

The Seven Churches of Revelation

I. John is given a revelation of the things which must soon take place

- A. God's message is given through an angel to the apostle John, he writes the vision he receives from the Lord
- B. John writes a letter to 7 churches in Asia Minor

II. The seven cities John writes to are on a postal route

- A. Some call the apostle John the postman from Patmos because of his exile on the island during the writing of Rev.
- B. The seven churches are as follows

1. Ephesus
2. Smyrna
3. Pergamum
4. Thyatira
5. Sardis
6. Philadelphia
7. Laodicea

III. Views on the Seven churches

A Chronological View- each represents a period of time in church history

1. Example-Ephesus is the early church which represents the apostolic church, the first century church
2. Laodicea-represents the church at the end of the church age when Jesus comes
3. Difficulties with this, who's going to slice up history to make it fit

B. Literal View-these are 7 real churches who are given an actual letter from Jesus through John, for them to have and understand

IV. Why study these letters?

- A. Profound principles can be found which can be applied today
(Both as a church or individually)

- B. If Jesus were to write a letter to you what would he say?
 - 1. what would he write to you about?
 - 2. what would he write about your spiritual life/walk?
 - 3. what would he say about your relationship with him?
 - 4. what would he challenge you to change?
 - we probably wouldn't want our letter public
 - we need reflective honesty to study Scripture
 - what does Jesus have to say to me?

V. Pattern present in letters-but not identical

- a) description of the church
- b) often times (not always) word of commendation
- c) word of condemnation
- d) word of challenge/exhortation

VI. The Lampstand Image

- A. John's already given us an outline of the book of Revelation in
Rev 1:19
"Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things."

- B. Rev 1:20
"As for 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 are the seven churches."
 - 1. in the vision John sees the stars representing the messengers to the church
 - 2. the lampstands represent the church itself
 - 3. Jesus will warn the church at Ephesus that if they don't get there act together he's going to remove the lampstand of their church

The Case of Spiritual Cardiac Thrombosis
Rev. 2:1-7

- I. The Correspondent to the Church :1

- II. The City of the Church :1
 - A. Secular

 - B. Sacred

- III. The Church :1

- IV. The Commendation to the Church :2-3 (:6)
 - A. Active
 - B. Orthodox
 - C. Persistent

- V. The Condemnation to the Church :4

- VI. The Command / Consequences for the Church :5-6
 - A. R _____
 - B. R _____
 - C. R _____

- VII. The Challenge to the Church :7
 - A. Exhortation

 - B. Encouragement
 - 1. The Pattern

 - 2. The People

 - 3. The Prize

Lessons for Us today?