

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

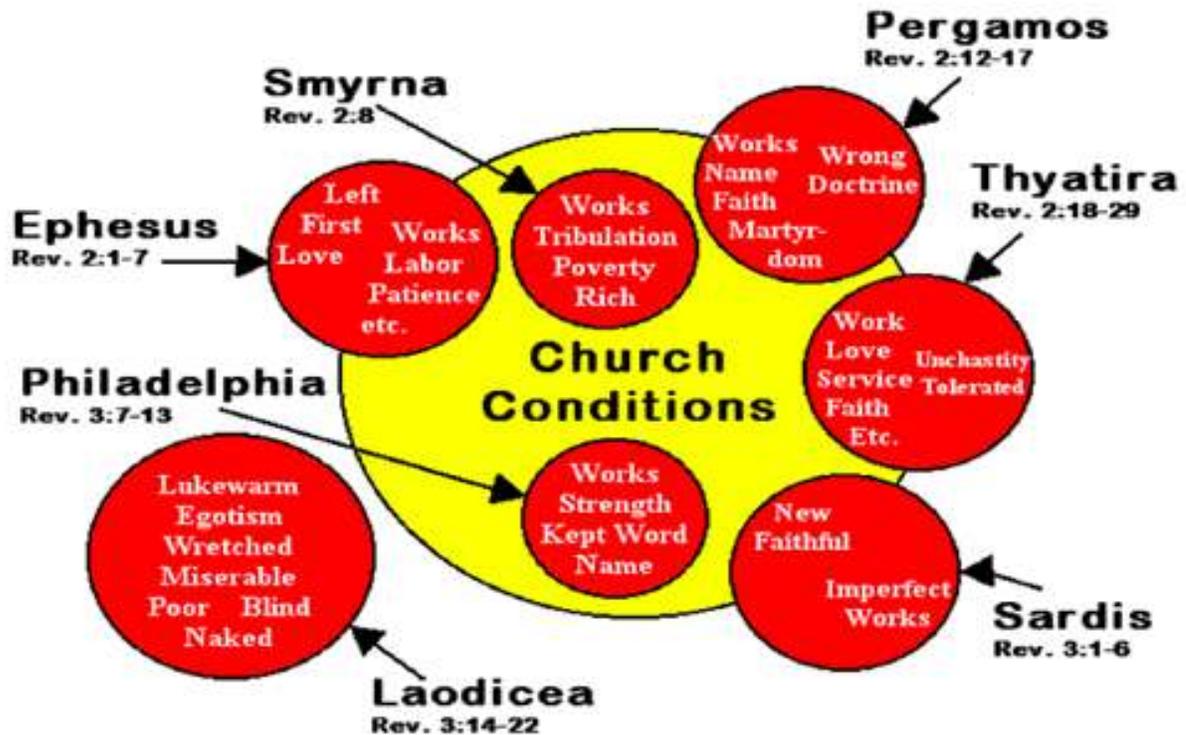


REVELATION 2-3

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Winter Park church of Christ Adult Bible Study 2018

Are we like the church at:

- I. Ephesus - Loyal, but lacking?
- II. Smyrna - Poor, but rich?
- III. Pergamos - Compromising, the doctrine of Balaam?
- IV. Thyatira - Also compromising, the woman Jezebel?
- V. Sardis - Known as being alive, but was dead?
- VI. Philadelphia - Given an open door?
- VII. Laodicea - Lukewarm?



The Seven Lampstand's Are Seven Churches. Chapters 2-3. - By John Cripps

Key Theme to be Noted --- "Ye Are the Light of the World"

- A. The seven lampstand's (light bearers) are the seven churches. Each church is a light bearer they individually must hold forth the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world **cf. I Tim. 3:15**.
 - 1. Also to note that though the churches as a whole are here symbolized as Lampstands, one needs to realize and recognize that individual Christians are also likewise portrayed to be light bearers of the truth, **cf. Phil. 2:15-16 ; Eph. 5:8**.
 - 2. The same word "lampstand" is used in **Matt. 5:14-16 ; Mk. 4:21 ; Luke 8:16 ; 11:33**.
- B. As one looks at the seven letters written to the churches one can see there are certain similarities that can be found.
 - 1. Each of the letters has seven sections to them with the exception of Smyrna and Philadelphia - where there are no sections of condemnation and Laodicea - where there is an obvious absence of commendation.
 - 2. Another of the similarities that can be found is the opening address to each of these churches --- "Unto the Angel of the church at", are identical in format.
 - 3. Thirdly one needs to note the sobering thought that the omniscient nature of Christ is revealed in the phrase "I know thy works/toils". One must note that this is absent in the letter to the Laodiceans.
 - 4. The fourth similarity to note is the promise of the reward to "him that overcometh".
 - 5. Lastly to note in the similarities is the invitation of the Lord to the church to "hear the things that the Spirit has to say to them."
- C. The short epistles to the seven churches of Asia reveal the good and the bad conditions of each church. No doubt the Lord wanted these revealed because they are general conditions that would be found in churches in all generations. Hence, a close study of the letters will reveal the strong and the weak points of any church and will show where it stands in relation to Christ. Application of the principles are necessary for all churches of all times.
 - 1. To say that the seven churches represent seven dispensations through which the church must pass appears to be of little/no persuasion.

II. Outline of the first Letter to the church at Ephesus:

- A. The Letter to the church at Ephesus - **Revelation 2:1-7**.
 - 1. Commendation:
 - a. Toil/Labor
 - b. Patience
 - c. Can't bear evil men
 - d. Tried false prophets.
 - e. Didn't grow weary
 - f. Hate the work of the Nicolaitians. ---- All these are good things but it only takes a little mud or leaven to contaminate the whole- {JC}
 - 2. Condemnation:
 - a. Left their first love.
- B. In order to gain a better understanding of the church in Ephesus it would benefit us to study a little about the history of the church and the situation of the people of the city of Ephesus.
 - 1. The beginning of the church at Ephesus.
 - a. Paul's first visit to Ephesus was brief and was at the closing portion of his second journey (A.D. 53).
 - b. At this time he left Priscilla and Aquila.
 - (1) Their work is recorded for us in **Acts 18:24-28**.

- c. Paul's return to Ephesus is recorded for us in **Acts 19:1-6**.
 - (1) Paul stayed in this region about three years --- cf. **Acts 20:31**.
- 2. The city of Ephesus itself.
 - a. Ephesus is situated in Asia Minor on the West Coast.
 - b. It lay at the mouth of the river Cayster, and was located about six miles from the Aegean Sea.
 - (1) The river Cayster emptied into the Gulf of Ephesus that extended inland about six miles from the Aegean Sea.
 - c. Ephesus was a city of the greatest commercial importance in the Ancient world, however, Ephesus lost its importance as a commercial city due to the fact that the harbor began to silt up and made shipping hazardous.
 - d. Ephesus was a city of greatest political importance.
 - (1) It was known as a free city.
 - (2) The Roman Government had granted Ephesus the right of self-government within its own limits.
 - e. Ephesus was a city of the greatest religious importance.
 - (1) Its greatest glory was the Temple of Diana --- cf. Acts 19:26-27.
 - (a) This Temple was one of the seven wonders of the Ancient World.
 - (b) The impressive building was supported on 100 large columns
 - (c) Services and worship in her honor were conducted by eunuch priest
 - (2) The image of Diana was so old that its original origin was unknown and some claimed that it had fallen from heaven itself --- cf. Acts 19:35.
 - (a) The image of Diana was a black, squat, repulsive figure. Covered with many breasts, was the symbol of fertility. It also held a club in one hand and a trident in the other. Diana was the Roman name for the mythological Greek goddess Artemis, daughter of Jupiter and Latona and the twin sister of Apollo. Variations of the descriptions of this god show Diana attended by lions without the instruments in her hands.
 - (b) To millions of people of that day and time this image was the most important and sacred thing in the world.
 - f. The character of the people were notoriously wicked and bad.
- C. This was the second letter that we have recorded in the New Testament to have been written to the church at Ephesus. The first being the Letter written to the Ephesians by the Apostle Paul.
 - 1. Should one take the latter dating of the writing of the Book of Revelation, as this author does, the church at Ephesus had been in existence some 40 odd years at the time of this letter being written to them.
- D. Analysis of the Letter to the Ephesian Church: - THE ADDRESS OF THE LETTER vrs 1.
 - 1. The angel or messenger of the church at Ephesus is addressed. vrs 1.
- E. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER vrs 1-2
 - 1. It is Jesus Christ of chapter one who walks amidst the lampstands. It is He who "holdeth the seven stars in His right hand."
 - a. The stars are the angels of the churches.
 - 2. It is Jesus Christ who "walketh in the midst of the seven golden lampstands."
 - a. Important to note that Christ dealt with each congregation separately.
 - (1) This is an indication that each congregation is to be about doing their own work.
 - (2) The churches in the New Testament were independent and self-governing.
 - b. It ought to be likewise today.
 - 3. The omniscience of Christ is felt and taught by the phrase "I Know".
 - a. It is only Christ Jesus who truly knows the things of the church --- cf. John 2:24-25 cf. Hebrews 4:13.
- F. WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS. --- This is often referred to as the commendation.
 - 1. Christ knows their "works and their Labor/toil".
 - a. Christians must work --- cf. Phil. 2:12 ; James 2:14-26.

- b. There is no place for the idle in the Kingdom of Christ -- cf. Matt 20:1.
- c. Their efforts need to be "for His name sake" --- cf. Matt 19:29 ; I Peter 4:14.
 - (1) Richard Trent wrote concerning the word "toil" --- "From the Greek 'kopos': Indeed this word, signifying as it does not merely labor, but labor unto weariness, may suggest some solemn reflections to everyone who at all affects to be working for the Lord, and is under His Great Taskmaster's eye."
- 2. Christ knows their "patience or steadfastness".
 - a. cf. Acts 2:42 ; I Cor. 15:58.
 - b. Many times this patience was an outgrowth of trying work that had to be done many times under perilous conditions --- cf. Matt 24:13 ; Heb. 10:36.
 - (1) Patience or Steadfastness comes from the Greek word 'hupomone' which defined by Thayer is: "steadfastness, constancy, endurance; in the N.T. the characteristic of a man who is un-swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings:"
- 3. Christ knows that they "cannot bear them that are evil"
 - a. Christians ought not to have company with those things which are evil --- 2 Thess. 3:6 ; Romans 16:17 ; II John 9-11 ; I Cor. 5:1-6 ; I Cor 15:33.
 - b. James Tolle notes of this phrase: "Churches today do indeed need to follow the example of the Ephesian church, which refused to tolerate, support, or entertain hospitably in its midst as fellow members of the body of Christ those whose lives were persistently evil."
- 4. They had put to the test those who were claiming to be Apostles ---- "tried them which say they are Apostles."
 - a. Securing the purity of the gospel of Christ can only be done by putting to a test those who claim to be speaking the oracles of God --- Gal. 1:6-9 ; II Cor. 11:13 ; Matt. 15:9.
 - b. The defense of the truth is an essential part of the work and existence of the church -- cf. I Cor. 5:11 ; II Thess 3:6 , 14-15.
 - c. The testing of False teachers is a command of God to all churches -- cf. I John 4:1; Rom 16:17-18; II John 9-11.
- 5. "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary." vrs. 3.
 - a. The Greek word 'kamon' is translated into our English word "weary" and signifies, "become faint from toil."
 - b. cf. Galatians 6:9 a Scripture that needs to be heeded by every Christian.
- 6. They hated the "deeds of the Nicolaitans." vrs 6.
 - a. Firstly to note is the fact that the Ephesian brethren did not hate the Nicolaitans, but rather the "deeds/works" of the Nicolaitans.
 - b. As Christians we ought to count every person as a precious soul in the sight of God.
 - (1) It is certain that Christ died for those who are in need. He is the Great Physician and it is not up to you and I to judge who is worthy of the grace and mercy of the Lord. For certainly every soul that sins is in need of the Saving blood of Christ.
 - c. There has been much speculation as to what the deeds of the Nicolaitans is.
 - (1) The only conclusive evidence as to what this is has reference to is found in vrs 15. whose deeds and doctrines were condemned without being mentioned. This clearly shows how Jesus' attitude is toward false doctrines and practices.
 - (2) External evidence from Irenaeus makes this description of the Nicolaitans: "The Nicolaitans are the followers of Nicolaus who was one of the seven ordained to the diaconate by the Apostles. They lead lives of unrestrained indulgences. The character of these men is very plainly pointed out in the Apocalypse of John as teaching that it is a matter of indifference to practice adultery, and to eat things sacrificed to idols."
 - (a) In a tract entitles "Against Heresies" Tertullian gives essentially the same description of the Nicolaitans as does Irenaeus.

