

The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ

7 Churches of Revelation



Ephesus



Smyrna



Pergamos



Thyatira



Sardis



Philadelphia



Laodicea

APOCALYPSE

THE UNVEILING OF

JESUS CHRIST

"COMING KING"

IN THE BOOK OF

"REVELATION"





The Seven Churches

Revelation Chapters 2 and 3

The Biblical Week – Recorded in the Bible

- Day 1 1,000 years Adam – Enoch
 - Day 2 1, 000 years Enoch – Noah
 - Day 3 1,000 years Hebrew Patriarchs
 - Abraham – David
 - Day 4 1,000 years Kingdom / Captivity
 - David – Birth of Jesus
- Jesus' Ministry Years – 33
- Days 5/6 2,000 years + (Daniel's final week)
 - Day 7 1,000 years Christ's Reign Millennial Kingdom

Arguments for 7,000 year Biblical Historical Writings

- II Peter 3:8 a day is like a 1000 years and a 1000 years are like a day.
 - Also stated in Psalm 84:10 and Psalm 90:4
- Creation (Gen 1 and 2) = 7 day period, beginning the 7 day (year) pattern
- Rev. 20:1-4 = 7th day (Shabbat) would be 1,000 years (a time of rest- Heb. 4:3-11)
- Gibbon recorded early church fathers (Rabbi Ketina, Lactantius, Victorinus, Hippolytus of Rome, Justin Martyr, and Methodius, Iraneus, and Polycarp)
- Adam told on the day he ate of the tree of knowledge he would die (930 yrs old)

Patterns of the Sevens

Zechariah 3:8

- high priest – Yeshua (called the Nazarene)
- Stone with 7 facets

Arguments for a 2,000 year Church Dispensation

- Luke 13:32 Jesus says, “...today and tomorrow, and on the 3rd day I will reach my goal – what was His goal...”
- John 2:1 – (John 1:35, John 1:43) 3rd Day Pattern = Wedding 1st miracle
 - John 1:35 Jesus begins call of disciples / John 1:43 finishes call of disciples
- John 2:19-21 – Temple (Body)? Church...also raised up on 3rd day!
- Matt 27:64 Jesus was in the tomb 2 days and rose on the 3rd day, early
- Hosea 5:16-6:2 – (Hosea was to take a harlot Bride) – Christ is saying He is going away and coming back to the Jews when they seek me...rapture and 2nd coming millennial Kingdom
- Deut. 18:15 – The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him.

Is the Rapture in the Bible

- I Thess. 4:17 – rapturo (Latin) / Harpazo (Greek)

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be **caught up together** with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the **Lord**. ¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

Can we know the time of the rapture? His return?

Rapture

- Matt 24: 36 – No one know the day or the hour...rapture or second coming?
- I Thess 5:2-6 – the day of the Lord will come upon them like a thief in the night...that the day would not overtake you like a thief because you are children of the light. Be ready, sober, with faith, and love having the hope of salvation...

Return

- Daniel 9:27 – one week (7) = 7 years after antichrist covenant with Israel...

Church

Meaning

Century

Ephesus

Apostolic

1st

Smyrna

Persecuted

Late 1st – 4th

Pergamum

Worldly / State

4th – 12

Thyatira

Sacramental

4th – present

Sardis

Protestant

14th – present

Philadelphia

Missionary

18th – present

Laodicea

Modern

20th – 21st

The first 3 churches' letters are slightly different in format dealing with rewards from the body to the end for "overcomers".

7 Elements of Each of the 7 Churches

- Meaning – Name of the Church
- Revelation of Christ
- What's Good
- What is Bad
- Encouragement / Exhortation
- Promise / Reward
- Command to Hear

4 Applications of the Message

1. Local Application
2. General Application to Churches who fit the elements
3. Personal Application to people who fit the elements
4. Prophetic Application

Revelation 1:17 - 20

- ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.
- ¹⁹ “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Revelation 2:1-3

2 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:

