

MASTER THE CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE



The Book of Revelation

Volume I

Chapters 1-3

José De Luna

Armando Rodríguez

Study of the Book of Revelation

The Victory of Christ and the Church

José De Luna

Armando Rodríguez

Copyright 2024

Revised 11/20/24

CONTEXT OF BOOK OF REVELATION

After the crucifixion of Jesus, the disciples scattered and found themselves in a state of utter confusion. They were behind closed doors in fear of what was to come, but all that changed when Jesus conquered death. As a result of the resurrection, their zeal was revived. They set out to evangelize the world. They preached the gospel. They believed the kingdom of God had come, but by the time of the writing of the Revelation, many of them were struggling with their faith.

The church had come under persecution. They faced two enemies: Judaism, on the one hand, and Rome on the other. The Jewish Christians were rejected by their families and thrown out of the synagogue. Many of them lost their jobs, property and were labelled as traitors because of their refusal to acknowledge Caesar as Lord. Others were martyred. By the time of the writing of the Revelation, all the original apostles except John had been executed. It had cost them everything to identify with Jesus.

As a result of persecution, many believers were tempted to return to the old way of Judaism. There is evidence of this in the letter written to the Hebrews. Some renounced Christ and were in danger of becoming apostate. Some of them wondered: "If Jesus is really Lord, why are we being persecuted? (Rev. 6:10). Those who had lost loved ones wondered about when justice would come.

This struggle is addressed in the book of Revelation. The book is written to comfort the faithful with a promise of justice. The content of this book filled an immediate need and encourage those who were undergoing severe trials. For this reason, John repeatedly states that the events found in the book are things that must **shortly come to pass.**

The major theme of the message is God's sovereignty. It promises VICTORY!!!!!! Jesus leads from temporary tribulation to eternal triumph.

As you read, you will discover various transition:

- a. Old Covenant to New Covenant
- b. Old Creation to New Creation
- c. Old World to New World

To properly understand the Book of Revelation, it is necessary to pay attention to the genre of literature being used by the writer. As you know, the Bible includes genres such as Law, narrative, history, psalms-poetic literature, wisdom literature, prophecy, gospels, parables-earthly story with heavenly meaning, history of Acts, Letters, Apocalyptic and prophetic literature.

To properly understand the Book of Revelation, it is also necessary to have a good grasp of the content of the Old Testament. Of the 404 verses found in the Revelation, 348 of them are allusions to the Old Testament.

Why does John use symbolism?

Prophetic literature is supposed to be symbolic by nature. John is trying to explain things about which we have no knowledge. He compares heavenly with earthly reality. Similes are used 57 times. Symbolic language may have been used because the message of the book would have been considered treason. John was writing about the fall of Rome.

Each chapter in the following study is divided into three parts. They include: the content under study, an outline of the chapter covered and a commentary about the chapter in review. Obviously, this study is not comprehensive. It was the basis for a Bible study held on Sunday nights with a faithful group of believers. The Revelation

gave us a greater appreciation for the victory of Christ and the Church. I hope that this book provides the reader with a greater vision of God's Son and his Bride.

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 1-3

The book of Revelation, penned by the Apostle John, is a prophetic and symbolic unveiling of Christ's purposes for the church in the first century and beyond. These opening chapters set the stage for understanding Revelation as a letter written to seven historical churches in Asia Minor. The chapters emphasize the immediate relevance of John's vision to his first-century audience, portraying Jesus as the reigning King addressing His church's spiritual condition, challenges, and mission. Each chapter offers rich insights into Christ's relationship with His people and the call to faithful endurance amidst tribulation.

Chapter 1 of Revelation introduces John's apocalyptic vision while firmly grounding it in historical and spiritual reality. Jesus Christ appears to John as the glorified Son of Man, walking among the seven lampstands (representing the seven churches), holding the stars in His hand (symbolizing the church leaders). This chapter highlights Jesus' active and sovereign role in guiding and judging the churches in the immediate historical context of their struggles with persecution, heresy, and complacency. The imagery serves to encourage the original audience by affirming Christ's power and presence with them.

Chapter 2 begins Jesus' specific messages to four of the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira. Each message evaluates the church's spiritual state, offering commendation, rebuke, and promises for overcoming. John emphasizes the immediate relevance of these exhortations. For example, the church in Ephesus is commended for doctrinal vigilance but rebuked for losing its first love, a call to renewal particularly pertinent to its historical struggles. Similarly, Smyrna is encouraged to remain faithful amidst persecution, reflecting the hardships faced by Christians under Roman oppression. The instructions to Pergamum and Thyatira address the dangers of compromise with pagan practices, idolatry, and false teachings that threatened their witness.

Chapter 3 in this volume contains Christ's messages to the churches in Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Sardis is admonished for spiritual deadness despite its reputation for life, urging immediate repentance. Philadelphia is uniquely commended for its steadfastness

despite limited strength, receiving promises of protection and an open door of opportunity. Finally, Laodicea is sternly rebuked for lukewarmness, symbolizing spiritual complacency and self-sufficiency, with Christ's call to repentance and fellowship standing as a poignant appeal. These messages are deeply rooted in the historical and cultural realities of these communities, emphasizing Christ's urgent call for repentance and faithfulness in the face of contemporary challenges.

In these first three chapters, John establishes the context and purpose of Revelation, drawing attention to the real struggles, faithfulness, and failures of the seven churches in Asia Minor. Through symbolic imagery and Christ's direct words, these chapters challenge the church to endure persecution, reject compromise, and remain faithful to their calling. These messages are not just timeless spiritual lessons but historically grounded exhortations to first-century believers facing Roman oppression and societal pressures. Christ's presence among the churches assures them of His sovereignty and ultimate victory, providing hope and guidance in their immediate historical moment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Revelation 1

Content	1
Outline	3
Commentary	7

Revelation 2

Content	16
Outline	18
Commentary	23

Revelation 3

Content	38
Outline	40
Commentary	44

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION CHAPTER ONE

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; 2 who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; 6 and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 7 Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet 11 saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13 and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle. 14 And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15 and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been

REVELATION 1-3

refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters. 16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, 18 and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. 19 Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter; 20 the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 1 OUTLINE

I. Chapter 1

A. The Revelation

1. of Jesus Christ
2. which God gave him
 - a. to show unto his servants, even
 - b. the **things which must shortly come to pass:** and
3. he sent and **signified it**
 - a. by his angel
 - b. unto his servant John; (1) who bare witness:
 - of the word of God, and
 - of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even
 - of all things that he saw. (2)
4. Blessed is he ...
 - a. that **readeth**, and they
 - b. that **hear** the words of the prophecy, and
 - c. that **keep** the things that are written therein:
5. [Time-Stamp:] for the **time is at hand.** (3)

B. From John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

1. Grace to you and peace, from him ...
 - a. who **is** and
 - b. who **was** and
 - c. who **is to come;**
2. Grace to you and peace, from
 - a. the seven Spirits
 - b. that are before his throne; (4)
3. Grace to you and peace, from Jesus Christ, who is ...
 - a. the **faithful witness,**