- (b) The fact that must be noted here is though, we cannot positively identify who these Nicolaitans are, we are sure of the fact that they were wicked men; and the Lord praised the Ephesian brethren for not condoning nor associating with their works, but rather they hated the works as God hated their works also.

G. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS --- Also known as the Condemnation

1. "They have left their first love" vrs 4.
 - a. Verse 5. indicates that the congregation had lost its fervor for the spread of the gospel of Christ.
2. They must "do the first works" --- this is a reference to the fact that their early enthusiasm for the worship and progress of the church has waned.
 - a. This can be said of many congregations today.
3. Some scholars also understand this "first love" to be a reference to the loss of love for one another.
 - a. James Moffatt renders this verse; "You have given up loving one another as you did at first." vrs. 4.
 - b. As many scholars have noted the rendering of "first Love" cannot be confined to just a singular meaning for positions of:
 - (1) Lack of love for God as they once did.
 - (2) You have lost your love for God, Christ and all mankind.
 - (3) As noted above lack of diligent fervor to the spreading of the Gospel of Christ.
 - (4) All have been supplied as to the meaning of this "first love."
4. The basic message of this fault in the Ephesian church can be summed up in saying, that though they were still doing the things which designated them as a sound body of Christ, the methods of doing this had become mechanical and ritualistic. It was done out of a cold heart of duty rather than the glorious privilege that it is.
 - a. A illustration of this is the wife who no longer loves her husband but goes through the motions in a cold and heartless manner.
 - b. All congregations of the body of Christ need to be aware of the destructive power of Satan. This certainly is one avenue that all Christians ought to take note of.
5. To sum up this passage I want to quote Willaim Mitchell, "Does it not often happen in the Christian life that the soul retains earnestness, patience, truth, endurance, a hatred of evil, long after it has left its first love; that its religious service is continued, apparently unaltered, while the spirit that prompted that service is changed for the worse? But though love is altered, there may yet remain a sense of duty."

H. THE ADMONITION vrs 5.

1. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen."
 - a. Christ returns the Ephesian brethren to their first works so that they might recognize the fact that what they now had was a corroded and vastly deteriorated love compared with what they had in the beginning.
 - b. As Christians today we can understand what the Lord here is saying. So many have lost that first love, which drew them to the Saving Grace of God which reached out in every way to help and touch others who were lost and dying. Having after much disappointment and despair become part of the masses who go through the motions of worship because they have to and not because they want to.
2. "Repent" --- turn aside from this behavior and return to what you once had. - It must be noted here that God has never accepted second best in anything - especially in our worship to Him.
 - a. This certainly can be considered a summons from Christ to cast off the man they now have on them and return again to the beginning. Much the same as to say "turn over a new leaf" or to "start again from scratch."
3. "Do the first works".
 - a. A congregation that fails to promote the gospel of Christ loses its purpose for existing and where no love is found in the hearts of the members - a ice cold reality exists.

I. THE THREAT vrs 5. ----- "This is not an IDLE threat - when God says "I WILL" we better take note

1. "I will come and remove your candlestick/lamp stand from its place."

- a. A lamp stand support the light.
 - (1) The light that we hold up is the great Love of Jesus Christ.
 - (2) If we have lost our love how then can we hold up the light of the Love of our Master and draw people to His wonderful body?
- b. No congregation who has lost their first love can do this.
- 2. This was the tragic fate of the Ephesian Church. There has not been any church in Ephesus for ages and the sight of the majestic ancient city now lies in ruin.
- J. THE COUNSEL of the LORD vs. 7a.
 - 1. The counsel here is intended not only for these members of the Lord's body but to all those who can examine their lives as see the great corroding effect of the loss of their "first love."
 - 2. The counsel here identifies that it is the heart that is receptive to receive what the "Spirit of the Lord says unto them."
 - a. It is the heart that is receptive such as that which is described in Matt. 13:8.
 - b. Such a heart will bear forth fruit and hearken to the admonition of the Lord.
- K. THE PROMISED REWARD vs. 7b.
 - 1. They would be granted to eat from the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.
 - a. Note the "tree of life that was in the Garden of Eden" of Genesis 2:9 is now in the midst of the "paradise of God". cf. Rev 2:7.
- L. Note the table below and in other letters to the 7 churches of Asia, is Taken from Merrill C. Tenney, summarizing the letter to the Church at Ephesus and others:

Salutation	Christ's Self-Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear
vrs 2:1 "Unto the Angel of the church of Ephesus"	2:1 "These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:"	2:2-3 "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; "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary." 2:6 "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."	2:4 "Nevertheless I have {this} against you, that you have left your first love."	2:5 "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place - unless you repent."	2:7 "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."	2:7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

III. The Second of Seven Letters to the churches of Asia. ---- **THE church at SMYRNA** - (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: (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. (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. (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." (Revelation 2:8-11)

- A. Outline of this Letter to the church at Smyrna Rev. 2:8-11: This letter is one of only two letters that does not have a section of condemnation.
1. The Introduction and Address - vrs 8a.
 2. The commendation.vrs 9.
 - a. Their tribulation.
 - b. Their poverty.
 - c. And their present situation about being cast into prison. vrs. 10.
 3. The Admonition. vrs. 10.
 4. The invitation to hear vrs. 11a.
 5. The promise of reward vrs. 11b.
- B. Analysis of the Letter to the church at Smyrna
1. Introduction: - Smyrna was a great trade city.
 - a. It stood on a deep gulf which reached thirty miles inland and was about 50 miles to the north of Ephesus.
 - (1) It had a specially rich trade market in wines.
 - b. Smyrna was an outstandingly beautiful city.
 - (1) It claimed to be the "Glory of Asia as well as the first city of Asia".
 - (a) It was founded about 1000 B.C. by colonists from Lesbos.
 - (b) Shortly before 688 B.C. it was captured by the Ionians, under whose rule it became very powerful and rich.
 - (c) In 323-301 B.C. Lysimachus as well as Antigonus undertook to rebuild Smyrna on its present site.
 - (d) One of the beautiful buildings that was built in this city was in honor of Homer.
 - i) Smyrna was one of the many places that laid claim to the birth site of Homer the poet.
 - (e) A theater that seated 20,000 spectators was carved out of the slope of Mt. Pagus.
 - (2) The streets of Smyrna were wide and paved.
 - (a) It was widely celebrated for its schools of medicine and science.
 - (3) Several temples to idol gods are found in this city.
 - (a) The temple of Cybele and the Acropolis, Zeus was worshiped here, joined the palace known as the citadel.
 - (b) In 23-26 A.D. a temple was erected in honor of Tiberius and his mother Julia.
 - (c) Smyrna was the center for the worship of Dionysis on of the names of Bacchus, originally a nature god of fruitfulness and vegetation but eventually became the god of wine.
 - i) A mock death, burial and resurrection of Dionysis was celebrated annually.
 - (d) These circle of Temples around the summit of Mt. Pagus is one of the reasons the city became known as the "crown city."
 - (e) As early as 195 B.C. it had dedicated a temple to the goddess Roma.
 2. Politically Smyrna was an important city.
 - a. It had chosen the right side in all the civil wars. (For this Rome was Grateful). It was ceded in 133 B.C. to the Romans.
 - (1) It claims to be the first in beauty.
 - (2) It claimed to be the first in Caesar worship.
 - (3) It also claims to be the birth place of Homer.
 - (4) Smyrna looked with contempt on the poor and humble Christians and despised them as of no importance.
 3. Smyrna had two characteristics which made life for Christians a constant and continued peril.
 - a. Smyrna was one of the great centers of Caesar Worship.- In the days of Domitian, Caesar worship

became compulsory.

(1) Once a year the Roman citizens would burn a pinch of incense on the altar to the godhead of Caesar.

(a) Having done this a certificate was given to all worshipers.

(2) Nowhere could life have been more dangerous for the Christian than in Smyrna.

(a) For a man to become a Christian was to be considered as an outlaw.

(b) To become a Christian in Smyrna was to literally take one's life in his own hands.

b. The second peril was that of the Jewish population in the city.

4. No authentic information remains as to the time and circumstances of the establishment of the church in Smyrna.

a. It is however believed that it was established from Ephesus and sometime during the ministry of Paul on his third missionary journey.

C. The ADDRESS vs. 8a.

1. The letter once again is addressed to the "angle of the church at Smyrna".

D. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER: vs 8b.

1. "The first" - Self-existent being who is the origin of all things cf. John 1:1-3, 15 ; 8:58 ; Col. 1:15- 17 ; Heb. 13:18.

a. He should be the first with all men. cf. Matt. 6:33.

2. "The Last" - cf. Rev. 22:13.

a. This is representative of His eternal nature.

b. The eternity of Jesus Christ had a very special significance to all the saints in Smyrna.

c. Also represents His dependability.

3. "Who was dead, and came to life:" - cf. Rev. 1:18.

a. The Savior has been through what they were now experiencing.

b. His death, burial, and resurrection are fundamental facts of the Gospel. -- I Cor. 15:1-4 ; Rom. 5:8 ; I Cor. 1:17.

c. His death was the sacrifice for all mens sins --- Romans 5:8.

E. "I KNOW" vs. 9a.

a. Once gain the omniscient nature of Christ is displayed in this statement.

b. Also displayed in this expression is the assurance that Christ was possessed of a complete and perfect knowledge of their needs and their character.cf. James 1:25 ; Rev. 2:2,9,13,19 ; 3:1,8,15.

c. A lesson that needs to be recognized here is the fact that there is no chance of deceiving the Lord about the character and accomplishments of the church anywhere.

F. THE COMMENDATION --- WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH vs. 9b.

1. "Thy works" --- This is omitted in the ASV since the majority of Ancient manuscripts omit it.

a. This is a solemn reminder that we are going to be judged by our works and according to the works which we have accomplished in this life. -- cf. Rev. 20:12.

2. "Thy tribulation" --- from Greek Thlipis meaning --- pressing, together, pressure.

a. The source of much of their tribulation are those who "say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." --- Rev. 2:9.

b. There will be tribulation if we live as God would have us live --- cf. Matthew 5:11-12 ; II Tim. 3:12.

(1) When we suffer for His cause we have a fellowship with Him --- cf. Phil. 3:10.

(2) Paul says Christians should glory in tribulation --- cf. Romans 5:3.

(3) Paul gives us a description of what tribulation does --- Romans 5:3-4.

(4) James tells us to "count it all joy when we fall into trials and temptation" --- James 1:3-4.

(5) The apostle Peter tells us --- cf. I Peter 1:6-7 ; 4:16.

3. "Thy poverty" --- this is physical not Spiritual.

a. These had suffered physical poverty.

(1) The churches of Macedonia were poor churches --- cf. II Cor. 8:1-5.

b. A probable explanation of their poverty lies in the fact that many Christians had their "property taken

for not worshipping the Ceasar." --- cf. Heb. 10:32-34 ; Mt. 16:29 ; Lk.14:33.