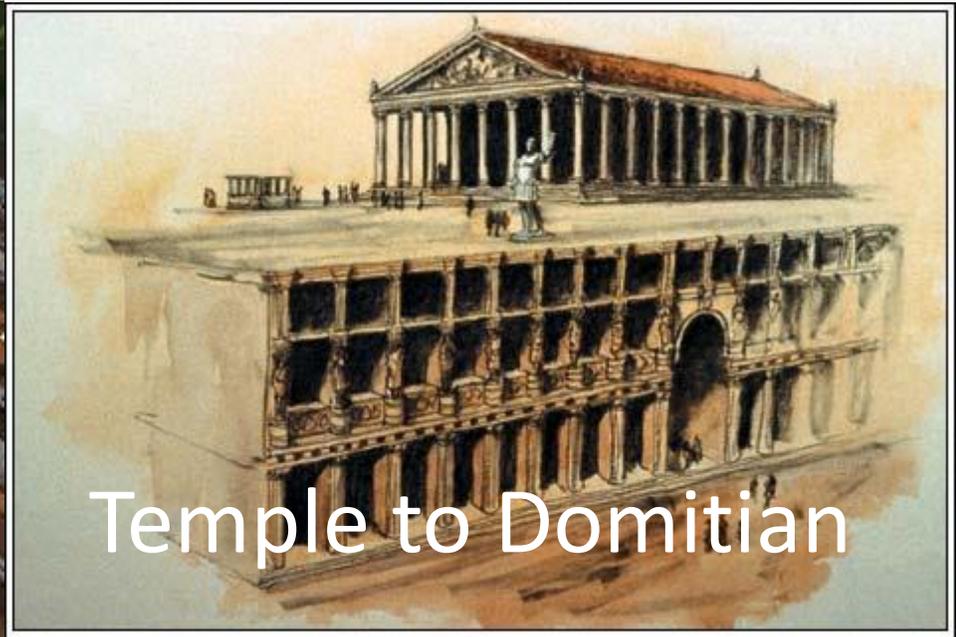
² ‘I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false; ³ and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary.

⁴ But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. ⁶ Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.’

Ephesus - Background

- Established by the Greeks – thrived under the Roman Empire
- 250,000 people – cosmopolitan and diverse, rich trade center
- Agora – open market
- Temple of Artemis (Diana) – Wonder of the World (among 14 temples)



Temple to Domitian

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Ephesus Church

- Name of the Church: **Desirable**
- Revelation of Christ: holds the 7 stars in his right hand and walks among the 7 golden lampstands
 - God walks among His church / never forsakes His people
- What's Good:
 - good deeds
 - hard work
 - **perseverance.**
 - do not tolerate **evil people**
 - you have tested (quality of their words) those who claim to be apostles - have found them false.
 - You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name
 - have not grown weary
 - Hate the **Nicolatians** – followers of Nicolas (leaders in the church who promote themselves) and/or took part in some of the Roman worship ceremonies

Ephesus

- What is Bad:
 - You have forsaken the love you had at first – likely love for God (yes) but also for one another – brothers and sisters in Christ (I John letter / Ephesians (spouse))
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - Repent – follow your doctrine (yes) BUT, love (God, the church, spouses) – Ephesians (book)
 - Repent = μετανοέω to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins – speaks of a continual action...
- Promise / Reward:
 - I will take away your lampstand...today Ephesus, neither city nor church, exists.
 - I will give the right to eat from the tree of life
 - Access to the paradise of God – place of the dead (Luke 23:43)
- Command to Hear:
 - Hear what God is saying to the churches...listen to what I am telling all – individually and corporately within our church(es).

Revelation 2:8 – 11

⁸ “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. ⁹ I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for **ten** days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown.

¹¹ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Smyrna Background

- Myrrh – ointment and embalming substance, largest producer of myrrh in the ancient World. (Has to be crushed.)