REVELATION 1-3

- b. the **firstborn of the dead**, and
- c. the **ruler of the kings** of the earth.
- d. Unto him that ...
 - **loveth us**, and
 - **loosed us** from our sins by his blood; (5) and he
 - **made us** to be a kingdom,
 - **made us** to be priests unto his God and Father;
[To his God and Father] be the glory and the dominion
for ever and ever. Amen. (6)

C. Behold,

- 1. **he cometh** with the clouds; and
- 2. **every eye shall see him**, and
- 3. **they that pierced him** shall see him
- 4. **all the tribes** of the earth shall mourn over him.
Even so, Amen. (7)

D. I the Lord God say ... I am

- 1. the Alpha and
- 2. the Omega,
- 3. who is and
- 4. who was and
- 5. who is to come,
- 6. the Almighty. (8)

E. I John, your ...

- 1. brother and
- 2. partaker with you in the ...
 - tribulation and
 - kingdom and
 - patience which are in Jesus,

F. I John, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for ...

- 1. the word of God and

REVELATION 1-3

2. the testimony of Jesus. (9)
- G. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me **a great voice**, as of a trumpet (10) saying
 1. What thou **seest**,
 2. **write** in a book and
 3. **send** it to the seven churches:
 - a. unto Ephesus, and
 - b. unto Smyrna, and
 - c. unto Pergamum, and
 - d. unto Thyatira, and
 - e. unto Sardis, and
 - f. unto Philadelphia, and
 - g. unto Laodicea. (11)
- H. **And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw ...**
 1. seven **golden candlesticks**; (12)
 2. in the **midst** of the candlesticks one **like** unto a **son of man**,
 - a. clothed with a **garment** down to the **foot**, and
 - b. girt about **at the breasts** with a **golden girdle**. (13)
 - c. his **head and his hair** were white **as white wool**, white **as snow**; and
 - d. his **eyes** were **as a flame of fire**; (14)
 - e. his **feet like** unto **burnished brass**, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and
 - f. his **voice as** the voice of **many waters**. (15)
 - g. he had **in his right hand seven stars**: and
 - h. out of his **mouth** proceeded a **sharp two-edged sword**: and
 - i. his **countenance** was **as** the **sun shineth** in his strength. (16)
 3. John's interaction with Christ: when I saw him ...
 - a. I fell at his feet as one dead. And

REVELATION 1-3

- b. he laid his right hand upon me, saying,
 - Fear not;
 - **I am**
 - * the **first** and
 - * the **last**, (17)
 - * the **Living one**; and
- b. I **was dead**, and behold,
 - **I am alive** for evermore, and
 - I **have** the **keys of death and of Hades**. (18)
- 4. **Write** therefore
 - a. the things which thou **sawest** ...
 - b. the things which **are**, and
 - c. the things which **shall come to pass** hereafter; (19)
- 5. the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.
 - a. The **seven stars** are the **angels** of the seven churches: and
 - b. the **seven candlesticks** are **seven churches**.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 1 COMMENTARY

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly (takhos: immediately) come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John;

Vs. 1 – The source of the Revelation is God the Father. The recipient of the Revelation is Jesus Christ. Jesus is instructed to show, exhibit, and make know the Revelation to his servants. Jesus sent and signified (sémainó: give a sign) the Revelation to John through the agency of an angel. The word ‘revelation’ (apokalupsis) means to unveil, uncover or reveal. The content of this book is not written to hide anything from the believer, but to reveal God’s heart. Note that verse 1 provides a timestamp for the content of this book. The things (events) that follow are said to “shortly come to pass.” This time qualifier is mentioned throughout the book of Revelation.

Examples:

Rev. 1:1	Things which must shortly come to pass
Rev. 1:3	For the time is at hand
Rev. 1:19	Write ... what is about to occur.
Rev. 2:5	I will come quickly
Rev. 2:10	Persecution for 10 days
Rev. 2:16	I will come soon and fight for you.
Rev. 3:10	Time of trouble is about to come.
Rev. 3:11	I am coming soon – hold on
Rev. 6:11	How long ... wait a little longer.
Rev. 11:14	3rd woe is coming soon.
Rev. 22:6	Sent to show things which must soon take place
Rev. 22:7	Behold, I am coming soon.
Rev. 22:10	Do not seal up the words of this prophecy ... the time is near.
Rev. 22:12	I am coming soon.
Rev. 22:20	Yes, I am coming soon.

REVELATION 1-3

Why is the time qualifier important? When seeking for evidence to interpret the book, the text informs us that the book is about “...things which must shortly come to pass...” A review of the events that took place **shortly after** the book was written will help to interpret the content of the Book of Revelation.

2 who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw.

Vs. 2 – John is said to bear witness (martureó: provide evidence) of three things:

- the Word of God,
- the testimony (marturia: evidence, witness) of Jesus Christ and
- all those things that he saw (horaó: experience, perceive).

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Vs. 3 – The book offers a promise of blessing. The blessing (Makarios: extension of God’s benefits) belongs to those who do three things:

- Those who **read** the prophecy. This refers to the practice of public reading. (anaginóskó: to read in such a way that enables others to re-live what is conveyed)
- Those who **hear** the words of the prophecy. (akouó: to hear God’s voice which prompts God to birth faith within)
- those that **keep** (téreó: guard, observe or watch over) those things found in the prophecy.

The three-part blessing is granted to those who read, hear and practice the content of the Revelation. Again, this passage also reveals a timestamp (time is at hand) indicating that the activity to follow will take place shortly.

REVELATION 1-3

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne;

Vs. 4 – John is writing to seven churches which were in existence during his time. Grace is God's unmerited favor from which everything good flows. Peace (eiréné: God's gift of wholeness) is the state of wellness of heart and soul. It is not possible to experience peace without first receiving divine grace. The text reveals Father as ...

- Him who is (eimi: present)
- Him who was (past)
- Him who is to come (future)

Also, the text reveals that grace and peace flow from the seven Spirits who are before the throne. The number 7 is used to describe perfection. There are not seven Spirits. The number is used to highlight the idea of fulness. In this passage, the Holy Spirit is before the throne. Whereas Jesus sits to the right hand of God, the Holy Spirit is before the throne. This passage introduces us to Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood;

Vs. 5 – In this passage, the author reveals that grace and peace also flow from Jesus. There are several titles used to identify Jesus:

- Christ (Christos: anointed one)
- Faithful witness (Pistos: reliable; Martus: martyr)
- Jesus is a truthful and reliable source of what is recorded in the Revelation.
- Firstborn of the dead (prototokos: first in time) He was the first to rise from the dead in a glorified, everlasting body.)

REVELATION 1-3

- Ruler (archón: preeminent ruler) of the kings (basileus: rulers) of the earth (Sovereign over all)

The text reveals that Jesus loves (agapaó: takes pleasure in) the believer and has loosed (luó: released, untied) him from sins (guilt, fault, failure) by his blood. The redemptive work of Jesus is in view here. The love Jesus was such that he was willing to give his life to rescue us from our condition.