- c. Though they were physically poor and under hardship Christ reminds them that they are rich --- "but thou art rich". --- cf. Lk. 12:16-21 for Christ's teaching on physical riches --- cf. James 2:5 ; II Cor. 6:10

- (1) They were rich in spiritual things.

- (2) The complete opposite was said to a church that was rich physically -- cf. Rev. 3:17-18.

4. "Blasphemy"

- a. It would be better to translate this word "slander".

- (1) The Jews had the ear of those in High places, so they would whisper their slander against the Christians into the ears of the Roman authorities.

- (a) Examples of this are found in Acts 13:45, 50 ; 18:5-6.

- (b) The fleshly Jews were no longer God's people -- cf. Rev. 2:9 ; Rom. 2:28-29.

- (c) They claimed to be God's people but they were of the Devil --- Rev. 2:9.

- (2) Many today claim the same things but by their actions we can see that they are not of God but rather of the world which is governed by their father Satan.

- b. The Lord suffered revile and ridicule at the hands of the Jews also --- cf. Mt. 26:67 ; Lk. 16:14 ; 23:18-25 ; Acts 2:36

G. THE ADMONITION vrs. 10.

- 1. "Do not fear what you are about to suffer".

- a. Some were going to suffer imprisonment --- cf. Acts 12:3,4 ; 16:23.

- (1) cf. James 1:12 ; I Peter 1:6-9 --- suffering a way of sifting out the "chaff".

- 2. The suffering was going to get worse. --- cf. Mt. 10:22 ; 24:13.

- a. The assurance that we have is the fact that the suffering is but for "10 days".

- b. Whether this is literal ten days or not cannot be said, but the assurance is that in comparison to eternal life the suffering is but for a moment.

- (1) cf. James 4:14 ; II Cor. 4:17.

H. THE PROMISE OF THE REWARD vrs 10-11.

- 1. They shall receive their "crown of life." --- cf. I Cor. 9:25 ; II Tim. 4:8 ; James 1:12 ; I Pet. 5:4.

- a. Crown here is from the Greek "stephanos" ---literary a victory crown --- cf. Matt. 10:39.

- (1) In giving even their lives for Christ they gain eternal life.

- (2) It is said that the priests who served at the festival of Dionysus were all given crowns.

- 2. They shall not be hurt at the second death --- cf. Rev. 20:14-15.

I. Note the Table below is Taken From Merrill C.Tenney, summarizing the Letter to the church at Smyrna.

Salutation	Christ's Self-Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear
Rev. 2:8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,	Rev. 2:8 `These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:	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.	NONE	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."	Rev. 2:10-11 Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.	Rev. 2:11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

IV. The third of the Letters to the Seven churches of Asia. - **The church AT PERGAMOS** - (12) "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, `These things says He who has the sharp two edged sword: (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. (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. (15) "Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. (16) `Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. (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}." (Revelation 2:12-17)

A. Outline of the Letter to the church of Pergamos Rev. 2:12-17

1. The Introduction and Address. --- vrs 12
2. The Description of the speaker. --- vrs 12
3. Commendation: --- vrs 13
 - a. Dwell where Satan's Throne is.
 - b. Didn't deny the faith.
 - c. Antipas killed among them.
4. Condemnation: --- vrs 14-15
 - a. Hold to the teachings of Balaam.
 - b. Hold the teachings of Nicolaitans.
5. Admonition. --- vrs 16
6. Invitation to hear --- vrs 17
7. Promise of Reward. --- vrs 17

B. Analysis of the letter to the church at Pergamos\Pergamum.

1. Introduction: The first two letters addressed churches that were located on the sea coast --- Pergamos is inland.
 - a. It is located some 30 miles Northwest of Smyrna in the territory that is now known as eastern Turkey.
 - b. It lay in the Caicus valley some 15-20 miles from the sea.
 - c. It's acropolis rose 1000 feet between two tributary streams some three miles north of the river Bakyrtschai (also known as the Caicus River in ancient times).
2. Pergamos was a capital city.
 - a. "When the empire of Alexander the Great was broken up, following his death, Pergamum became the capital of the powerful, wealthy, and independent kingdom of Mysia."
 - (1) It was the Capital of the Attalid Kingdom/ this names is derived from the King Attalus I (241- 197 BC).
 - (2) Its king, (the last of the Attalic Dynasty, King Attalus III) not having an heir willed the Attalic Kingdom into the possession of the Roman Empire (133 BC), thus it had become a part of the Roman Empire by choice and not by compulsion or by military force.
 - (3) With the exception of Pergamum and a few Greek cities, which were given freedom as independent administrative units exempt from paying tribute, all of the Kingdom was placed under the Roman Government.
 - (4) The Romans made it the capital of the province of Asia, and it retained this honor until the year A.D. 130.
3. The city itself was built in three distinct sections:
 - a. The upper city --- was the northernmost area and was largely the domain of the rich, royal and noble families. Military leaders also lived in this section.

- b. The middle city --- further south and down the mountain contained the part of the city that was visited by the common people. It also included sports fields, and temples for the less educated people.
 - c. The third area across the Selinus River to the southwest, contained the famous Asclepian of Pergamum, a center of the healing arts. A lovely fountain, pool, library, and various temples all can still be seen today amongst the ruins of this city.
4. At the time of this writing the city had been the capital for some three hundred years.
- a. Pergamos had one of the most famous libraries in the ancient world - Approx. 200,000 books.
 - b. These books were later given to Cleopatra by Mark Anthony.
 - c. Because of the extensive manufacture of writing material from sheepskin in Pergamum, the name "parchment" (pergamena) was given to this product.
 - (1) "It is interesting to note that the word "parchment" is derived ultimately from the Latin Pergamena Charta, literally meaning "paper of Pergamum", and it is held by certain authorities that parchment was invented in Pergamum for the purpose of transcribing books for its great library."
- C. Pergamos was a famous center of religious worship.
1. It was the center of the worship of Asclepius the god of healing.
 - a. The emblem of Asclepius is the serpent.
 - b. Tame snakes were kept in the temple.
 - (1) The sufferers were allowed to spend the night in the darkness of the temple, if a snake touched the sick this was held to be the touch of the god himself.
 - c. The modern day symbol of medicine still carries this ancient symbol of healing.
 - (1) When Asclepius was not depicted as a serpent, he was always depicted as holding a staff with a serpent wreathed around it.
 2. Altars to Zeus, the chief of gods, also known as Jupiter ; To Dionysus, the god of wine ; of Athena, the goddess of wisdom as well as Asclepius, the god of medicine was found on the hill behind the city of Pergamum.
 - a. In 29 B.C. it erected a temple to "Roma and Augustus" and later temples were also erected in honor of "Trajan and Severus". The title "Thrice Neokorus" which it bore, meant that in the city three temples had been built to the Roman Emperors, in which the emperors were worshiped as gods.
 - (1) It must be noted that this was after their deaths - not before.
 - b. Participation in such worship became a test of loyalty, and therefore became a frequent ground for Christian martyrdom. Christians would be brought to Pergamum for trial from any northern part of the province.
 3. Pergamos had always glorified in the fact that it was the last outpost of Greek civilization.
 4. Pergamos was also the center of Caesar Worship.
- D. As to the founding of the church here in Pergamum, it is once again speculated that Paul during his stay at Ephesus was its possible origin. However, it must be noted that Pergamum is only mentioned in the book of Revelation. The basis of such speculation and conjecture is only due to the ideas that a place of such great importance would have been visited by Paul.
- E. The Introduction and Address. - Once again the letter is addressed to the angel of the church.
- F. The DESCRIPTION of the SPEAKER vrs. 12
1. It is He who "hath the sharp sword with two edges."
 - a. The sword is the word of God --- cf. Heb. 4:12 ; Eph. 6:17.
 - b. His words cut and penetrate deep, they are as piercing as a sharp sword.
 2. Christ was about to reprove the church at Pergamos.
 - a. This reproof would cut deep.
 - b. His word pricks and cuts to the heart --- cf. Acts 2:37 ; 7:54.
 3. "That sword is the symbol of the discerning, convicting, converting, and punishing power of the word of God. cf. Eph. 6:17 ; Heb. 4:12-13.....On the one hand, it was to smite that it might heal, cutting to the quick, reaching the conscience, laying bare the hidden depths of each man's life. On the other, it was also

quick and powerful to smite and destroy."

4. One must note that the sword was recognized by the Romans as a symbol of authority and judgment.
5. Here it must be noted that the sword is in the hands of Jesus Christ, thus the authority and judgment lies in Christ and not in the government or Empire of Rome.

G. The COMMENDATION of the Lord vrs 13

1. The Lord's knowledge of the church --- vrs 13. --- "I Know thy works"
 - a. Once again the omniscience of the Lord is here revealed. For further notes on this please refer to the comments on 2:1-2.
 - b. It is also to be noted here that Christ's followers were placed in an environment that made any semblance to loyalty with Christ a conflict of interests with that of the state or province.
 - c. The knowledge of Christ concerning the "works of the Ephesians" and the "tribulations of those at Smyrna, is here acknowledged at knowing the oppressive conditions under which the children of God at Pergamum find themselves.
2. "Where you dwell, where Satan's throne is."
 - a. The Lord knows our surroundings.
 - (1) Pergamum exceeded all other cities at that time in wickedness.
 - (2) Its inhabitants lived a life of luxury plagued with many wicked vices --- an example of such a place today leads one to look at Beverly Hills in California.
 - (a) The wickedness that we are confronted with each day is known by the Lord.
 - (3) They were in Pergamos, they had to go on living there they could not escape, life had set them where Satan's seat was.
 - (a) It was in Pergamos they must live and it was there they must show that they were Christians.
 - (b) It is said that in Pergamum there were more idols than any other place in the whole of Asia.
 - i) Hailey states concerning this; "The significance of 'Satan's Throne' and its location in Pergamum is better understood when one considers that it was the political capital of the province and the seat of pagan deities and emperor worship. All these elements combined to produce a heavy and oppressive Satanic atmosphere deserving of the title which the Lord bestows upon it."
 - ii) In the city of Smyrna the persecution and troubles came mainly from the Jews of that community, however, here in Pergamum the persecutions were evidently directly related to the heathen and pagan worship.
3. Where "Satan's seat is".
 - a. Here he had a seat of special authority.
 - b. Pergamos was a place where the Anti-God forces of Satan were at the most authoritative and most powerful.
 - c. This is certainly an appropriate name for a place that has placed so much emphasis on the worship of pagan gods and immorality.
4. "And you hold fast to My Name."
 - a. They had not denied their confession of Christ --- Matt. 10:32-33.
 - b. They wore and honored the name of Christ --- given at Antioch -- cf. Acts 11:36 ; I Peter 4:16.
 - c. They held fast --- cf. I Cor. 15:58.
 - d. The name of "Christ" stands for all that He is ; DEITY, His AUTHORITY, and His LORDSHIP over the entire universe.
5. "And did not deny the faith."
 - a. There is only one faith --- Eph. 4:5.
 - b. We should contend for this faith --- Jude 3 cf. Col. 1:22f.
 - c. In the days when one was killed they held fast --- cf. Rev. 3:13.
 - (1) Antipas, was an example of faithfulness unto death --- cf. Rev 2:10.
 - (2) It is doubtful that Antipas was the only one who had suffered death for the cause of Jesus Christ in this area at this point in time.

(3) "Even in the days" seems to represent a period upon which they must reflect prior to the writings of John.

(a) Antipas was most probably a martyr amongst the first slain for the cause of Christ, but most certainly was by far not the last.

H. THE LORD'S CONDEMNATION - What is wrong with the church vrs 14-15. One needs to be aware of the fact that much teaching is done in the New Testament concerning the dangers of a "little leaven" and how it can destroy the whole lump.