- Commercial Center – port city
- **Message:** I was Dead but now I am alive.
- Poverty = no rights to buy or sell
- Jews – greatest persecution of Christians
- 10 Days = 10 decrees that went out from Roman Emperor late 1st century – 312



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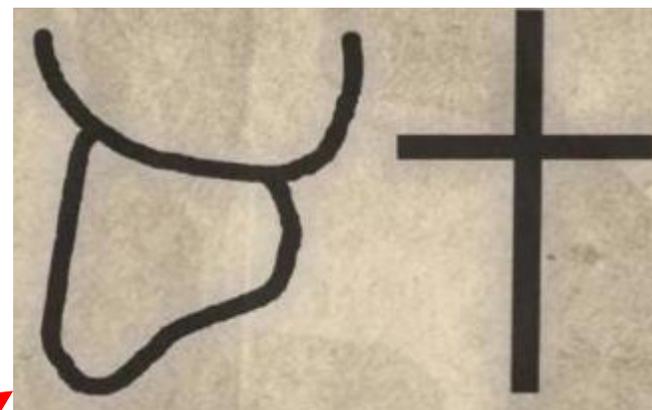
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Smyrna

- Name of the Church: spice / myrrh = death
- Revelation of Christ: He is the First (protos) and the Last (eschatos) / He died and came to life again.

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Smyrna

- What's Good: good works, tribulation, poverty, endured blasphemy, cast into prison
- What's bad: there are NO condemnations made of this church (people)
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - Fear none of the things you are going to suffer (10 days)
 - Be faithful (remain faithful)
- Promise / Reward:
 - You will not be hurt by the second death...spiritual death – you will have life.
- Command to Hear:
 - All churches...all people within the church age. Do not be scared of death...

10 Decrees Against Christians / 10 Emperors

1. Under Nero, A.D. 67
2. Under Domitian, A.D. 81
3. Under Trajan, A.D. 108
4. Under Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, A.D. 162
(Polycarp)
5. Commencing with Severus, A.D. 192
6. Under Maximus, A.D. 235
7. Under Decius, A.D. 249
8. Under Valerian, A.D. 257
9. Under Aurelian, A.D. 274
10. Under Diocletian, A.D. 303

Revelation 2:12 – 17

¹²“And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: ¹³ ‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴ But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. ¹⁵ So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶ Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war 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, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.’



Pergamum



Alter of Zeus



Church

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Pergamum

- Name of the Church: excessive marriage / mixed married
- Revelation of Christ: I have a weapon and I will use
 - Sword separates
 - Sword smites
 - Sword = Word (truth)
- What's Good:
 - Holds fast to the name of Christ
 - Has not denied the faith
 - Few martyred
 - Live in a terrible place (those not given to the mixed marriage)



Nuremberg
Rally 1930s

Pergamum

- What's bad:
 - Some hold teaching of Balaam
 - Teaching of Balak among you
 - Commit acts of immorality
 - Hold to teaching of Nicolaitians
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - Repent – turn around
- Promise / Reward:
 - Hidden manna
 - White stone
 - New name
- Command to Hear:
 - All churches...



Baal Symbol –
Arabian Moon god /
Satan (antichrist?)



Revelation 12:18 – 29

¹⁸“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: ¹⁹‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. ²⁰‘But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹‘I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. ²²‘Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. ²³‘And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. ²⁴‘But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. ²⁵‘Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. ²⁶‘He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, **TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS** ²⁷**AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES**, as I also have received authority from My Father; ²⁸and I will give him the morning star. ²⁹‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

Thyatira



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Thyatira

- Name of the Church: “castle of Tyra” or “continual sacrifice” / previous name was Semiramis – wife of Nimrod (the first anti-Christ)
- Revelation of Christ:
 - eyes of fire (judgment)
 - brass (copper and zinc) – alter
- What’s Good:
 - Works
 - Charity
 - Love
 - Faith
 - Perseverance



Asherah-Middle East



Egypt-Queen of Heaven



Ishtar-Babylon



Semiramus / Tammuz



Isis / Horus



Mary / Jesus



Venus



Aphrodite



Diana

Greek and Roman Names

Middle Ages – Worship of Mary



Thyatira

- Name of the Church: “castle of Tyra” or “continual sacrifice” / previous name was Semiramis – wife of Nimrod (the first anti-Christ)
- Revelation of Christ:
 - eyes of fire (judgment)
 - brass (copper and zinc) – alter
- What’s Good:
 - Works
 - Charity
 - Love
 - Faith
 - Perseverance

Thyatira

- What's Bad:
 - Fornication
 - Jezebel is in the church – adultery
 - Religious practices are messed up - back to legalism (law)
 - Satanic practices (rituals)
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - Place no burden on those in this church who live by faith in God / Jesus
 - Hold fast until I come

