

The Church at Ephesus – 2 letters

Paul’s letter in 63AD 2 Ephesians: He encouraged the church there to abound in Love.

Jesus’s letter in 90AD Revelation: He warns the church that they have lost the flame and excitement for their “first love”, Jesus Christ. Can you relate to either of these messages?

The Seven Letters follow a pattern. (a), the good the church has done. (b), a need they should work on. (c), a warning and a promise. Discuss each church and its characteristics comparable to an individual:

1. Ephesus – (a) hard work and perseverance despite their hardships
(b) not just following a routine but a closer relationship with Jesus
(c) recall their early relationship and love with Christ or their lampstand will be removed
2. Smyrna – (a) faithful despite their affliction and poverty and spiritually rich
(b) do not be afraid during your persecution
(c) “He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.”
3. Pergamum – (a) faithfulness in a pagan society of learning and secular culture (home of Satan)
(b) chides them for allowing false Christians to influence them, one foot in the world and one foot in God’s word
(c) promises the provisions of manna from Heaven and a special intimate relationship
4. Thyatira – (a) doing deeds and having greater faith than before
(b) allowing the teachings of Jezebel and committing adultery
(c) will destroy Jezebel and her children and give the faithful authority over the nations
5. Sardis – (a) a dead church
(b) strengthen what is still alive and wake up
(c) Jesus will come like a thief in the night, the faithful will be in the book of life
6. Philadelphia – (a) having an open door and enduring patiently
(b) some claim to be Jews but are liars
(c) the liars will fall at their feet and acknowledge Jesus has loved them, keep you from the hour of trial, tribulation (thlipsis), coming upon the whole world
7. Laodicea – (a) a luke-warm church, wealthy and self-reliant
(b) repent
(c) spit from His mouth or share His thrown

What can we learn from the seven early churches that were closest to the time of Jesus?

Does any one particular church cause you to reflect on your life and spiritual walk with Christ?