1. "There are those, indicating a small number, who hold to the teachings and doctrine of Balaam."
 - a. Let us note what Balaam did, "He taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel." cf. Numbers 23-24.
 - b. When Balaam found that he was unable to curse the people of God he gave counsel to Balak to send forth the daughters of Moab and to entice the men to join them in lascivious worship cf. Num. 31:16
 - (1) It is bad to sin and involve others in it.
 - (2) Even worse to teach others to sin --- cf. James 3:1.
 - c. Note what Balaam taught:
 - (1) To eat things sacrificed unto Idols --- I Cor. 8:8-13.
 - (a) This involved the participation and engaging in the actual act of the worship, and not just a mere eating of the meat.
 - (2) To commit fornication. "It has been said that chastity was the only completely new virtue which Christianity introduced into the ancient world."
 - (a) Warnings --- I Cor. 5:11 ; 6:9-19 ; Gal 5:19 ; Eph. 5:5 ; Col 3:5-6 ; I Thess. 4:5-7.
2. The teachings of the Nicolaitans are once again introduced here in verse 15.
 - a. Some argue that the teachings of Balaam and Nicolaitans are identical thus they are not two separate groups in this congregations, however, it seems evident to me that John's usage of "also" and "in like manner" indicates two separate groups in this congregation.
 - b. Although the teachings might be very similar the language seems to indicate two separate groups.

I. The ADMONITION - Counsel vrs 16.

1. They are to repent. - Note the command is to the whole church.
 - a. A congregation that tolerates any compromise in religious practices or ethics would need to repent and change their ways to only that of Jesus Christ.
 - b. If they did not repent the coming of Christ against them would be swift and destructive.
2. As the sword that slew Balaam was of those whom he tried to curse, so to shall the sword of God be used to destroy those who curse and degrade the worship and teachings of Jesus Christ.
 - a. cf. I Cor. 5:1-8.

J. The Invitation to HEAR vrs 17a

K. The Promised Reward vrs 17b.

1. They would be given "hidden manna cf. John 6:35, a white stone cf. Acts 13:38-39 ; 26:10 (some have understood this to denote the ancient custom of the judicial system in acknowledging the guilty by a black stone and the innocent by a white stone, and a New name cf. Rev. 21:3-7 ; 22:4)."
 - a. Hailey notes that the hidden manna stands in contrast with the things that were openly sacrificed unto the idols.
 - (1) Note the manna given to the Jews as a symbol of Gods ever presence with them and was to be given from generation to generation cf. Ex. 16:31,33; Heb. 9:4 ;I Kings 8:9.
 - (2) One needs to remember that Jesus Christ is the "true manna from heaven" cf. John 6:33-35 ; 50-59. to eat of the bread of life is to live.
 - b. We need to note that our lives are "hid with Christ in God" cf. Col. 3:3 , to be made fully manifest with His return cf. I John. 3:2.
2. White is represented in the book of Revelation as being pure, and holy. It is also closely associated with heaven.

- a. White describes the hair of Christ, cf. 1:14.
 - (1) The garments worn by the elders cf. 4:4.
 - (2) The horse on which one goes forth to conquer cf. 6:2 etc.
 - b. Here is indicated the: Intimate friendship and blessings of God.
 - (1) Full access into Grace.
 - (2) Final recognition by the Lord in His Glory.
3. The new name would indicate the essence of all that a man is and the new relationship he will then enjoy.
- L. Note the Table below is taken from Merrill C. Tenney, and is a summarization of the letter to the church at Pergamos.

Salutation	Christ's Self-Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear
Rev. 2:12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,	Rev. 2:12 `These things says He who has the sharp two edged sword:	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.	Rev. 2:14-15 "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. 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.	Rev. 2:17 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}."	Rev. 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

V. The fourth Letter written to the Seven Churches of Asia --- **The Letter to THYATIRA** - Revelation 2:18-29.---- "(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: (19) "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and {as} for your works, the last {are} more than the first. (20) "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile My servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols. (21) "And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. (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. (23) "And 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. (24) "But to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan, as they call {them}, I will put on you no other burden. (25) "But hold fast what you have till I come. (26) "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations - (27) `He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces' - as I also have received from My

Father; (28) "and I will give him the morning star. (29) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

A. Outline of the Letter to the church at Thyatira

1. Address to the angel of the church. vrs 18a.
2. Introduction of the Speaker. vrs 18b.
 - a. The Son of God.
 - b. Eyes like a flame of fire.
 - c. His feet like fine brass.
3. The Commendation: vrs 19
 - a. I know thy works.
 - b. Their love.
 - c. Their faith.
 - d. Their Ministry or service.
 - e. Their patience and perseverance.
 - f. Their growth in works.
4. The Condemnation: vrs 20-21
 - a. They fellowship Jezebel (ie. Jezebel is a symbolic name).
 - (1) This sinner seduces the people of the Lord.
 - b. Hardened heart is displayed by the refusal to repent.
 - c. This Jezebel called herself a prophetess.
 - (1) She was a false teacher.
 - d. The Threat. vrs 22-23
 - (1) Cast her out with those who go along with her immorality.
 - (2) Her children will be killed with death.
5. The Admonition or Encouragement. vrs 24-25
 - a. The rest encouraged who did not hold the actions of this sinner.
6. The plead to hear. vrs 29
7. The Promised reward .vrs 26-28
 - a. Power over the nations.
 - b. And will be given the morning star.

B. Analysis of the Letter to the church of Thyatira:

1. Introduction: - It is an odd fact that the longest of the letters to the seven churches was written to the church in the smallest and least important area of the seven towns mentioned. The length of the letter is probably due to the nature of the problems that the Christians faced in the city.
 - a. Thyatira was a wealthy city.
 - b. Located in the Northern part of Lydia.
 - (1) Near the border of Mysia.
 - (2) On the Lycas River.
 - c. Approximately forty miles southeast of Pergamum.
 - (1) About mid-way between the royal cities of Pergamum and Sardis.
 - d. The city itself lay in a valley and as such there was no acropolis that adorned the city.
 - (1) The city was surrounded by gentle sloping hills all around.
 - e. The name Thyatira emerged in history in 290 B.C. as the name of a military center.
 - (1) It had been in the hands of the Romans since 190 B.C.
 - (2) The supreme importance of Thyatira was that it was the gateway to Pergamos, the capital city of Asia.
2. Thyatira was not a center of special religious importance.
 - a. It was not a special center of Caesar worship.
 - b. The chief deity of the Thyatians was that of Tyrimnos.
 - (1) This god was identified with the Greek god Apollo, who was the god of the sun.

- c. A goddess of less importance, yet associated with Tyrimnos, was honored in the Thystiran pantheon.
 - (1) A Temple to Sambethe was also located at Thyatira.
 - (a) At this temple it is said that there was a prophetess who would utter sayings for the deity and imparted them to its worshipers who in turn would accept them as oracles of the deity.
 - (b) It seems that this prophetess had her counterpart in the form of the Jezebel at the Thyatiran church.
 - 3. Thyatira was a great commercial center.
 - a. The roads which passed through its valley brought the trade of half the world to its doors.
 - b. A great center of wool trade and of the dyeing industry.
 - (1) It was from Thyatira that Lydia, the seller of Purple came cf. Acts 16:14.
 - (2) She was Paul's first European convert and was baptized in the river just outside of the city of Philippi.
 - (3) Purple dye was very expensive.
 - c. Scholars believe that the dye was of a Turkish-red color.
 - (1) Made from the madder-root which abounded in the area.
 - (2) True purple dye was made from an expensive shell fish found in the Mediterranean sea.
 - 4. Thyatira possessed more trade guilds than any other town of its size in Asia.
 - a. It would seem that the danger which threatened the church in Thyatira was the direct result of the powerful existence of these trade guilds.
 - b. No merchant or trader could hope to prosper and to make money unless he was a member of his trade guild.
 - c. If a trader refused to join his trade guild, he would be in much the same position as a working man would be in today if he refused to join his trade union.
 - (1) In his book Ramsey lists:
 - (2) Wool workers, linen workers, makers of outer garments, tanners, leather workers, dyers, bakers, slave dealers and bronze smiths.
 - d. But, we may well ask why should a Christian of Thyatira not join such a trade guild?
 - (1) The social activities of these trade guilds were intimately bound up with the worship of the heathen gods.
 - (2) These trade guilds would have had common meals together.
 - (3) The meal would begin and end with a cup of wine poured out as a libation and an offering to the gods.
 - (4) Such a meal would almost certainly follow a sacrifice.
 - (5) At these social activities drunkenness and fornication were the accepted things.
 - e. There was a very real problem here, that faced the Christian of Thyatira.
 - (1) They had to decide whether to make money or to serve Jesus Christ.
 - 5. It seemed this woman Jezebel was teaching Christians that it was all right to be a member of these trade guilds and to participate in their activities as well as serve Jesus Christ.
 - 6. Of its origin as a congregation, nothing is known.
 - a. Once again this is the only time that the congregation in Thyatira is mentioned in the New Testament.
 - b. The earliest contact with anyone from this area is found in Acts 16:11-15.
 - c. It is conjectured that Lydia returned to her home in Thyatira and was chiefly responsible for the church that developed there. However, for this conclusion there is no evidence just speculation.
- C. THE ADDRESS: vrs 18a. - Once again it is addressed to the angel of the church.
- D. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER: vrs 18b.
- 1. "The son of God."
 - a. The gift of God --- John 3:16.
 - b. God's spokesman --- Heb. 1:1-2.
 - c. The only way to the Father --- John 14:6.
 - d. Man's Savior --- Matt 1:21.
 - e. This is an indication of the fact that Jesus Christ was God and shows His relationship with the Father.

- (1) This description is in contrast to His description of 1:13 where Christ is referred to as the "son of Man".
2. "Eyes like a flame of fire."
 - a. Eyes that are all penetrating.
 - (1) The all-wise inspector --- cf. Heb. 4:13.
 - (2) Certainly the omniscient nature of Christ is here depicted.
 - b. This description is no doubt the infinite awareness and insight that Christ has concerning the activities of all His body.
 3. "His feet are like fine brass."
 - a. Strong and durable. --- This is symbolic of strength
 - b. Able to tread under foot all evil His eyes may discover.
 - (1) His enemies will be trodden underfoot and will face the wrath of God cf. I Cor. 15:25 ; Rev 19:15.
- E. THE COMMENDATION OF THE CHURCH: vrs 19.
1. "I know thy works." - This would certainly have reference to their works in the spiritual realm --- cf. Eph. 2:10.
 2. Charity of love. --- this is active good will.
 - a. Love is the fountain from which flow true activities --- cf. Gal. 5:6 ; I Cor. 13.
 - b. Unlike the church in Ephesus the love of the brethren here is said to have grown and not waned.
 - c. "It is important for Christians of all ages to grow in love, for it is the unselfish concern that freely accepts one another in loyalty and seeks out each others good. cf. Matt. 22:35-40."
 3. Service --- most probably the work of benevolence.
 - a. Certainly this would not be the limit of their growth in service.
 - b. This is an outgrowth of love --- "love in action" cf. I John 3:17.
 4. Faith --- fidelity, faithfulness.
 - a. As with all Christians throughout the ages faith is an essential part of the Christian doctrine.
 - b. This faith comes from hearing the Word of God --- cf. Rom. 10:17.
 - c. Without faith we cannot please God --- Heb. 11:6
 - (1) Faith that grows helps us overcome the trials and tribulations for we look at not that which is corruptible but for that which is incorruptible --- cf. Heb. 11:1.
 5. Patience --- perseverance under all circumstances --- cf. I Cor. 15:58 ; Heb. 10:36.
 - a. This patience is largely related to the ability that one has to withstand the various pressures that face us in our walk of faith. --- cf. Heb 6:11-12 cf. Heb. 11.
 6. A growth in works --- "the last to be more than the first." --- cf. I Peter 2:2 ; II Cor. 4:16 ; I Thess. 4:1.
 - a. Every congregation must go forward. Essentially this is what Christ is commending the church at Thyatira on.
 - b. Their motion is forward and thus they have growth.
 - (1) Every church that no longer moves forward and stagnates is doomed to destruction.
 - (2) Forward growth is the only way the a congregation of the Lord's people can be found well pleasing to God.
- F. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE CHURCH: vrs 20.
1. A sinner is tolerated, Jezebel.
 - a. Jezebel is either a symbolic name or it could have been her real name.
 - (1) A character like Jezebel of the Old Testament, the wife of Ahab.
 - (a) Cf. I Kings 16:31 ; 18:4 ; 19:1-2 ; 21:8-15, 23-25.
 2. They should have withdrawn from her --- cf. I Cor. 5:1-13 ; II Thess. 3:6.
 - a. "It cannot be overemphasized that the sin of this church consisted in the fact that it raised no protest against the woman Jezebel, that it allowed her to promulgate under its shelter the terrible teachings that had also plagued the church in Pergamos, with the most disastrous results. We must observe that the church as such was not charged with complicity in this teaching, but with toleration of it."