6 and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Verse 6 continues with the benefits we have received because of the finished work of Jesus. He has made us a kingdom (basileia: those ruled by Christ). The believer is said to be a priest (hiereus: one who offers sacrifices) to God the Father. In the Old Testament, the priest offered sacrifices to God and interceded for others. Today, we are that kingdom of priests who offer God sacrifices of praise and intercede for His people. Praise is offered to Father. Glory and dominion to Father for ever and ever. Amen! (let it be so)

7 Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen.

Verse 7 introduces the reader to the major theme of the book. God will soon judge Israel for the murder of His Son. The judgment comes upon those who said “let his blood be upon us and our children.” (Matt. 27:22, 26; John 19:16) The “Coming” in this passage does not refer to the 2nd Coming of Christ. It deals with a coming in judgement.

The idea of God “coming in the clouds” is found in the Old Testament. It does not always refer to the final or second coming. The coming-in-the-cloud language was a prophetic way of speaking of historical judgement.

REVELATION 1-3

See examples below:

1. Isa. 19:1 - A prophecy against Egypt:
“See, the LORD rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear.”
2. Psa. 18:7-15; 104:3
3. Isa. 13:1; 9-13
4. Joel 2:1-2
5. Micah 1:1-4
6. Zech. 12:10; Dan. 7:13
7. Matt. 24:2, 16, 29-30; 34 (a coming against Israel. His coming is against the nation who pierced him.)
8. Matt. 20:18; 21:33-43; Luke 9:22
9. Matt. 20:13
10. Acts 4:10; John 19:5-15; Acts 2:22, 33, 36; Acts 3:14-15; Acts 4:8-10; 5:30

To whom is Jesus coming? The passage refers to “those who pierced him.” They are those who were responsible for the death of Jesus. The “Coming” in this text is going to be witnessed by those who murdered the prince of life. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple were said to be a Coming of Christ in glory. Almost every time the word earth is mentioned in the Revelation, it can be translated as “land”. Both the word tribes and land point to the Jews as the recipients of the judgment in this passage.

8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Vs. 8 - The theme ends with a signature. The Lord God reveals Himself as the Alpha (the first letter of the Greek alphabet; the initial point) and the Omega (the last letter of the Greek alphabet; the goal or purpose). Again, He reveals Himself as the one who is (present), was (past) and is to come (future). He reveals Himself as the almighty. (pantokratór: ruler of the universe)

REVELATION 1-3

9 I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

In verse 9, John introduces himself as:

- a brother (adelphos – fellow Christian)
- partaker (co-partner) in tribulation (thlipsis: persecution, affliction, distress).
From this text, we may infer that Christians were undergoing persecution. John identifies himself with the believer in their suffering.
- He is also a partner in the kingdom (basileia: rule) and patience (hupomoné: steadfastness) which are in Jesus.

John was exiled to the isle of Patmos for two reasons:

- for the word of God
- for the testimony of Jesus

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet

Vs. 10 - While John was under the control of the Holy Spirit on the Lord's day, he heard behind him a great voice. The voice was loud. It was like the sound of a trumpet. Trumpets were used to communicate important messages during the time of the Revelation. The trumpet indicates the importance of the message to follow.

11 saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Verse 11 introduces the reader to the message announced by the loud voice in the previous verse. The voice instructs John to write in a book the things witnessed.

REVELATION 1-3

The content of his writing is to be sent to seven literal churches that existed in Asia Minor.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks;

John provides details about his experience. He turned to see the voice that was now speaking to him. After turning, he saw seven golden candlesticks.

13 and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

14 And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

In verses 13-16, John identifies someone standing in the middle of seven candlesticks. John provides a detailed description of the Son of Man.

- He was clothed with a garment down to the foot
- He was girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.
- His head and hair were white as white wool, white as snow
- His eyes were as a flame of fire
- His feet were like burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace
- His voice was like many waters
- He was holding 7 stars in his right hand.
- Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword
- His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength

REVELATION 1-3

In these passages, John witnessed a glorious vision of Jesus. The details of the description are not to be taken literally. Each detail represents something about the glorious Christ. They will each be unpacked as we continue this study. The Son of Man in these verses is dressed like a High Priest. He is prepared to carry out a new role. He will now rule from his new position at the right hand of Father.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last.

18 and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

John records his reaction to the vision of Christ. John fell at his feet as a dead man. It is interesting to note that John leaned on the breast of Jesus in his account of the gospel, but in this verse, John falls as a dead man. John states that Jesus laid his right hand upon him and provided him with comfort by declaring:

“Do not fear.” Jesus proceeds to reveal himself by stating:

- I am the first and the last.
- I am the Living one
- I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore
- I have the keys of death and of Hades

Again, these description of Christ will be unpacked as we move into our study.

19 Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter;

In verse 19, John is instructed to write about three things:

- What you saw (past)
- The things that are (present)

REVELATION 1-3

- The things which shall come to pass hereafter (future)

It may be possible to divide the Revelation into these three divisions identified by Jesus.

20 the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.

In verse 20, Jesus interprets the symbols that he used earlier in this chapter. The symbols were mysteries until they were interpreted by Jesus.

The 7 stars refer to the 7 angels (aggelos: messengers or delegates) of the 7 churches. The 7 candlesticks refer to the seven churches. Most agree that the angels in this passage refer to the pastor/leader of each church. The word angel can refer to both a celestial or human being.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 2 CONTENT

1 To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: 2 I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; 3 and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary. 4 But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. 5 Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent. 6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

8 And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These things saith the first and the last, who was dead, and lived again: 9 I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty (but thou art rich), and the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword: 13 I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is; and thou holdest fast my name, and didst not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to

REVELATION 1-3

commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. 16 Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it.

18 And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto burnished brass: 19 I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first. 20 But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest

the woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time that she should repent; and she willeth not to repent of her fornication. 22 Behold, I cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her works. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto each one of you according to your works. 24 But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, who know not the deep things of Satan, as they are wont to say; I cast upon you none other burden. 25 Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come. 26 And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I 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 shivers; as I also have received of my Father: 28 and I will give him the morning star. 29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 2 OUTLINE

II. Chapter 2

- A. To the angel of **the church in Ephesus** write:
1. These things saith he ...
 - a. that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he
 - b. that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks:
(1)
 2. These things saith he ...
 - a. I know thy works, and
 - b. I know thy toil and patience, and
 - c. I know that thou canst not bear evil men, and
 - d. I know thou didst try them that call themselves apostles,
and
 - they are not, and
 - thou didst find them false; (2) and
 - e. I know thou hast patience and
 - f. I know didst bear for my name's sake, and
 - g. I know thou hast not grown weary. (3)
 3. But I have this against thee, that
 - a. thou didst leave thy first love. (4)
 - b. The expectation
 - Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and
 - repent and
 - do the first works;
 - c. The warning ... or else
 - I come to thee, and
 - I will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou
repent. (5)