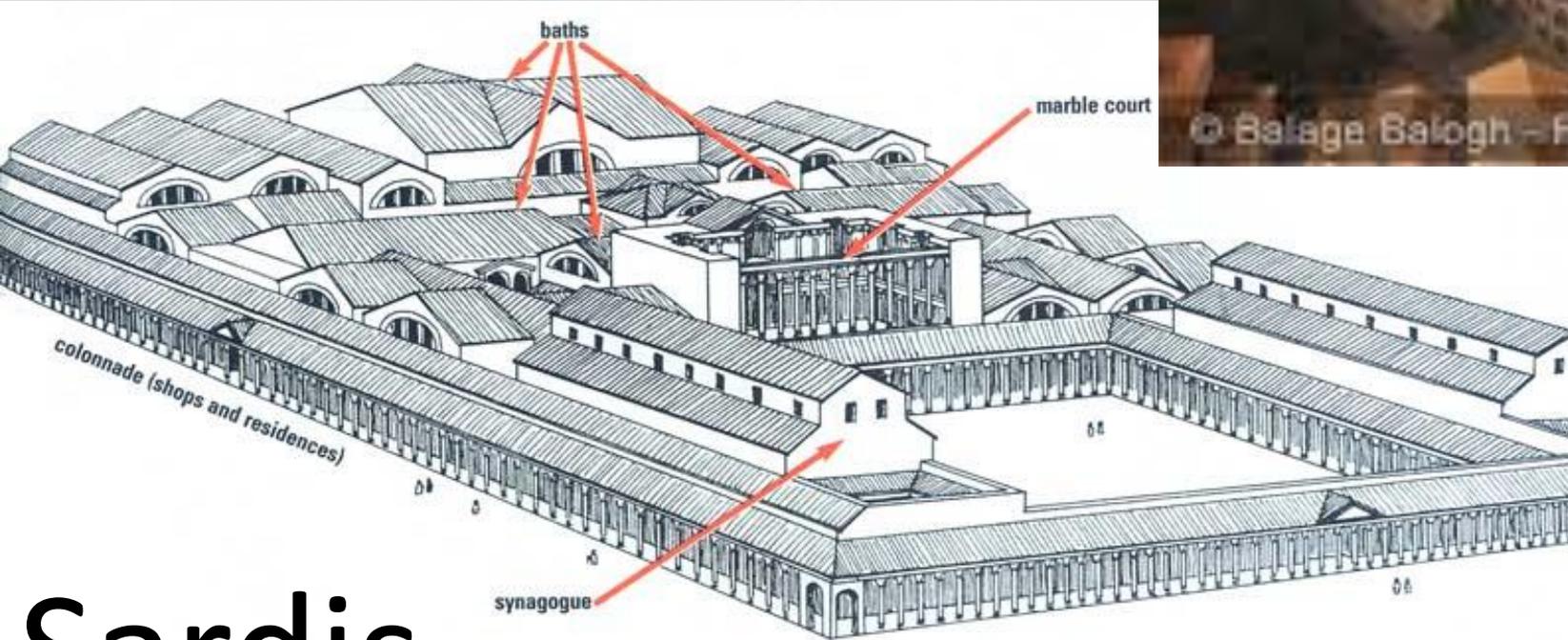
Thyatira

- Promise / Reward:
 - Thrown onto a bed of sickness
 - Go into the “Great Tribulation” (thlipsis – used in Matt 24 and Rev 7)
 - Kill her – (Jezebel’s) leaders’ of this movement and church – children
 - Overcomers will rule (with Christ) nations = Dispensation of the Kingdom
 - Give the faithful the morning star (Rev 22:16)
- Command to Hear:
 - To all the churches – consider what the Lord has said to Thyatira

Revelation 3:1 – 6

¹“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. ³ Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

⁴ Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels. ⁶ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.