3. Jezebel called herself a prophetess.
 - a. She was a false teacher.
 - b. She taught that it was alright to:
 - (1) Commit fornication.
 - (2) And to eat things sacrificed unto idols.
 - (3) This doctrine was the "depths of Satan." cf. vrs 24.
 - (a) Some believe that this phrase introduces the idea that this false teacher was teaching the belief that one could not conquer sin unless they first became throughly acquainted with its experiences.
 - c. Divine grace extended for her to repent. --- cf. vrs 21 cf. Eccl. 8:11.
 - (1) But she refused to do this. cf. Rom. 2:4.
 - (2) Note the patience and love of God demonstrated here.
 - (a) Though she was wrong and walking out of harmony with His teaching, God does not wish to condemn men to damnation --- cf. I Tim. 2;3-4 but wants all men to repent.
 - (b) However, the severity of God's judgment can be seen in what is warned if she and her followers did not turn away from their teachings and return back to God.
 - d. A TREAT: vrs 22-23.
 - (1) "I will cast her into a bed."
 - (a) Afflict or punish. --- some believe this to be a reference to great sickness that would come over her.
 - (b) Also those who have followed her false teaching --- cf. Matt. 15:14.
 - (2) "I will kill her children with death."
 - (a) Her followers will be destroyed.
 - (b) This could also be referring to her natural children since this would be similar to what happened to the house of Ahab.
 - i) They all came to violent and sudden ends --- cf. I Kings 22:34 ; II kings 9:30-37 ; 10:7.
 - (3) "Will give unto every one of you according to your works." --- cf. II Cor. 5:10.
 - (a) These three immediate punishments is an indication that Christ will render unto every man according to his works --- cf. Eph. 6:8 ; Col 3:25.
- G. THE ADMONITION/ENCOURAGEMENT: vrs 24-25.
1. Unto the "rest"
 - a. The ones who had not gone along with Jezebel's teaching.
 2. "I will not put upon you none other burden".
 - a. Than the one of getting rid of the Jezebelites.
 - b. The only burden that they had was the carrying of the weight of such sinners amongst them. It was for them to cast this weight off and to continue in the faith that they had in Christ Jesus.
 3. "Hold fast till I come." cf. Rev. 3:11 ; Heb 4:14.
 - a. Christ is coming again to claim His faithful and we must be sure to be ready to meet Him in the air every waking hour of the day.
- H. THE PLEAD TO HEAR: vrs 29.
- I. THE PROMISE OF REWARD: vrs 26.
1. Twofold promise:
 - a. They will be given "power over nations".
 - (1) They will share in the power of Christ over the nations cf. Rev 3:21.
 - (2) "The picture of their ruling with a `rod of iron' is symbolic of the certainty of their vindication and triumph with Christ cf. Psa. 2:8-9 ; Rev 19:15.
 - b. And will receive the morning star.
 - (1) The star is symbolic of royalty being linked with the scepter --- cf. Num. 24:17.
- J. Note the Table below is taken from Merrill C. Tenney, and is a summarization of the letter to the church at Thyatira.

Salutation	Christ's Self-Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear
Rev. 2:18a. "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,	Rev. 2:18b. `These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:	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.	Rev. 2:20-21 "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile My servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols. (21) "And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent	Rev. 2:22-25 (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. (23) "And 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. (24) "But to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan, as they call {them}, I will put on you no other burden. (25) "But hold fast what you have till I come.	Rev. 2:26-28 (26) "And he who overcomes ,and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations - (27) `He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces' - as I also have received from My Father; (28) "and I will give him the morning star.	Rev. 2:29 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

VI. REVELATION **CHAPTER THREE** - Cont. of the Seven Letters to the churches of Asia, The fifth letter written to the Seven churches of Asia - The Letter to the **church at SARDIS** - Revelation 3:1-6 ---- (1) "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, `These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. (2) "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. (3) "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. (4) "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. (5) "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. (6) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

A. Outline of the Letter to the church at Sardis

1. Address to the angel of the church. - vrs 1a.
 2. Introduction of the Speaker. - vrs 1b.
 - a. He who has the Seven Spirits of God.
 - b. And the seven stars.
 3. The Commendation. - vrs 1c., 4.
 - a. "I know thy works."
 - (1) You have a few names who have not defiled their garments.
 - (2) These shall walk with Him in white for they are worthy.
 4. The Condemnation. - vrs 1d., 2b.
 - a. You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.
 - b. I have not found your works perfect before God.
 5. The Threat and Counsel. - vrs 2-3.
 - a. Be watchful, strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.
 - b. Remember how you have received and heard.
 - c. Hold fast and repent.
 - d. If you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief in the night.
 - e. You will not know the hour I will come upon you.
 6. The Admonition, Encouragement and Promised Reward. - vrs 5
 - a. Those who overcome shall be clothed in white garments.
 - b. Their names will not be blotted out from the Book of Life.
 - c. Christ will confess their names before the Father and the angels.
 7. The plea to hear. - vrs 6.
 - a. Those who have an ear.
 - b. Heed the things that the Spirit says to the churches.
- B. Analysis of the Letter to the church at Sardis:
1. Introduction: Sardis was one of the oldest cities in Asia Minor and lay thirty miles southeast of Thyatira.
 - a. In AD. 17 a great earthquake destroyed the city of Sardis and Emperor Tiberius assisted in its rebuilding on the valley floor.
 - (1) Money from the state treasury was used as well as a cessation of taxes for five years to aid in the rebuilding of the city.
 - (2) Basically it can be stated that the city of Sardis was a city with a valued past but with very little if no future.
 - (3) The city was little more than a name but literally it was dead. (It arose out of the ashes of destruction)
 - b. It was an extremely wealthy trading center on the routes between the Aegean Sea and the interior of Asia Minor.
 - (1) Sardis was a great commercial center.
 - (2) It was a great center of the woolen industry.
 - c. Sardis had been the ancient capital city of the Kingdom of Lydia.
 - d. Sardis was the place where our modern monetary system was born.
 - (1) "Under King Croesus (c. 560-547/6 B.C.) gold and silver coinage came into use."
 - e. Sardis was built on a mountain top (approx. 1500 feet above the plain), and from its position it was regarded as well-nigh impregnable.
 - (1) It was a position which seemed to defy assault.
 - (2) The Pactolus River lay on its eastern side flowing into the Hermus River.
 - (3) The broad ridge of Mt. Tmolus dominates the Hermus valley and deep spurs jut out into the plain, offering the impregnable strongholds.
 - (4) Cyrus, the King of Persia, captured Sardis in 546 B.C.
 - (a) King Cyrus arranged for a reward for the one who:
 - i) Worked out a method whereby the unsalable cliff could be scaled.

- ii) The city of Sardis was captured by a soldier in the Persian army noting one of the Lydian armies men drop his helmet down the steep cliff.
 - iii) He watched this soldier pick his way down the steep cliff to recover his helmet and then climbed back to his position of defense.
 - iv) That night with the path marked in his mind, the Persian soldier led a picked band of troops up the cliffs and into the city of Sardis.
- (b) In 334 B.C the city surrendered to Alexander the Great.
- i) It is noted that in 218 B.C. the city was captured in the same way that Cyrus the Great had captured the city by Antiochus the Great.
- f. The key word in this letter is "WATCH".
- (1) These people could know from history that disaster comes many times when we think we are secure.
 - (2) Certainly from its history the people would clearly understand the phrase "a thief in the night" since it had fallen victim to this type of attack twice.
- g. Sardis was not the center of Caesar worship.
- (1) Notoriously the people of Sardis were loose-livers.
 - (2) The people had grown flabby and had sunk into easy loose living.
 - (a) Ramsey notes that the city of Sardis, "was more of a robber's stronghold than an abode of civilized men."
 - (b) "Its most prominent temple was dedicated to the mother-goddess Cybele (a nature goddess), and her worship, with its eunuch priesthood and its orgiastic rites, was one which tended, as much as that of Dionysus and Aphrodite, to sins of foul and dark impurity."
 - (c) Hailey notes that there were other altars and shrines to other deities worshiped by the people.
 - (d) Howard C. Butler of Princeton worked to excavate Sardis during the years 1910-1914 in which his efforts were chiefly centered of the great Temple of Artemis (300 by 160 feet) to the west of the acropolis.
 - i) "Extensive excavations in recent years have identified many Roman public buildings: a theater, a temple of Artemis, a gymnasium, and an impressive late Jewish synagogue, suggesting that it became an important center for the Jewish Diaspora."
- h. The fate of the church in Sardis was the same.
- (1) The church at Sardis was at peace, but it was the peace of the dead.
 - (a) It must be noted that "only this church and the one in Laodicea seem not to have had outward or inward foes to combat, but they both had internal conditions to overcome."
 - (2) The church here was not plagued by emperor worship, nor was it disturbed by the Jews or the Nicolaitans.
 - (3) As to the exact establishment of the church there is no record given.
- C. THE ADDRESS: 3:1a. - Once again the letter opens with an address to the angel of the Church at Sardis.
- D. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER: 3:1b.
1. "Hath the seven Spirits of God."
 - a. The "seven Spirits of God" are listed in 1:4 as being before the throne of God.
 - (1) Here the "seven Spirits" are at the disposal of Christ and are ready to act as He might direct them.
 - (2) One needs to remember that "seven" is here used in a symbolic way. As we study other scriptures we can note that Christ and the Apostles only spoke of One Spirit - cf. Eph. 4:4-6.
 - (a) Thus "the seven Spirits" must represent as Hailey notes: "the sevenfold perfection, completeness, and universality of the Spirit's working."
 - (b) It is highly improbable that John here has reference to Isaiah's description of the Spirit which was to be upon the Messiah - cf. Isa. 11:2.
 - i) Note that Isaiah uses 3 couplets in his description having a total of six and not that of seven.
 - (3) Christ possessed the Spirit without measure - cf. John 3:34.
 2. "Hath the seven stars."