REVELATION 1-3

4. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. (6)
 5. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.
 6. To him that overcometh, to him will ...
 - a. I give to eat of the tree of life,
 - b. which is in the Paradise of God. (7)
- B. And to the angel of **the church in Smyrna** write:
1. These things saith ...
 - a. the first and the last,
 - b. the one who was dead, and
 - c. the one who lived again: (8)
 2. These things saith ...
 - a. I know thy tribulation, and
 - b. I know thy poverty (but thou art rich), and
 - c. I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and
 - they are not, but
 - they are a synagogue of Satan. (9)
 3. Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer: behold,
 - a. the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and
 - b. ye shall have tribulation ten days.
 4. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. (10)
 5. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.
 6. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. (11)
- C. And to the **angel of the church in Pergamum** write:
1. These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword:
 2. These things said he ... (12)
-

REVELATION 1-3

- a. I know where thou dwellest, even
 - b. I know where Satan's throne is; and
 - c. I know thou holdest fast my name, and
 - d. I know thou didst not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas
 - my witness,
 - my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth. (13)
 - 3. But I have a few things against thee, because
 - a. thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam,
 - who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel,
 - to eat things sacrificed to idols, and
 - to commit fornication. (14)
 - b. So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. (15)
 - 4. The expectation
 - a. Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and
 - b. I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. (16)
 - 5. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.
 - 6. To him that overcometh, to him will ...
 - a. I give of the hidden manna, and
 - b. I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it. (17)
 - D. And to the angel of the **church in Thyatira write:** These things saith ...
 - 1. the Son of God, who hath
 - a. his eyes like a flame of fire, and
-

REVELATION 1-3

- b. his feet are like unto burnished brass: (18)
 - 2. I know ...
 - a. thy works, and
 - b. thy love and
 - c. thy faith and
 - d. thy ministry and
 - e. thy patience, and
 - f. that thy last works are more than the first. (19)
 - 3. But I have this against thee, that ...
 - a. thou sufferest the woman Jezebel,
 - who calleth herself a prophetess; and
 - she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and
 - to eat things sacrificed to idols. (20)
 - b. I gave her time that she should repent; and
 - she willeth not to repent of her fornication. (21)
 - Behold, I cast her into a bed, and
 - I will cast them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her works. (22)
 - I will kill her children with death; and
 - all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts: and
 - I will give unto each one of you according to your works. (23)
 - 4. But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, who know not the deep things of Satan, as they are wont to say;
 - a. I cast upon you none other burden. (24)
 - b. Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come. (25)
 - 5. He that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end,
-

REVELATION 1-3

- a. to him will I give authority over the nations: (26)
 - b. he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father: (27)
 - c. I will give him the morning star. (28)
6. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 2 COMMENTARY

1 To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks:

Vs. 1 is addressed to the leader of the church in Ephesus. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

The City of Ephesus

Ephesus came under the control of the Romans in 133 BC. It was given the status of a free city. For this reason, it enjoyed less direct rule and control from the central government in Rome. During the time of the writing of the Revelation, Ephesus was the capital of the Province of Asia and had an estimated population of about 250,000.

It was a port city and was considered a chief commercial center. It boasted such attractions as art, science, witchcraft, idolatry, gladiators, and persecution. It included a theater, a gymnasium, public baths and a public brothel. It was one of the wealthiest and most influential cities in the Roman Empire and attracted people from all over the world.

One of the most important structures in Ephesus was the temple to the Greek goddess Artemis which was considered one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. (Acts 19:35) The temple not only served a religious (sexual) purpose but was responsible for creating great wealth. It sold silver shrines.

Paul spent 3 years in Asia Minor. As a result of Paul's ministry, 'all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord' (Acts 19:10, 26)

REVELATION 1-3

In verse 1, Jesus identifies himself as holding the 7 stars (leaders) in his hand. What does it mean to have the stars (leaders) of the church in his hand? It may refer to the way Jesus upheld, directed and protected the leaders of his church.

The text also reveals that Jesus is walking amid the 7 golden candlesticks (7 churches). Not only does Jesus have the leadership of Ephesus in his hand, but he also walks in the midst of the church. The message is clear. Jesus is among us. We are not alone. He walks among us to both guard and inspect.

Verse 1 also states that the candlestick (church) is made of gold. Gold represents the nature of God. The church reveals God's nature because it is indwelt by God. The candlestick (church) served as a light so others could see. The church is to serve as a light to the world.

2 I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false;

3 and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary.

Verses 2-3 reveal that Jesus is not only present in the church, but is also aware of its condition. There are several things about which Jesus is aware and for which he praises them.

Note the following:

- Jesus was aware of their works. Apparently, the church was involved in doing good works.
- Jesus was aware of their toil. Their labor was focused.
- Jesus was aware of their patience. They endured as they did God's work. They did not tolerate men who called themselves apostles and were not. The Ephesians were zealous and protected the interests of the church. They had

REVELATION 1-3

done well to heed the apostle Paul's admonition to protect the flock (Acts 20:28-31).

- Jesus was aware of their willingness to do his work tirelessly.

4 But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love.

5 Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent.

Verse 4 begins with a coordinating conjunction. Jesus highlights a problem in the church. He voices his disapproval. In the previous verses, Jesus praises the church for protecting God's work from false teachers. In this verse, Jesus reprimands them for losing their first love. Acts 18-19 reveal that the Ephesians were zealous learners who eagerly communicated the gospel with all of Asia. They are identified in the book of Ephesians as those who had love for the saints and faith in Jesus. The apostle Paul uses the phrase "in union with Christ" 35 times in the epistle to the Ephesians. The church was known for her strong relationship with Christ.

In this passage, Jesus reveals that things had changed. The church had left its first love. Jesus stated, 'I will come to thee.' He warns them that he would discipline them. Verse 5 describes the serious nature of the churches' failure. They had fallen and were called to repent by doing first works. The first works are linked with the loss of their first love. The church had lost its former earnest enthusiasm for Christ.

Our activity can never take the place of our relationship with Jesus. Our works are the result of being in union with Christ. A fine-tuned church organization is not enough. Orthodoxy and love must walk hand-in-hand. The church must have a vibrant relationship with Christ as it labors. In verse 5, Jesus issues a warning. The Ephesians are not asked to improve, but to return to their previous practice and experience. If they failed to do so, their candlestick (church) would be removed out of its place. It is possible that an organization can survive after losing its first love, but

REVELATION 1-3

not as a candlestick that provides light to the world. When the church loses its first love, it loses its power to shine, influence and draw men into relationship with God.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

In verse 6, Jesus again, praises the Ephesians because of their hatred for the works of the Nicolaitans. Jesus also confirmed his hatred for their works. We do not have much information about the Nicolaitans in history. The name Nicolaitan means conqueror of the people. It is believed that they belonged to a Gnostic sect that taught someone could sin freely without fear of the wrath of God. Later in 2:14-15, John seems to indicate that the doctrine of the Baalamites and that of the Nicolaitans is similar. The doctrine promoted by this sect sought to seduce God's people into idolatry and fornication.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Verse 7 exhorts the reader to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Even though the message in this letter is specifically directed to the church in Ephesus, it applies to all the churches everywhere who have lost their first love. The Spirit's message is to Overcome! (1 John 5:4)

A promise of reward is granted to those who overcome the loss of their first love. To those who restore their love and zeal for Jesus, they will be given to eat of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God. This passage alludes to Genesis. It was there that Adam and Eve were denied access to the tree of life because of their sin of rebellion. In this passage, the overcomer will receive access to that tree of life. Revelation 22 reveals that the leaves of that tree provide healing for the nations. The overcomer is given access to the tree of life. What is the Tree of Life? It points to

REVELATION 1-3

Jesus Christ. To partake of the Tree is to appropriate the blessings and benefits of salvation in time and eternity.

