear Him.
 - Open up to Him.
- **Reward** – Abide with Him, Dine with Him, Sit with Him.
 - *“²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. ²¹ The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.” (v. 20-21)*

What is the message to you and me?

- Remember from where you have fallen. Wake up.
- Repent, go the correct direction. Turn away from deadness and lukewarmness.
- Return to your first Love. Seek Holy things.
- Repeat the works you did at first.
- Be rooted in and hold fast to the truth of God’s Word.
- Reject false teachings and affirming of immorality.
- Restore your Faith - A little lived faithfully is a lot.
- Reject Fear of what you are may suffer.

Prayer