- a. The stars are the angels - cf. Rev. 1:20.
 - b. Hailey notes: "If, as suggested, the stars represent the spirit or inner life of the churches, the Holy Spirit, the energizing, life-impacting, directing power of God has the ability to revive this 'dead' church IF {emp.JC} it be willing."
 - c. They are under His authority.
- E. A CHURCH WITH A REPUTATION: 3:1c.
- 1. "Thou has a name that thou livest."
 - a. The "name" indicates that the church has a reputation.
 - (1) We learn from this that what men think of a church is not necessarily what the Lord thinks of it.
 - 2. The reputation of the church is that it "looks alive" in the sight of men but in the sight of God the congregation is "dead."
 - a. We also learn from this that congregations like men have reputations.
 - b. Like the church in Ephesus this congregation possibly had a beginning that burnt with zeal and enthusiasm for Christ and the Truth. However, over time it is evident that it was dying from internal deterioration. Lenski refers to this as "dry rot."
 - 3. Let us note some things which probably gave Sardis this outward reputation of being alive.
 - a. A large membership.
 - b. Material wealth.
 - c. Prominent people in its membership.
 - d. Sound Doctrine.
 - 4. Yet all this is for naught if like the widow of I Tim. 5:6 it is "dead while it is still alive."
- F. SARDIS WAS A DEAD CHURCH IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD: 3:1d.
- 1. There are several causes of spiritual death.
 - a. A church is dead when it worships its own past, when it lives on its memories instead off finding a challenge in its hopes for the future.
 - b. A church is dead when it is more concerned with material things than with spiritual things.
 - c. A church is dead when love for one another is gone.
 - d. An a church is dead when its works are not perfect - cf. 3:2.
 - 2. They never finished a single thing.
 - a. To perfect from {pleroo} meaning to "bring into completion, finish something already begun."
 - (1) Strong's defines it as "to make replete, i.e. (literally) to cram (a net), level up (a hollow), or (figuratively) to furnish (or imbue, diffuse, influence), satisfy, execute (an office), finish (a period or task), verify (or coincide with a prediction), etc.: -accomplish, X after, (be) complete, end, expire, fill (up), fulfil, (be, make) full (come), fully preach, perfect, supply."
- G. ADMONITION TO SARDIS: 3:2-3.
- 1. "Be watchful"
 - a. We have noted the history of the city of Sardis at this point.
 - b. Both times Sardis was captured it was done "as a thief in the night."
 - c. There are two points at which every man must watch.
 - (1) We must be watchful at our weak points.
 - (2) But we must also be watchful at our strongest points. (Over confidence)
 - (3) To every Christian this admonition to be "watchful" should ring a responsive chord.
 - (a) The Lord Himself pleads for us to be watchful - cf Matt. 24:42f.; Luke 12:39f.
 - d. From the Greek [gregoreuo {gray-gor-yoo'-o}]; from 1453; to keep awake, i.e. watch (literally or figuratively): -be vigilant, wake, (be) watch(-ful).
 - 2. "Strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die."
 - a. Some were weak and very sick and ready to die - cf. I Cor. 11:30.
 - b. The strong members have a responsibility to the weaker members - Gal. 6:1.
 - c. Here is a warning but also a ray of hope.

- (1) All is not yet lost, there are still some things that distinguish them as being part of the body of Christ.
 - (2) It is this that the Christians here are pleaded with to strengthen.
 - (3) Paul urged the church at Ephesus in a similar way - cf. Eph. 5:14.
3. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard."
 - a. Remember your past state and get back to it.
 - b. The very fact that the Lord wants them to remember their beginning indicates that the congregation started in a special or glorious manner.
 4. "Hold fast."
 - a. This is a condition of success in every field.
 5. "Repent" --- cf. Luke 13:3.
 - a. Here the church needs to repent of the lethargic and deathlike condition that it had fallen into.
- H. SARDIS THE CHURCH WITH A REMNANT: 3:4.
1. "A few names even in Sardis which have not defiled (from the Greek word "molumein" - to besmear and not from "mianein" - to stain) their garments."
 - a. "Few," this is true in many places and congregations.
 - b. The faithful few keep the church going.
 2. Only the few had been able to keep themselves unspotted - cf. James 1:27.
 - a. Defilement is a "failure to keep oneself unspotted from the world" and a failure to "hate" even the garment spotted by the flesh - cf. Jude 23.
 - b. Does not mean that one is "sinless" for such would violate other Scriptural teachings found in the N.T. cf. James 3:2 ; I John 1:8,10.
 3. "They shall walk with Me in white." - cf. 3:4-5; cf. Matt. 13:43.
 - a. Note that only the living walk. - cf. Zech. 3:7.
 - b. This walking represents the fellowship that we shall have with Christ.
 - (1) cf. Amos 3:3; II Cor. 3:14.
 4. "White" represents the purity and holiness of our walk.
 - a. Note that only the pure and holy enter into heaven - cf. Rev.21:27.
 - b. The evaluation of Christ on these few as summed up in the words, "they are worthy".
 5. "I will not blot out - (Note from Greek word "exaleipho" - also used in Rev. 7:17 ; 21:4 - "To wipe away") his name in the Book of Life." - cf. 3:5; 20:15 names added when one becomes a child of God - cf. Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Heb. 12:23.
 - a. Big part of this congregation is walking the road to damnation.
 - b. The term "book of Life" occurs seven times in the N.T.
 - (1) Phil. 4:3
 - (2) Six times in Revelation: 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27.
 - (a) By every indication the Jews kept a register of their citizens, which was a book of the living - cf. Isa. 4:3; Ezek. 13:9; Neh. 12:22f. From this register the name was removed at death.
 - c. The very implication of this statement is that those who are spiritually dead will not be found in the "book of Life" at the day of judgment. - cf. Rev. 20:15.
 6. "I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."
 - a. cf. Matt. 10:32f.; Luke 12:8f.
 - b. Those whose names are not found by the Lord will be denied by the Lord before the Father - cf. Matt. 7:23; Luke 13:27.
- I. THE THREAT AND WARNING TO HEED THE SAYINGS: 3:6
- J. Note the Table below is taken from Merrill C. Tenney, and is a summarization of the letter to the church at Sardis.

Salutation	Christ's Self-Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear
Rev. 3:1a. "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,"	Rev. 3:1b. `These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars:'	Rev 3:1,4 "I know your works," "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy."	Rev. 3:1-2 "that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead." "for I have not found your works perfect before God."	Rev. 3:2-3 "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die," "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent." "Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you."	Rev. 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."	Rev. 3:6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

VII. The sixth letter written to the seven churches of Asia - The Letter to the **church at PHILADELPHIA** - Revelation 3:7-13 ---- (7) "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, `These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": (8) "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. (9) "Indeed I will make {those} of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie - indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. (10) "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. (11) "Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (12) "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 out of heaven from My God. And {I will write on him} My new name. (13) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

A. Outline of the Letter to the church at Philadelphia

1. Address to the angel of the church. - vrs 7
2. Introduction of the Speaker - Description - vrs 7b.
 - a. He who is "Holy"
 - b. He who has the Key of David.
 - c. He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.
3. The Commendation - vrs 8-10
 - a. "I know your works"
 - b. "Have set before you an open door"
 - c. "You have little strength/power"
 - d. "Have kept my Word and not defiled My name"
4. The exhortation - vrs 11
 - a. "Behold I come quickly".

- b. "Hold Fast"
 - c. "That no one takes your crown"
5. The Promise of the Reward - vrs 12
 6. The plea to hear - vrs 13.
 - a. NOTE: As with the church in Smyrna there is no segment of condemnation of evil in the church at Philadelphia. Instead what we find here is a congregation of the Lord's people who are more richly praised than any of the other seven churches in Asia.
- B. Analysis of the Letter to the church at Philadelphia:
1. Introduction: Unlike the other cities in the province of Asia, Philadelphia was not an ancient city, but rather a relatively new city in this part of the world.
 - a. The city was founded in 140 B.C. by Attalus the second - (159-138 B.C.) King of Pergamon.
 - (1) The city became the possession of the Roman Government in the year 133 B.C. thru A.D. 1379 when it fell after persistent resistance into the hands of the Turks.
 - (2) The city derived its name from the title (Philadelphus) that was given Attalus II because of his great affection and loyalty to his brother Eumenes II, King of Lydia and predecessor.
 - (a) "Philadelphia" is a Greek word which means - "Brotherly love" or "Brother lover". - cf. II Peter 1:7
 - (b) The city's modern name is AlaSheher/Allah-Shehr - (City of God). (Hastings p. 721; William Smith p.509).
 - b. The city is located twenty-eight miles southeast of Sardis and 105 miles from Smyrna.
 - (1) The city stood on the little river called "Cogamus" which was a tributary of the Hermus River.
 - (2) It is also located at the foot of Mt. Tmolus - (elevation 952 feet above the sea), and stood at the place where the borders of three countries met - Mysia, Lydia, and Phrygia.
 - (a) Because of its position here, Philadelphia is located on a main trade route between west and east. Due to this importance Philadelphia became a wealthy trade center.
 - (b) It is said of this highway that it linked one continent to another, and Philadelphia stood as the gateway to the east.
 - c. Philadelphia lay on the edge of a great volcanic area.
 - (1) In one way this proved to have brought prosperity to the area.
 - (a) The great plain was one of the most fertile areas in the then known world.
 - (b) It lent itself to a great grape growing region.
 - i) Philadelphia was known for its fine wines.
 - (2) The area was rich in hot springs.
 - (a) This was an area in which the infirm would come to bathe in the waters.
 - (b) In another way, the very fact that brought prosperity to the region, also brought with it great danger.
 - (3) Philadelphia was subject to earthquakes.
 - (a) The same earthquake that destroyed eleven cities in Asia in A.D. 17 also claimed Philadelphia as its victim.
 - (b) As with the city of Sardis, the city of Philadelphia was rebuilt with the aid given it by Tiberius Caesar. Funds were given it from the national Roman treasury.
 - i) In a show of appreciation the city was renamed "Neocaesarea" - (New Caesar). The city received a third name "Flavia" during the reign of Vespatian.
 - ii) The people of this city lived in constant fear of these quakes and would flee to open country when they came, but always returned to the city after - cf. Rev. 3:12.
 - (4) Philadelphia was a famous center of heathen worship; it had so many pagan temples to the various deities that the city became known as "Little Athens".
 - (a) Since the region was good for growing grapes, and the making of wine, one might expect to find the cult of Dionysis/Baachus in the city.
 - (b) This cult was so powerful that it is the chief cult of the city.
 - (c) Not only was this cult the chief cult, but the coinage of the city of Philadelphia carried the image of

Baachus the god of wine on it.

(5) Though many temples are found in Philadelphia, the main opposition to the church did not come from the pagan and heathen cults, but from the wealthy Jews of the city.

(a) It must be noted that the Jews flourished here and had a beautiful synagogue.

(b) Philadelphia had a custom that was directly related to the heathen temples.

i) When a man had served the state well, a pillar was erected in one of the temples with his name upon it.

ii) Today amidst the ruins of this city, there are four marble pillars which bear the names of men who served the state well.

d. As to the establishment of the church in Philadelphia we are left with no record, however, it may have been started by some of the members from Ephesus who were taught by Paul or by or by Paul himself during his stay in Ephesus - cf. Acts 19:10.

e. The Key thought for this letter is the "Open Door".

C. THE ADDRESS: 3:7a. - Once again the letter opens with an address to the angel of the Church at Philadelphia.

D. THE INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER: 3:7b.

1. "He that is Holy".

a. The definition of "holy" {hagios} is - that which is separated from all evil, with perfect hatred of evil.

(1) However, in this sense the Greek {ho hagios} - "The Holy One" is an affirmation of the deity of Jesus Christ.

(2) Christ here refers to Himself in the same language that the prophet of Old wrote concerning Him - Dan. 9:24.

b. "The Holy One" - this is a name which belongs to God exclusively. In this sense Christ is either Deity or He is guilty of Blasphemy, since He refers to Himself with a title that belongs alone to God.

(1) In the sense that it is here used Christ identifies Himself with the absolute holiness of God, which is repeatedly stated that He is THE HOLY ONE, and all that is pertaining to Him is Holy.