8 And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These things saith the first and the last, who was dead, and lived again: 9 I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty (but thou art rich), and the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Vs. 8 is addressed to the leader of the church in Smyrna. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

The City of Smyrna

The city was located about 40 miles north of Ephesus and included a population of about 100,000. It had a good harbor and was a major trade center. The city included 5 pagan temples, a famous stadium, a library and the largest public theater in Asia Minor. The city also included a large population of Jews.

The word Smyrna means myrrh. It was a resinous gum used as an ointment for embalming or perfume. Even though the church was under much pressure, they gave off a fragrance (2 Cor. 2:14-15). While Ephesus had an **internal** problem, a lack of love; Smyrna faced an **external** problem – persecution.

The inhabitants of Smyrna were devoted to the emperor's cult. Those who provided a pinch of incense were given a certificate to do business in Rome. This was Rome's way of testing political loyalty. When Christians refused to participate in the pagan ritual, they were then persecuted. They were not allowed to do business in Rome.

Jesus introduces himself as the first and the last as well as the one who was dead and lived again. Isaiah 44:6; 48:12 uses the title "the First and the Last" as one of

REVELATION 1-3

the names of God. Though the believers were undergoing trials, Jesus comforts them by reminding them that he is present from beginning to end. In essence, Jesus encourages the believers by reminding them of his death and his victory over it. Jesus was the first fruit of the dead (1 Cor. 15:20-22). He swallowed up death in victory (1 Cor. 15:45). Death cannot defeat us when resurrection is on our side. Jesus guaranteed resurrection to those who were about to face death.

In verse 9, Jesus informs the church that he is aware of all the details.

- He knows all about their political and religious affliction (Roman & Jewish).
- He knows all about the consequences of their affliction – poverty.

The first source of persecution against the Christians was by the Romans. Believers had lost their jobs, property, wealth, status, friends, and opportunities. Jesus declared to them that in their poverty, they were rich in God. (2 Cor. 6:10).

Verse 9 also provides the reader with a clue about a second source of persecution faced by the believers. Jesus speaks of the blasphemy of the Jews and reveals that they are of the synagogue of Satan (accuser). The Jews claimed to be children of Abraham, but in fact they were children of Satan (John 8:38-44). There is no such thing as an orthodox Jew. If a Jew rejects Christ, he has rejected Moses (John 5:46). Paul states that the real Jew is one inwardly (Rom. 2:28-29). The real Jew is the one who has embraced Jesus Christ (Rom. 11:11-24; Gal 3:7-9, 26-29). According to Paul, the church is the new Israel (Gal 6:16; 3:16, 29). The Jews under the old covenant belonged to the synagogue of Satan, whereas, the Christians under the new covenant belong to the synagogue of Christ (Acts 6:9-14; 13:10; 14:2-5; 17:5-8; 18:6, 12-13; 19:9; 21:27-36; 24:1-9; 25:2-3, 7).

10 Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.

REVELATION 1-3

In verse 10, Jesus forewarns the church about things to come. He informs them that they were about to undergo suffering. Jesus identifies the source of that suffering – the devil. He identifies the outcome of the suffering: 1) prison and 2) legal trials. Lastly, he also defines the time of suffering: 10 days. The time may be symbolic. It may refer to the fact that suffering will be temporary. Jesus does not sugar coat persecution. The believer will know triumph through tribulation. Jesus declares that some will face death as they transition from the old covenant into the new one. Ten days of tribulation in exchange for one thousand years of victory (20:4-6) is worth it. Jesus provides a conditional promise in this passage. If those who undergo suffering are faithful unto death, they will be given a crown of life (salvation).

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Verse 11 exhorts the reader to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Even though the message in this letter is specifically directed to the church in Smyrna, it applies to all the churches everywhere who are undergoing persecution. The Spirit's message is to overcome. (1 John 5:4).

Jesus makes a promise. Those who overcome will not be hurt of the second death. The first death is a separation of the soul from the body and is temporary. The second death is the lake of fire and is permanent (Rev. 20:14; 21:8). Those who have believed have not only escaped the wrath of God, but eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword:

Vs. 12 is addressed to the leader of the church in Pergamum. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

The City of Pergamum

REVELATION 1-3

Pergamum was located north of Smyrna about 65 miles. Its estimated population was about 120,000. In the year 31 BC, Pergamon was authorized to become the first imperial cult center in the east. For much of this early period, Pergamum served as capital of the Roman Province of Asia. It was also host to Zeus, Dionysos, and Asklepios, the serpent-god designated savior.

The city had magnificent temples to the Caesars and Rome. During the first and second centuries before Christ, Pergamon was famous for its extensive hospital and healing sanctuary dedicated to the god Asclepius. It stood over half a mile from the Acropolis and the main portions of the city, to which it was attached by a paved and colonnaded processional way. The sanctuary of Asclepius covered nearly 154,000 square feet and contained temples, sanctuaries, baths, a spa, springs, exercise rooms, library, a small theater, and more. It served, not only as a hospital, but also as a social and religious center in the city.

In verse 12, Jesus introduces himself as one who has a sharp two-edged sword. Due to the popularity of emperor worship in this city, the believers were more likely to clash with the government. Rome had declared itself to be the Creator of all. Its power over life and death was absolute and final.

Christians embraced an opposing view and declared that all authority outside of God was derived from God (Rom. 13:1-4). Christianity taught that it was Jesus who wielded all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). If earthly rulers usurped the authority of God, they would then be met with the sword of judgment. The two-edged sword represents the authority of Christ.

13 I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is; and thou holdest fast my name, and didst not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Verse 13 reveals those things that Jesus knew about the church in Pergamum. Jesus declared that he ...

REVELATION 1-3

- was aware of where those in Pergamum dwelt
- was aware of where Satan's throne was located
- was aware that those in Pergamum that held his name fast
- was aware that those in Pergamum did not deny his faith
- was aware of Antipas, his witness and faithful one who was killed among them where Satan dwelt.

In this passage, Jesus states that Satan's throne was in Pergamum. This reference may refer to the fact that Rome had established Pergamum as its official cult center of emperor worship in Asia. Satan had already been linked to the synagogue. The Jewish community had abandoned God's covenant to gain Rome's favor. They had in essence married Rome. As we will see later, Satan was the moving force behind Jewish/Roman attempts to destroy the church.

