

To the church in Tempe

A study on Revelation 1-3

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Letter 1 sent to the church in Ephesus: A church beginning to decline

Read Revelation 2:1-7 (EHV).

To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write:

The one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven gold lampstands, says this:

²I know your works, your labor, and your patient endurance, and that you are not able to tolerate evil people. You have tested those who say they are apostles, but are not, and have found them to be liars. ³Indeed, you do have patient endurance. You have endured hardships on account of my name and have not become weary.

⁴But I have this against you: You have forsaken your first love. ⁵Remember, therefore, the state from which you have fallen! Repent and do the works you did at first. Otherwise I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, if you do not repent.

⁶But you do have this: You hate the actions of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious I will give the privilege to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

1. What was *good* in the church at Ephesus?
2. What was *bad* in the church at Ephesus?
3. How might we “forsake our first love”?
4. What *promise* does Jesus give?

Summarize: What does Jesus want in a church?

Jesus wants a church that does not _____ her _____
_____.

Letter 2 sent to the church in Smyrna: A church strong in tribulation

Read Revelation 2:8-11 (EHV).

To the messenger of the church in Smyrna write:

The First and the Last, who was dead and came to life again, says this:

⁹ I know your suffering and your poverty – but you are rich. And I know the blasphemy that comes from those who say they are Jews but are not; rather, they are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear anything that you are about to suffer. Look, the Devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you will be tested, and you will suffer for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹ Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

1. Explain this statement: To be persecuted, you must stand for something.
2. What are some teachings that we stand for?
3. How might we face persecution and tribulation because of those teachings?
4. Jesus told the church that they “are rich,” and he encouraged them, “Do not fear.” How were they rich and why can they not be afraid?

Summarize: What does Jesus want in a church?

Jesus wants a church that remains _____ in the face of

Letter 3 sent to the church in Pergamum: A church lax in discipline

Read Revelation 2:12-17 (EHV).

To the messenger of the church in Pergamum write:

The one who has the sharp, two-edged sword says this:

¹³ I know where you live – where the throne of Satan is. And I know that you hold fast to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me even in the days when Antipas, my faithful witness, was put to death near you, the place where Satan lives.

¹⁴ But I have a few things against you: You have some people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to put a stumbling block in front of the children of Israel so that they would eat things offered to idols and commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Likewise, you also have some people who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶ Therefore, repent! If not, I will come to you soon, and I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

¹⁷ Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, which no one will know except the one who receives it.

1. Paul once wrote to Timothy: *“For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”* (2 Timothy 4:3-4). How had the church in Pergamum held true to sound doctrine?
2. Jesus promises a lot to those who hold on to the truths of God’s Word:
 - Hidden manna –
 - White stone –
 - New name –
3. Where did the church in Pergamum fail?

Summarize: What does Jesus want in a church?

Jesus wants a church that is concerned about her _____ and her _____.

Letter 4 sent to the church in Thyatira: A church with emotional tendency

Read Revelation 2:18-29 (EHV).

To the messenger of the church in Thyatira write:

The Son of God, whose eyes are like fiery flames and whose feet are like polished bronze, says this:

¹⁹ I know your works and love and faith and service, as well as your patient endurance, and that you are doing more now than you did at first.

²⁰ But I have this against you: You allow that woman Jezebel, the one who calls herself a prophetess, to deceive my servants and to teach them to commit sexual immorality and eat things offered to idols. ²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her sexual immorality. ²² Look, I am going to throw her onto a bed and throw those who commit adultery with her into great suffering, if they do not repent of her works. ²³ And I will put her children to death. And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches hearts and minds, and that I will give to each of you according to your works.

²⁴ To the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold to this teaching, who do not know Satan's "deep things," as they call them, I say that I will not lay any other burden on you. ²⁵ Only hold fast to what you have until I come.

²⁶ To the one who is victorious and continues to do my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations, ²⁷ and he will rule them with an iron staff and shatter them like clay pots, ²⁸ just as I myself have received authority from my Father. I will also give him the morning star.

²⁹ Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

1. For what does Jesus commend the church in Thyatira?
2. For what does Jesus call them to repentance?
3. How do we allow *Jezebels* into our church?
4. The apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 : "*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*"
How does that passage connect with *ruling* and the *morning star* which Jesus promises?

Summarize: What does Jesus want in a church?

Jesus wants a church that holds on to and preaches a powerful and enlightening