(2) This is in direct contrast to the situation that is found in this city of Philadelphia - cf. vrs 9.

c. Richard trench wrote: "The hagios is separate from evil, with the perfect hatred of the evil. But holiness in this absolute sense belongs only to God ... Jesus claims to be the 'The Holy One,' - a name which Jehovah claims for Himself, - implicitly claims to be God; takes to Himself a title which is God's alone, which would be blasphemy for any others to appropriate, and, unless we allow the alternative that He is guilty of this, can only be accepted as Himself God."

2. "He that is true".

a. The Greek work for "true" here is "alethinos", meaning - genuine or real.

(1) This is a favorite word of the Apostle John and is found only twenty seven times in the New Testament.

(2) Twenty-two times it is used by the Apostle John.

(a) It is used of Christ as the "true light" - John 1:9.

(b) The "true bread" - John 6:32.

(c) The "true vine" - John 15:1

(d) The "true God" - I John 5:20.

(e) The faithful and "true witness" - Rev. 3:14.

(3) Here once again Christ stands as the genuine and true One in opposition to the false gods and claims of those in the city of Philadelphia.

(a) In opposition to the Jewish claims, Jesus is the true and real Messiah in whom is realized the consummation of God's Eternal plan to reconcile man back to Him. Of this fact the prophets of Old spoke.

(b) This term also distinguishes from all those who only partially realize the characteristics of God - cf. John 5:35; Psa. 80:8; 105:40

- (4) Described as having the "Key of David"
 - (a) This is a fulfillment of prophecy concerning the Messiah - cf. Isa. 9:6.
 - (b) The key of the house of David was kept by the steward of the house.
 - i) It was this steward's responsibility to grant or deny access to the King.
 - ii) Original reference here is to Isa. 22:22.
 - a) Shebna is removed as the steward of the House of David and Eliakim is put in his place.
 - b) Eliakim is an anti-type of Christ.
 - c) The power of certain governmental powers were entrusted to Eliakim, however, with Christ it is His right - cf. Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:32f.; Matt 28:18; I Peter 3:22; Eph. 1:20-22; Rev. 1:5; 1:18.
 - (5) "Key" denotes power and authority.
 - (a) In the sense that it is here used it denotes the authority or power to open or close the door.
 - i) One must bear in mind that no one comes to the Father but thru Jesus Christ - John 14:6; Acts 4:12,cf 10.
 - ii) Christ has all power NOW! - Matt. 28:18.
 - iii) Christ is also NOW Reigning on David's Throne - cf. I Cor. 15:23-25; Acts 2:29-35.
 - a) This passage of scripture strikes at the very core of the pre-millennial theories that speculate that Christ will return to reign on the earth for a literal 1000 years.
 - b. The Jews may have laid claim to the fact that they held the keys to bar any who confessed the name of Christ from the worship in the synagogue's, however, the true {alethinos} authority to open and shut the door rests in the hands of Jesus Christ.
 - 3. "He that opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens":
 - a. This power and authority belongs exclusively to Christ and is shared with NO individual or organization on this earth.
 - (1) It is God who adds to the body of the saved - cf. Acts 2:47, man has no part in the admission of any obedient person being added to the congregation of believers.
 - (2) "Any man who takes it upon himself to determine the eternal destiny of another, presumptuously assumes a prerogative that belongs only to Christ - cf. James 4:11-12." {James M Tolle, p. 65}
 - b. Christians must recognize His authority alone - cf. Eph. 1:22-23.
- E. THE COMMENDATION - vrs. 8-10
- 1. This segment of our study can be divided into four groups:
 - a. "I know thy works" - vrs 8.
 - (1) As with the other churches, Christ is the only one who is worthy to pass judgment and exhortation on the churches since He is all knowing, all seeing and every where - ie. Christ is the one who stands in the midst of the churches - cf. 1:13.
 - (2) This phrase "I know thy works" shows that the message that Christ will give to the church is not based on hear say, on limited knowledge but rather on the bases of complete and perfect knowledge of the churches activities/geographical location etc.
 - (3) For further notes on this please refer to 2:1-2.
 - b. "See, I have set before you an open door,"
 - (1) It is my understanding that this "open door" is symbolic of the opportunity that the church has in Philadelphia to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost in that city.
 - (a) The Greek word {thura} meaning a literal door is only used in the book of Acts.
 - i) In all other cases it is used in a figurative or metaphorical manner as is indicated here by Strong's dictionary. "thura {thoo'-rah}; apparently a primary word [compare "door"]; a portal or entrance (the opening or the closure, literally or figuratively): -door, gate."
 - ii) Hailey notes that the metaphorical statements of the usage of the word "door" often "indicates an opportunity, an opening through which a goal could be achieved." {Hailey. p. 150}
 - (2) Paul in his writings and reports to the churches, many times uses a similar expression to show the opportunities that are available in the world for the spread of the gospel - cf. I Cor. 16:9; Acts 14:27;II

Cor. 2:12; Col 4:3.

- (a) NOTE: that in each of the cases it is always the Lord that has opened the door, as is here indicated by our section of study.
- (3) As the city of Philadelphia had been established to open door of the Greek civilization to the eastern world, having been set on the borders of Mysia, Lydia and Phrygia, so too has a door been opened to the church.
 - (a) Before this congregation was a door of usefulness in the Kingdom of Christ.
 - (b) What is this door of opportunity?
 - i) It could refer to the door of self-improvement - Bible study, attendance ect Heb. 10:25; II Tim. 2:15.
 - ii) The door of opportunity to convert others Matt. 9:37-38; II Tim. 2:2.
 - iii) The door of prayer. - cf. James 5:16; Eph. 3:20-21.
 - iv) The door to use our money to the glory of the Lord's Work. - Phil. 1:4; 4:17.
 - v) An opportunity to be hospitable - I Peter 4:8-9; Heb. 13:1-2; Acts 16:15.
 - vi) An opportunity to minister to the needy - Rom. 12:13; Acts 9:36,39.
 - (c) "Abilities used, increase; abilities unused are taken away." - cf. John 15:1-8. {Robert Harkrider p. 35}
 - (d) The congregation must see the opportunities and not the hardships or the obstacles only.
 - i) Our faith and trust needs to be in the power of the Gospel and the power of Christ to overcome all things - cf. Phil 4:13.
- c. "For you have little strength/power"
 - (1) Whatever this "little strength" has reference to it must be noted that even with this little power, it was sufficient to achieve the purpose that Christ has given to every church.
 - (a) This little power can be a reference to the smallness of their numbers/ or to their smallness in their resources not being from the wealthier and more powerful organizations that where in the city itself/it could also have reference to their social standings cf. I Cor. 1:26.
 - (b) Though they might have been small in the sight of the men of the community and city, they are great in the sight of God - cf. II Cor. 12:9; cf. Isa. 40:29.
 - (2) One must recognize that in many cases God's power was not displayed with large quantities, but rather in small eg. Feeding of the 5,000 etc.
 - (a) Note some passages that show God can perform wonders with small things.
 - i) I Cor. 1:25-29
 - ii) I Sam. 17:49 - David's sling and stone.
 - iii) Gospel spread through out the then known world.
 - (b) The lesson here to learn is the fact that the "battle is the Lord's" - I Sam. 17:47 --- "Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle {is} the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands."
- d. The church with Heaven's commendation - "Have kept My word and have not denied My name."
 - (1) You have kept "My word". - cf. John 14:23-24; 14:15; 15:10.
 - (a) They patiently endured during the opposition and persecution cf. vrs 10.
 - (b) This observation is based upon the fact that both the words "kept" and "deny" in the Greek are in the aorist tense.
 - i) Alluding to some particular occasion in the past, when the church had been put to the test and proved itself faithful to the Lord.
 - ii) The strength of this congregation is not in the fact that they have confessed the name of Christ but by their stand in the face of Great danger and in many times death, to hold to the name and faith of Christ Jesus. - cf. Romans 10:9-10.
 - (2) They had not denied the "name of Christ" - cf. Matt. 10:32-33.
 - (a) Since salvation is only found in Christ, when one denies the power by which he is to be saved, he

burns the very bridge that he must cross over. - cf. Hebrews 6:6.

- F. In verse 9 we see here that Christ promises to expose the enemies of the church and they will be punished.
1. Once again Jesus, as He did in the letter to the church at Smyrna, refers to the persecuting Jews as being from the "synagogue of Satan - cf. 2:9; John 8:39-40 for comments on what this refers to. - cf. Romans 2:28-29; Acts 17:5-9; I Thess 2:14-16.
 - a. Hailey notes that the true Jew was one who: (a) Had been circumcised in Heart - Rom. 2:28; (b) One who worshiped by the Spirit of God and gloried in Christ and had no confidence in flesh - Phil 3:3 p. 151.
 2. The true test of a Christian is not what he says but what he does and whether his conviction is inward or his profession outward.
 - a. Note that the promises to these two churches differ in the fact that one (Philadelphia) would go beyond just prevailing.
 - b. "To Smyrna the promise was that the Jews should not prevail against the faithful in it cf. 2:9-10; however, to the church here in Philadelphia the promise is that it shall not only prevail against the Jews but also that some of its Jewish adversaries would worship before its feet cf. 3:9."
 - c. The Jews would bow down before the feet of the Saints in Christ.
 - (1) This in no way means that they will be worshiped since only God is worthy of Worship - cf. Heb. 1:6.
 - (2) Commentators do not agree as to what this means.
 - (a) Some teach that these Jews would become Christians - {Lenski p. 142-143; William Hendriksen p.75}.
 - (b) Others teach that it means that the Jews would finally be moved to acknowledge that God was with the Christians.
 - (c) According to my personal study it seems to me that the latter is the better interpretation, though some Jews might have come to Christ, the promise of Christ here seems to indicate all would be bowing.
 - i) Note the American Standard Footnote - "The Greek Word denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to the creature or the Creator."
 - ii) Note the Jews hated, but they would know that Christ loved them - This made them victorious.
 3. Verse 10 denotes the Divine protection which is promised to those who hold the name of Christ.
 - a. Note how the verbs match in verse ten - "Thou didst keep" - "I, too, will keep,"
 - (1) Note here that the term is used in the sense - to guard, to hold, to keep, and to preserve against loss or damage.
 - (2) "Have kept" in 10a. states the fact more fully that the church had held to the faith during a time of trial and tribulation - cf. vrs 8.
 - (a) It is interesting to note that though we are actively involved in many works, they are worthless unless we first "keep the Word of the Lord."
 - i) The Christians fidelity is always rewarded by the Lord's fidelity.
 - ii) This might be referred to as the fundamental work of all servants of Christ - cf. II Tim. 4:1-4.
 - (b) Note here the "Word of My endurance \ Word of my patience (KJV)" as compared with "My Word" in verse eight.
 - i) Moffatt translates this - "that patience which belongs to me."
 - ii) This rendering makes it clearer to understand, that the endurance is not that of the church, but rather that of Jesus Christ.
 - a) The life of Jesus Christ shows us through the written word how that Christ suffered and endured the tribulations, disappointments and hardships that were brought against Him.
 - b) It is to this Word of Endurance of Jesus Christ that is here being referred to.
 4. Note the word "MY" - this is the patience that the Lord demands of all His followers, a part of the pathway of footprints that we should walk in - I Peter 2:21-24.