In verse 13, Jesus also praises the church for remaining faithful to his name and for holding fast to their faith in him. When the Christians were asked to offer incense to the emperor and declare that he was Lord, they refused and declared instead that Jesus was Lord of all. The persecution in question is time-stamped. The persecution occurred during the days of Antipas. Though no detailed information is provided about Antipas, he is praised as the faithful witness of Jesus. He was faithful unto death. Antipas may represent all the believers who were martyred for their faith.

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication.
15 So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner.

In verse 14, Jesus voices his disapproval as he provides details about the teaching of Balaam. He is aware that the church has allowed several individuals that have embraced the teaching of Balaam to dwell among them. The name Balaam means

REVELATION 1-3

conqueror or destroyer of the people. If you recall, this is also the meaning of the word Nicolaitan.

Who was Balaam? He was a false prophet (Num. 22-24). When Israel's enemy discover that God's people could not be destroyed, the enemy turned to Balaam for help. The false prophet suggested a plan to Balak. The false prophet revealed that the only way to defeat Israel was through corruption. Balaam taught Balak (Num. 31:16) to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel by eating things sacrificed to idols, and by committing fornication. Jesus mentions a second group that used the same method to corrupt God's people – the Nicolaitans. In verses 14-15, Jesus links Balaam and the Nicolaitans. The church in Pergamum faced two enemies: religious heresy and secular persecution. There is evidence of the heresy of Balaam and the Nicolaitans during the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:28-29).

16 Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth.

In verse 16, Jesus orders the church to repent. He states that 'he is coming quickly.' Again, the coming of Jesus in this passage refers to immediate judgement upon those who hold false doctrine. Jesus warns the church that he will make war with the perpetrators by using the sword of his mouth. To avoid judgment, the church must excommunicate the heretics that refuse to repent. When the church allows a heretic to remain in its midst, it suffers great loss. It is interesting to note that an angel came with a sword to oppose Balaam (Num. 22:31) and that Balaam eventually died by the sword (Num. 31:8).

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it.

REVELATION 1-3

Verse 17 exhorts the reader to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Even though the message in this letter is specifically directed to the church in Pergamum, it applies to all churches everywhere who have failed to cast out the heretic in their midst. The Spirit's message is to overcome! (1 John 5:4)

The overcomer is promised three things in this passage.

- First, there is a promise of hidden manna
- Secondly, there is a promise of a white stone
- Thirdly, there is a promise of a new name written on the white stone, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it.

The manna hidden in the Ark points to Jesus Christ (Exod. 16:33-34; Heb. 9:4). In the Old Testament, it was the manna that gave God's people daily strength and sustenance. The overcomer in this passage is promised strength and sustenance in time and eternity. Again, the overcomer is offered manna which the Psalmist calls angel's food (Ps. 78:25).

The believer is also promised a white stone. A white stone was used as a token of acquittal (justification) and may refer to the fact that Jesus imputed our sin to himself and his righteousness to us.

The believer is also said to receive a new name. This represents the receipt of a new character and identity when we embrace Jesus Christ. The new name is exclusive to the one receiving it.

18 And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto burnished brass:

Verse 8 is addressed to the leader of the church in Thyatira. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

REVELATION 1-3

The City of Thyatira

Thyatira was a prosperous trading town located on the Roman road from Pergamos to Laodicea. It hosted a major cult of the pagan god Tyrimnos (son of Zeus). The city was famous for its dyeing and was a center of the purple trade. The trade guilds in the city, which were well known, were more organized and in far greater numbers than in any other ancient Asia Minor city. Every artisan in Thyatira belonged to a guild. Guilds were incorporated organizations that could own property in its own name and could enter into contracts for construction projects. As such, they wielded a significant amount of influence. Two of the most powerful guilds were those of the coppersmiths and the dyers.

In this passage, Jesus introduces himself as the Son of God. His eyes are like a flame of fire and his feet are like burnished brass. The city of Thyatira mixed the worship of Tyrimnos and Caesar who claimed to be the incarnate Son of God. This letter begins with a revelation of Jesus as the real Son of God. Fire and burnished brass point to judgement. Jesus is present as the genuine Son of God who has appeared to judge those who would usurp his Lordship.

19 I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first.

In verse 19, Jesus commends the believers. He reveals the things that he knows about the church:

- I know thy works
- I know thy love
- I know thy faith
- I know thy ministry
- I know thy patience
- I know thy last works are more than the first. (19)

REVELATION 1-3

Note that the church was buzzing with activity.

20 But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

In verse 20, Jesus reprimands the believers and reveals the things that he knows about them. Jesus begins by stating that he had something against them. The church had allowed someone like Jezebel to teach and introduce practices that were offensive to Jesus.

Who was Jezebel? In the Old Testament, her (1 Kings 21:25-26; 2 Kings 9:22) sins were identified as “harlotries” and “witchcraft” The text indicates that the woman being condemned called herself a prophetess. She taught and seduced the servants of Jesus to commit fornication, and eat things sacrifices offered to idols. (20)

In the Old Testament, Jezebel was the wife of King Ahab (7th King of Israel). She is the archetype of a wicked woman. She was daughter of the priest-king Ethbaal (King of coastal Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon). When she married Ahab, she persuaded him to introduce the worship of the Tyrian god Baal-Melkart, a nature god. She murdered many of the prophets of Yahweh. Elijah called for a severe drought as divine retribution (1 Kings 17). Jezebel lied about Naboth committing blaspheme and had him stoned so her husband could have Naboth’s land.

Elijah had 400 Baal priests slain (1 Kings 18:18-19:3). King Ahab died, but Jezebel lived for another 10 years. She was thrown from a window and eaten by dogs. Jezebel introduced several ideas:

- She wanted to institute a government of absolute power and authority of the sovereign
- She thought she was above the law
- She wanted to be more inclusive in her religious practice

REVELATION 1-3

- She compromised the truth to gain financial advantage
- She was known for being cruel, greedy, and vain

21 And I gave her time that she should repent; and she willeth not to repent of her fornication. 22 Behold, I cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her works. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto each one of you according to your works.

In verse 21, Jesus reveals that the person involved with the sins of Jezebel was given the opportunity to repent, but refused to turn away from her works of fornication. In verse 22, Jesus reveals the punishment that she would suffer for her defiance. She would be cast into a bed. Both she and those who commit adultery with her would then be cast into great tribulation.

In verse 23, Jesus states that the offspring of her sexual relationships will be put to death. Upon witnessing this judgment, the church will then know that Jesus searches the reins of the heart. A promise of reward and judgment is made to all according to their work.

24 But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, who know not the deep things of Satan, as they are wont to say; I cast upon you none other burden.

25 Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come.

26 And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I 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 shivers; as I also have received of my Father: 28 and I will give him the morning star.

REVELATION 1-3

In verse 24, Jesus praises those who have not been influenced or led away by the teachings and practices of Jezebel. The faithful have not dabble with the deep things of Satan. Jesus did not cast any burden upon those who followed him.