Sardis

Church

Meaning

Century

Ephesus

Apostolic

1st

Smyrna

Persecuted

Late 1st – 4th

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4th – 12

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Laodicea

Modern

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Sardis

- Name of the Church: Precious “Sardius” Stone
 - High Priest breast plate – 1st Stone (Odem) or Sardius
 - Partial Representation of Lucifer – 1st Stone
 - Ancient Precious Stone – not sure what it is today...depiction of the Protestant Church
- Revelation of Christ: Seven Spirits / Seven Stars
 - Christ, the holder of church age or dispensation says this, “you once were the crown jewel of this age but now you have lost your value or meaning. What do you stand for...?”
- What’s Good:
 - You are not quite dead, yet...
 - A few have not soiled their new garments – they reflect me (light)

Sardis

- What's bad:
 - You have a name (stood for TRUTH) – BUT today your church (leadership) is dead
 - You did not complete or fulfill your purpose
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - You have a few (not so bad) beliefs that if strengthened would further God's mission
 - Wake up / Repent
 - Remember your roots...why you existed in the first place. Go back to your foundational truths
- Promise / Reward:
 - Overcomers will be clothed in White (Raptured)
 - Name NOT be erased from the Book of Life...name confessed before the Father
- Command to Hear:
 - To all the churches – consider what the Lord has said to Sardis

Revelation 3:7 – 13

⁷ “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. ⁸ I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. ⁹ I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.

¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. ¹² The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name. ¹³ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.



Philadelphia



6th Century Church

Temple of Hercules

Church

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Philadelphia

- Name of the Church: Love (Philos) Brotherly (Adelphos) – John 15:17 / I John epistle – love one another, show your love for God by loving one another
- Revelation of Christ: holy and true, who holds the key of David
 - Holiness has to be based truth (Word), doctrines must be defended by the Word – too many churches emphasize feelings without reading the Word (dangerous theology)
 - Keys of David (Is. 22:20-22) – explanation
- What's Good:
 - Your deeds – Christ knows them yet gives them no rebuke or admonishment
 - Reliance upon the strength of God (II Cor. 12:9 – 11)
 - Have NOT denied My name – know the name(s) of God in an experiential way...
 - Endurance for the work of the church

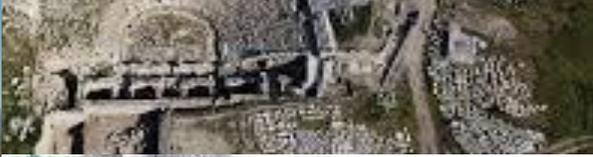
Philadelphia

- What's bad: Nothing Mentioned here
 - Jesus loves this church – open door church Rev 4:1
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - You will be kept from the hour of testing on whole World (tribulation)
 - Hold on...I am coming soon...rapture – removed from the wrath to come
- Promise / Reward:
 - “I will make a **pillar** in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it.”
 - Satan's followers will bow at their feet and admit that Jesus loves them
 - You will have a new name – identification as the Bride living in a new house (New Jerusalem)
- Command to Hear:
 - To all the churches – consider what the Lord has said to Philadelphia

Laodicea

¹⁴ “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ¹⁵ ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will [l]spit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; 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 will dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down 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.’”

Laodicea



- In fact, over the last four decades, there has been a **400% increase in Protestants** who identify as nondenominational. The sky still isn't falling on American Christianity or evangelicalism. Rather, there is a stunning growth in nondenominational evangelicalism that is reshaping the religious landscape today. Jun 12, 2015

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Laodicea

- Name of the Church: justice or verdict of condemnation for the people
- What's Good: No commendations for this church
- What's Bad: Neither hot / cold
 - Unfit for service
 - Rich and wealthy – no need for God
 - Closed the door to God / Heaven
- Encouragement / Exhortation:
 - I still love you – please repent (turn around)
 - I am knocking – please let me in
 - Christ stills wants fellowship with this church
 - Buy from me while you can...I have riches – you are really poor and don't know it.
 - I have eye salve that will help you to see spiritual things
 - Garments of White (Light) to cover your nakedness

Laodicea

- Promise / Reward:
 - I will spit (vomit) you out of My mouth
 - I am going to discipline you
 - Overcomers will be taken out – dine with Christ at His banquet table – the marriage supper for the Lamb and His bride
 - Overcomers will reign with me on thrones (24 elders)
- Command to Hear:
 - To all the churches – consider what the Lord has said to Laodicea

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