- G. The Lord promises the church in Philadelphia to "keep - (tereo - to protect) them from the hour of trial."
1. The first thing to note here is the fact that the Lord does not promise to exempt them from the persecutions and tribulations that would come upon the whole world.
 2. The reasons Christ will not keep His children from persecutions and tribulations is found in scriptures such as - James 1:2-4; I Tim. 4:5; II Tim. 3:12.
 - a. For the Lord to remove all obstacles that cause us to become stronger in the faith is not to help His children but to cause them to go backward.
 - b. "It does mean that the Lord would keep them from the hour of trial in the sense that he would sustain them, giving them the grace and power to bear under whatever difficulties they would face."
 - (1) Note the promise of the spiritual resources to endure these hardships - II Tim. 4:18; II Cor. 12:9; Heb. 4:16.
 3. "Hour" is here used of a season, or period of time. The hour of trial would come upon the whole world.
 - a. The word earth\world (ge {ghay}); contracted from a primary word; soil; by extension a region, or the solid part or the whole of the terrene globe (including the occupants in each application): -country, earth(-ly), ground, land, world.), occurs eighty one times in the book of Revelation.
 - (1) It is used to denote many various ideas.
 - (2) Note, in some cases it refers to the unregenerated men of the world, in other cases it might refer to the physical earth etc.
 - b. "Here, perhaps, all that is implied is, that the trial would be very extensive or general - so much so as to embrace the whole world - as the word was understood by those to whom the epistle was addressed."
 - c. It must thus be noted that the trial that Christ here refers to will affect both the saint and the sinner alike.
 - (1) The difference between these is the fact that the Christian has the help and assurance of Christ's hand to guide them through and to overcome, whereas the sinner has nothing to hold on to. cf. vrs 11; Matt.6:13.
 - (a) This sounds more like fortification for pressure rather than assurance of complete exemption.- cf. Ezek. 9:1-8; 21:3-4.
 - d. As to what this hour of trial is, speculation must be noted as the only evidence one might be able to give.
 - (1) Whether this refers to some form of persecution, or to some great calamity the speaker does not say.
 - (2) "Tacitus mentions an earthquake that sank twelve cities in Asia Minor, in one night, by which among others, Philadelphia was deeply affected."
 - (a) "Christians came under the terrible pressure of Rome for about two and a half centuries until the edict of Toleration under Galerius. The Jews too had their troubles with Rome, for it was Hadrian who urged the cessation of circumcision and aimed at building a shrine to Jupiter on the site of Jerusalem. This rebellion of the Jews in 132 under Bar Kosheba was perhaps the bloodiest of the Jewish battles with the Romans. Dio Cassius reports that over 580,000 died, of the Jews, in the war."
- H. Note the Table below is taken from Merrill C. Tenney, and is a summarization of the letter to the church at Philadelphia.

Salutation	Christ's Self-Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear

<p>Rev 3:7a "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,</p>	<p>Rev 3:7b `These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens"</p>	<p>Rev 3:8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. (9) "Indeed I will make {those} of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie - indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. (10) "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.</p>	<p>NONE</p>	<p>Rev 3:11 "Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.</p>	<p>Rev 3:12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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 out of heaven from My God. And {I will write on him} My new name.</p>	<p>Rev 3:13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.</p>
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VIII. The Seventh Letter written to the Seven churches of Asia - The Letter to the **church at LAODICEA** - Revelation 3:14-22 ---- (14) "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, `These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: (15) "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. (16) "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. (17) "Because you say, `I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked - (18) "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, {that} the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. (19) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. (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 dine with him, and he with Me. (21) "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (22) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

- A. Outline of the Letter to the church of Laodicea: It must be noted that of all the letters written to the churches of Asia, this is the only one that does not have any commendation. The letter is a harsh condemnation for a church that has become lukewarm in all its actions.
1. Address to the Angel of the church at Laodicea. - vrs 14a.
 2. Introduction and Description of the Speaker. - vrs 14b.
 - a. The Amen.
 - b. The Faithful & True Witness.
 - c. The Beginning of the Creation of God.
 3. The Condemnation of Evil. - vrs 15-17

- a. Neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm.
 - b. Wretched.
 - c. Miserable.
 - d. Poor.
 - e. Blind.
 - f. Naked.
4. The Counsel: vrs 18-19
- a. Warning.
 - b. Exhortation.
5. The Promise of Reward. - vrs 20-21
- a. Will grant to sit with me in my Throne even as I am set down with with my Father in His Throne.
6. The Invitation to Hear. - vrs 22
- B. Analysis of the Letter to the church at Laodicea:
1. INTRODUCTION: - "Of the several cities names Laodicea in Syria and Asia Minor, only one is mentioned in Scriptures, namely, the one situated in the confines of Phrygia and Lydia, on the banks of the Lycus."
 - a. This city of Laodicea was the largest of the three cities {Laodicea; Colosse; Hierapolis} found in the broad valley area {Lycus valley} on the borders of Phrygia.
 - (1) Approx. 90 miles East of Ephesus, and between forty and fifty miles southeast of Philadelphia.
 - (2) The city was situated approx. eleven miles west of Colosse and six miles south of Hierapolis. cf. Col. 4:13,16.
 - b. The city lay at the meeting of the Lycus Valley and the Maeander.
 - c. The city was called Diosopolis and Rhoas until it finally was named in honor of Laodike\Laodice, the wife of Antiochus II (261-246 B.C.), who rebuilt the city.
 - (1) Laodike\Laodice poisoned Antiochus II the Seleucid King.
 - d. Destroyed in A.D. 60 by an earthquake, but refused help in the rebuilding of itself.
 - (1) Tacitus writes that the Roman Senate at that time gave large sums to devastated Asian cities, but records with surprise that Laodicea refused such aid. "It rose again, with no help from us." This attitude is found in the church - cf. 3:17.
 - (2) "Rebuilt by Marcus Aurelius."
 - e. The city was completely destroyed by the "Mohammedan invaders, and is now the scene of utter desolation."
 - f. City is now known by the Turk's as "Eski-hissar" or "Old Castle".
 2. In 190 B.C. Laodicea became the center of Hellenic culture, reaching its peak at this time when it was made a Roman Province.
 - a. The city was famous for its great wealth and for its banking abilities.
 - (1) "Cicero travelled that way in 51 B.C. on his way to the provincial governorship of Cilicia, and the fact that he cashed drafts in Laodicea shows that the city had outgrown neighboring Colossae and was already a place of financial importance & wealth."
 - b. The city was well known for its producing black wool.
 - (1) This wool was the basis of the Textile industry centered in both Colosse and Laodicea.
 - (2) This trade was in existence well up into the 19th. Century.
 - (3) Various garments from Laodicea are listed in Diocletian's price fixing edit of A.D. 300.
 - c. Another important fact about Laodicea is that of its eye ointment.
 - (1) Approx. 13 miles from the cities boundries, a school of medicine was found.
 - (a) The names of the physicians appeared on coins as early as the principate of Augustus.
 - (b) It is stated that it was possibly the medical school of Laodicae that developed the eye powder known as "Phrygian". cf. 3:18
 - i) It is guessed that this power was probably made up from dried mud of the Hierapolis thermal

springs. Which when mixed with water it formed a Kaolin poultice, which was an effective remedy for inflammation.

3. The population of this city was comprised of a great number of Jews.
 - a. This great Jewish population is said to have its roots in the transferring of Jewish families by Antiochus II (223-187 B.C) to the territories of Lydia and Phrygia.
 - b. Two years after the earthquake the governor of Asia refused to allow the contribution to go to the Temple fund in Jerusalem.
 - c. Jews were useful citizens who brought money and trade to every city in which they settled.
 4. A great stadium was built in A.D. 79 and dedicated to Titus, who became emperor in that year.
 - a. It must be noted that an inscription found reads as follows, "Nicostratus, paid the cost out of his own resources."
 5. The language of Rev. 3:16 might have shocked the audience to whom it was addressed, however, some feel that this has reference to the mingling of the cold streams and the hot thermal springs which were chemically impregnated causing a lukewarm mixture which was nauseating.
 6. From the letter written to the Colossian brethren, it seems to indicate that there is a church in existence already in Laodicea - approx. A.D. 60.
 - a. Col 2:1 we are not sure whether Paul here is saying that he had never been to Laodicea.
 - b. However, in 4:15 it indicates that Paul knew the brethren their personally.
 - c. An Epistle to the Laodicians is mentioned in 4:16 however, it has long been lost or as according to Ussher it is the same letter that was written to the Ephesian brethren.
 - (1) The apocryphal "Epistola ad Laodicenses" is a late and clumsy forgery.
 - d. Once gain it is assumed from Luke's statement in Acts 19:10 that the church had its beginnings during the stay of Paul in Ephesus.
 - (1) Epaphras might have been the first to preach there since he was from the nearby city of Colosse - cf. Col 1:7; 4:12.
- C. In this last epistle Christ identifies Himself as:
1. The Amen--something which is established and positive; hence, indicates the stability of Jesus (see Heb. 13:8).
 2. The faithful and true witness--He declares the exact truth as seen; His testimony is absolute and trustworthy.
 3. The beginning of the creation of God. The word for "beginning" as used in the New Testament means:
 - a. "primacy in regard to time" that is, the commencement of a thing;
 - b. "primacy in regard to rank and authority"--it is often translated "principality" as a concordance will show.
 - (1) Jesus was not the first part of God's creation (Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching on this verse), but was the head and prince of God's creation.
 - (2) He created all things and sustains all things (Col. 1:15-16; John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:2, 10-12).
- D. Condemnation. The condition of this church was indifference and lukewarmness (having a knowledge but no zeal, inactive and unconcerned).
1. Christ wished that they would be one way or the other--cold or hot.
 - a. When individuals become cold and completely fall away and make wrecks of their lives, they can be reached easier than the self-conceited lukewarm.
 - b. The lukewarm are most difficult to reach and are a great hindrance to the cause of Christ because they influence others to be like themselves.
 2. The Lord showed His attitude toward this condition in verse 16 and His feelings toward it are no less today.
 - a. They said they were rich and had need of nothing (thinking their wealthy physical condition provided for or resulted from their spiritual condition, Luke 12:16-21), but in reality were wretched, poor, blind, and naked (their actual spiritual condition in the eyes of Christ).

3. The picture of Laodicea well describes many churches today.
 - a. They enjoy a comfortable building, have a respectable social standing in the community, and live in material prosperity unequaled before their time.
 - b. Their religion requires neither sacrifice nor effort and they feel perfectly satisfied in their own self-sufficiency.
 - c. It is sad that they do not realize that their lukewarm condition is an abomination in the sight of the Lord.
- E. Exhortation.---- They were summoned to purchase of Christ:
 1. Gold refined by fire (tested works, 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 1 Pet. 1:7) that they might be rich;
 2. White garments (clothed with purity, not stained with sin and indifference) to cover their nakedness;
 3. Eyesalve to anoint their eyes ("salve to put on your eyes" NIV) (insight and realization) that they might come to realize their miserable condition.
 - a. The Lord demanded of them fervent zeal and immediate repentance.
 - b. His sharp rebuke to them (and to all who are lukewarm) was a result of His love for them (vs. 19). (Compare Heb. 12:5-11).
 4. Christ stands on the outside seeking entrance and all can have His approval, comforts and blessings by letting Him in.
 5. To open the door to Christ is to obey His word, and to sup with Him is to dine with Him in spiritual communion and fellowship.
- F. Promise.
 1. He that overcomes or he that is victorious in living the Christian life will sit with Christ as He did with His Father--will share in His glory and dominion (Rev. 2:26-28)--shall reign with Him for ever and ever (Rev. 22:3-5).
 2. He who has an open mind and receptive heart, let him listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.
- G. Note the Table below is taken from Merrill C. Tenney, and is a summarization of the letter to the church at Laodicea.

Salutation	Christ's Self -Designation	Commendation of God	Condemnation of Evil	Counsel: Warning & Exhortation	Promise of Reward To Him That Overcometh	Invitation To Hear

Rev 3:14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,	Rev 3:14 `These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:	None	Rev 3:15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. Rev 3:16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. Rev 3:17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked	Rev 3:18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, {that} the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.	Rev 3:19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Rev 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. (21) "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.	Rev 3:22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""
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IX. In Conclusion:

- A. Through the seven short epistles we gain clear insight regarding the conditions of the churches existing at that time.
- B. In the light of these, how do we stand as a church today?

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