In verse 25, the believers are encouraged to hold fast to their godly understanding and practice until he comes again.

In verse 26, conditional promises are made to those who overcome the temptation of dabbling with the doctrines and practices of Jezebel. Those who overcome and keep the works of Jesus to the end will be given authority over the nations.

In verse 27, Jesus informs the faithful that they will rule the nations with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken in shivers. The authority Jesus offers the overcomer is the authority he received from his Father.

In verse 28, Jesus promises the overcomer the morning star. In verse 29, Jesus encourages the faithful to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Even though this letter is specifically written to the church in Thyatira, its message is relevant to all churches.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 3

1 And to the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead. 2 Be thou watchful, and establish the things that remain, which were ready to die: for I have found no works of thine perfected before my God. 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and didst hear; and keep it, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4 But thou hast a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments: and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. 5 He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth: 8 I know thy works (behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut), that thou hast a little power, and didst keep my word, and didst not deny my name. 9 Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10 Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown. 12 He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and mine own new name. 13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

14 And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

REVELATION 1-3

These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked: 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich; and white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest; and eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see. 19 As many as I love, I reprove and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 21 He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 3 OUTLINE

III. Chapter 3

A. And to the angel of the church in Sardis write:

1. These things saith he...
 - a. that hath the seven Spirits of God,
 - b. that hath the seven stars:
 2. I know ...
 - a. thy works,
 - b. that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead.
(1)
 3. Be thou ...
 - a. watchful, and
 - b. establish the things that remain, which were ready to die: for
 4. I have found no works of thine perfected before my God. (2)
 5. Remember therefore ...
 - a. how thou hast received and
 - b. didst hear; and
 - c. keep it, and
 - d. repent.
 6. If therefore thou shalt not watch,
 - a. I will come as a thief, and
 - b. thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee (3)
 7. But thou hast a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments: and
 - a. they shall walk with me in white; for
 - b. they are worthy. (4)
 8. He that overcometh ...
 - a. shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and
 - a. I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and
-

REVELATION 1-3

- b. I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. (5)
- 9. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

B. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

- 1. These things saith he ...
 - a. that is holy, he
 - b. that is true, he
 - c. that hath the key of David, he
 - d. that openeth and none shall shut, and
 - e. that shutteth and none openeth: (7)
- 2. I know ...
 - a. thy works (behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut),
 - b. that thou hast a little power, and
 - c. that thou didst keep my word, and
 - d. that thou didst not deny my name. (8)
- 3. Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie; behold, I will ...
 - a. make them to come and worship before thy feet, and
 - b. to know that I have loved thee. (9)
- 4. Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial,
 - a. that hour which is to come upon the whole world,
 - b. that hour that will try them that dwell upon the earth. (10)
- 5. I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown. (11)
- 6. He that overcometh,
 - a. I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and
 - b. he shall go out thence no more: and

REVELATION 1-3

- c. I will write upon him
 - the name of my God, and
 - the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and
 - mine own new name. (12)
- 7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. (13)

C. And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

- 1. These things saith
 - a. the Amen,
 - b. the faithful and
 - c. the true witness,
 - d. the beginning of the creation of God: (14)
 - 2. I know ...
 - a. thy works, that
 - b. thou art neither cold nor hot:
 - 3. I would ...
 - a. that thou wert cold or hot. (15)
 - b. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth. (16)
 - 4. Because thou sayest,
 - a. I am rich, and have gotten riches, and
 - b. I have need of nothing; and
 - 6. You know not that thou art
 - a. the wretched one and
 - b. miserable and
 - c. poor and
 - d. blind and
 - e. naked: (17)
 - 7. I counsel thee to ...
-

REVELATION 1-3

- a. buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich;
 - b. and white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and
 - that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest; and
 - c. eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see. (18)
8. As many as I love, I reprove and chasten:
- a. be zealous therefore, and
 - b. repent. (19)
 - c. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door,
 - I will come in to him, and
 - I will sup with him, and he with me. (20)
9. He that overcometh, ...
- a. I will give to him to sit down with me
 - b. in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne. (21)
10. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. (22)

REVELATION 1-3

REVELATION 3 COMMENTARY

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.

Vs. 1 is addressed to the leader of the church in Sardis. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

In verse 1, Jesus holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. In this passage, we are not being introduced to seven Spirits. The number seven represents fullness. It refers to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Jesus received the Holy Spirit without measure. (John 3:34; Col. 2:9)

Jesus also holds the seven stars. In a previous chapter, the stars are interpreted as the leaders of each church. Jesus supports, sustains, and strengthens the leadership of the church.

Jesus informs the church that he is aware of their activity. He knows their works, their reputation of being alive, but in fact being dead spiritually.

There is no evidence in history that there was any persecution from Rome or the Jews toward this church. The church had almost totally compromised with the surrounding culture. (the church became secularized). The church walked, talked, dressed, and ate like the nonbelievers. The problem with this church was a contradiction between its outward appearance and inward reality.

A reputation is not the real thing. If someone is dead, he or she cannot pretend to be alive. The church in Sardis may have been a religious organization, but it was not a legitimate expression of the church.

Jesus echoed this state of being when he said the following:

REVELATION 1-3

“... depart from me, I never knew you.”

“... they honor God with their lips, but their heart is far from Him.”

The apostle Paul also expressed the same idea when he said “... they have a form of godliness, but they deny the power of God.”

To be alive, we must objectively have real faith (John 5:24). If that faith is real, it will be accompanied by action (James 2:14-26). A church may die when it blindly follows tradition, fails to enjoy God’s presence, does not nurture itself with God’s word or gather as a family.

² Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.

In verse 2, Jesus charges the believers to wake up and strengthen what remains and is about to die. A couple of things are evident. We can infer that the believers in this church were asleep. Secondly, they were encouraged to keep certain practices alive. They were asked to support and prop up those things that were about to die. Jesus reprimands them and reveals that their deeds were unfinished in the sight of his God. Real faith results in real works.

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.

In verse 3, the believers are asked to remember several things:

- Remember what they had received
- Remember what they had heard
- Remember to hold these things fast
- Repent

REVELATION 1-3

In this passage, Jesus issues a warning. If they failed to wake up, he would then come to them in judgment like a thief. His coming would be a surprise to them.

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.

Verse 4 provides the believers in Sardis a word of encouragement. Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, said Jesus. Who are the faithful?

- They are those who have not soiled their clothes.
- They walk with Jesus
- They are dressed in white for they are worthy.

In verse 5, Jesus makes conditional promises to the faithful. Those who overcome will be dressed in white. White garments represent righteousness. Their names will never be blotted out of the book of life. (Rev. 13:8, 20:15, 21:27; Phil. 4:3) Their name will be acknowledged before Father and his angels.

In verse 6, the believers are invited to hear what the Spirit is saying. Even though the Spirit is speaking directly to the local church, the message belongs to all the churches.

