

## The 7 Letters To The Churches

Jesus dictated letters to 7 churches, in modern day western Turkey, by the hand of the Apostle John. In these letters he described himself as something the Church needed, reported what was good and bad with them, how to fix it, and an encouragement to overcome the worldly ways. The order the letters are in; and the troubles the churches are having, is the same as the history of the Christian Church in general. We can learn a lot from that.

Rev 1:10 I came to be in the Spirit on the Day of the Lord, when I heard a loud voice behind me like a trumpet,

Rev 1:11 saying, "Write on a scroll what you see, and send it to the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

Rev 1:12 Then I turned to see who was talking to me, and when I turned I saw seven gold lamp stands.

Rev 1:13 Among the lamp stands there was someone like the Son of Man. [Jesus] He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash around his chest.

Rev 1:14 His head and his hair were white like wool, in fact, as white as snow. His eyes were like flames of fire,

Rev 1:15 his feet were like glowing bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of raging waters.

Rev 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword. His face was like the sun when it shines with full force.

Number 1 is Ephesus; They are typical of the Christian Church in the first 100 years. They worked hard, and steady at putting together a strong church, testing those who would be leaders and weeding out the bad ones. But they were so busy sticking to the code of the Church that they forgot to have a relationship with Jesus. Jesus says "come back to me or I will remove your church, and he who conquers will have eternal life."

Number 2 is Smyrna, They are typical of the Christian Church in the next 300 years. They had bullying, were poor, and had liars trying to change things, even throwing some into prison. Jesus had nothing bad to say about them, just do not fear, be faithful even unto death and he will give them the "crown of life and they won't be hurt by the second death"; which again means eternal life.

Number 3 is Pergamum; They are typical of the Christian Church in the next 400 years. They refused to give up being Christian, but some of their leaders were introducing ideas from other religions. Jesus says stick with the original ways or I will come and straighten it out. The ones who overcome this problem will get the Manna, which is to say he will give them what they need, and a white stone, which is to say an admission ticket to eternal life.

Number 4 is Thyatira; They are typical of the Christian Church in the next 400 years. They had works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience (hold on to these); But, they had people turning the Church away from the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. He calls on them to knock it off or they will go into the coming Tribulation. To those who conquer and stay true to him, he will make rulers over the

nations and will give them the morning star. Other than a reference to Christ, I'm not sure just what this morning star means.

Number 5 is Sardis; They are typical of the Christian Church in the next 300 years. They had a few people who hadn't been corrupted and they will be recognized; But, Jesus says, wake up, remember what the church is supposed to be and return to it or I will come against you. The one who conquers will be recognized, written in the Book of Eternal Life and acclaimed before God and the angels.

Number 6 is Philadelphia; They are typical of the Christian Church in the next 300 years. They had little power, but have endurance, and have kept his word and have not denied his name. Jesus had nothing bad to say about them, and gave them a great promise;

Rev 3:10 Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from [the Rapture] the hour of trial [the Tribulation] that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.

And; will honor the one who conquers by inscribing his name on a pillar of the New Temple of God that comes down from heaven.

Number 7 is Laodicea; These are typical of the Christian Church in the last 300 years. They are lukewarm, non-committed Christians who don't realize how bad off they are, in the eyes of the Lord. He had nothing good to say about them. Jesus says, repent, return to him, to the one that overcomes this condition will sit with Jesus on the throne.

So; We see that the church has gone through good and bad, gotten worse, gotten better, and became weak at the end. If these are time periods in the history of the church, we can see, and it's pretty well agreed on, that we are in the final stages of the church. That means we are nearing the time of the Rapture. This is not scary; it is something to hope for, and look forward to, and to count ourselves blessed to be able to be a part of. When we go home to heaven, because believers are already citizens, we will be safe from all that is evil, in the company of family and friends, living side by side with Jesus and the angels in the presence of God our Father.