The nature of the salvation provided by Christ is eternal. Our justification in God's sight is not based on our works, but on the perfect, finished righteousness and substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. He who perseveres to the end will be saved. The Christ who saves has the power to keep. (1 Thes. 5:23)

REVELATION 1-3

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.

Vs. 7 is addressed to the leader of the church in Philadelphia. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

The City of Philadelphia

The city of Philadelphia was named for its founder Attalus II, who loved his brother Eumenes. The city was 28 miles southeast of Sardis and was a border town where 3 countries met. It had an open door of opportunity. The inhabitants of Philadelphia lived in constant dread of earthquakes. Today, it is called Alasehir and has a population of 44,000 inhabitants.

Jesus identifies himself as the one who is holy and true. He is the one who holds the key of David. The key of David represents God’s authority. (Isa. 22:21-22).

In verse 8, Jesus commends the faithful. He knew all about their works. He placed before the believers an open door that no one can shut. Jesus knew that they had little strength, yet they kept his word and did not deny his name.

Unlike the Jews, who had closed the doors of their synagogues to the Christian, Jesus informs the faithful that he had opened a door for them that no one can shut. The Lord honors those who keep his word and do not deny his 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.

REVELATION 1-3

In verse 9, Jesus calls the synagogue of the Jews a synagogue of Satan. Those who attend are called false Jews. The real Jew is a Christian (Rom. 2:28-29). Paul states,

“For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.”

The apostate Jews had been cut off from the tree while those of faith had been grafted to Christ.

In verse 9, Jesus prophesies that he would make the apostate Jews to worship at the feet of the Christian. Reference to this is made in the following text:

“The sons of those who afflicted you shall come bending low to you, and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” (Isa. 60:14).

The text also reveals that Jesus would cause the apostate Jews to see the love of Jesus for the Christian. The love which was previously fixed on the Jews is now transferred to the Gentiles.

In verse 10, the faithful are commended for keeping the command to endure patiently. Because the faithful kept the word of his patience, Jesus promised to keep them from (through) the hour of trial that was to come upon the whole world. The word for ‘world’ in this passage is land. It is used 12 times in the Revelation and refer to the Jewish nation. Even though, we are not provided details concerning the meaning of the trial, the hour of trial is temporary.

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.

REVELATION 1-3

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.

In verse 11, Jesus promises that he would come quickly. This coming is to protect, not judge. He encourages the faithful to do two things:

- hold fast to what they had
- not allow anyone to take their crown

In verse 12, a promise is made to those who overcome. They will be made a pillar in the temple of God. They will never again leave the temple. The faithful will be saved from wondering and will be secured a place in the eternal presence of God.

It is interesting to note that there were many earthquakes in Philadelphia. People lived outside the city because of the fear of buildings falling on them. Structures were unstable. In this passage, Jesus offers stability and safety. A promise is also made to write the name of God upon the faithful as well as the name of the city of God. That city is the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven. Jesus also promises to write his new name upon the faithful. Note that the writing of a name is a sign of ownership. Jesus was in essence saying, "You belong to me."

The letter invites the reader to listen to what the Spirit is saying. Though the letter is written to address a specific situation in Philadelphia, it is a message for all the churches.

¹⁴ "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. ¹⁵ I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one

REVELATION 1-3

or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

¹⁹ Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. ²⁰ Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

²¹ To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Vs. 14 is addressed to the leader of the church in Laodicea. Note that each of these letters is written to a church and is dictated by Jesus himself.

The City of Laodicea

Laodicea was founded by Antiochus II. Its original name was the City of Zeus. It was a Roman province of Asia. It was a city of Banking and Exchange. It was a manufacturing center for black wool. The city included the following:

- The Temple to the Phrygian god Men Karou (god of the valley)
- That temple served as a center of society, administration, trade, and religion
- It included a School of Medicine whose symbol was a serpent (encircled staff of Asklepios). Physicians followed the teaching of Herophilos. Medicines from Laodicea included ointment for the ears made from the spice nard as well as ointment for the eyes.

The city was a center of the Imperial religion. Its inhabitants loved their leisure, their games in its theatres, stadiums baths and amphitheatres. The city is currently located in Turkey and is known as Denizli. It is inhabited by 650,000 people.

Jesus identifies himself as the following:

REVELATION 1-3

- the Amen (denotes the complete truth and veracity of a pronouncement, no room for argument)
- the faithful
- the true witness
- the beginning (ruler) of the creation of God: (14)
John 1:3 - All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

In verse 15, Jesus reveals those things he knows about the church in Laodicea.

- He knows their works
- He knows that they are neither cold or hot

In verse 16, Jesus issues a warning. Because the church was lukewarm, Jesus stated that he was going to spit them out of his mouth. It is interesting to note that Laodicea had aqueducts. The water would flow into the city from 6 miles away – it was lukewarm. People would spit out the water. The city of Hierapolis had hot springs of water. Colossae had cold water from mountains. Laodicea, on the other hand, had neither cold nor hot water.

The example provided by Jesus indicates that the church in Laodicea was not able to quench spiritual thirst.

In verse 17, Jesus reveals the spiritual condition of the believers in Laodicea. The text reveals a contrast. The believers declared the following about themselves:

- They claimed to be rich (self-sufficient)
- They took credit for the wealth they possess and claimed they did not need anything

In the same text, Jesus reveals a different conclusion about their condition. Jesus described them in the following way.

REVELATION 1-3

- You are ignorant concerning your condition
- You are wretched
- You are pitiful
- You are poor
- You are blind
- You are naked

The passage indicates that the believers in Laodicea were blind to their own condition. Jesus exposed their pride, and their love for worldly wealth. The church had become a social club. The church was spiritually bankrupt.

No doubt, the church was affluent. Externally they may have been dressed like royalty, but inwardly they were naked. Peter alluded to this when he stated,

“Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious. (1 Peter 3:3-4)

In verse 18, Jesus counsels them to take the following action.

- Buy refined gold from me so you can become truly rich
- Buy white clothes to wear so you can cover your shameful nakedness
- Buy salve for your eyes to restore your sight

Paul alluded to this love of things when he stated,

“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good

REVELATION 1-3

foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. (1 Tim. 6:17-19)

Verses 19-20 provide the reader with an epilogue. These verses apply to all seven churches. Jesus informs the believers that he will discipline and rebuke those that he loves. He will intervene when we live contrary to his word and will. He issues a command to the believer. Be zealous and repent.

In verse 20, Jesus informs the believers that he is standing at the door and is knocking. The passage infers that Jesus is standing outside the home of the heart. He is seeking to enter. He is calling out to us. If we hear his voice, we are commanded to open the door. What will happen if we figuratively open the door? Jesus will come in and enjoy a meal with us.

In verse 21, promises are made to the overcomer. What rewards will be issued?

- Jesus will give the overcomer the right to sit with him on his throne
- As Jesus was victorious and sat down with his father on his throne.

In verse 22, Jesus makes an invitation. If you have spiritual ears, listen to the words the Spirit is saying to the churches. The message in this letter is specific to the local church, but also applies to all churches everywhere.