

# *The Seven Churches Of Revelation*

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*A Journey through the seven churches of Asia Minor, as  
addressed by the Lord in John's first vision in The Book  
of The Revelation, Chapters 1-3.*

## **LESSON ONE - Introduction to the Revelation**

### **1. ORIENTATION AND INTRODUCTION**

#### **2. THE UNIQUENESS OF THE REVELATION**

##### A. Statements/Quotes

The majority of Christians until 343 A.D. did not accept the Revelation as scripture.

Martin Luther: "My spirit cannot adjust itself to this book"

Thomas Kepler: "Revelation is the only masterpiece of art in the Bible"

##### B. History (Canon)

Council of Laodicea (363 - 364 AD)

Council of Carthage (397 A.D.)

##### C. Conclusion

### **3. BACKGROUND OF THE REVELATION**

#### A. Apocalyptic writing

1. Written during times of trouble/distress

2. Conveys its message by means of signs symbols, and cryptic language

## B. Background of the Revelation

1. Setting
2. Date
3. Central Message

The question that plagued the Christians (under persecution) was “Will this last Forever? Revelation says “NO”.

1. The dragon will be cast down 12:9
2. The saints will overcome 12:11
3. The forces of evil will be destroyed  
In the lake of fire 19:20; 20:10  
God will reign supreme and His church  
Will be adorned as a bride forever.  
21:2

## 4. HOW TO INTERPRET THE REVELATION

### A. Preterist Method

The events in Revelation belong only to the 1st century A.D. and have already been fulfilled.

## B. Idealist Method

In this method the message is timeless and represents the conflict between good and evil until the end of the age... basically a book of principles for overcoming.

## C. Futurist Method

Except for chapters 1-3, this method sees all the rest of the book as totally future, depicting end times drama and having nothing to do with the 1st century.

## D. Historicist Method

The third view is called the historicist approach. This view teaches that Revelation is a symbolic representation that presents the course of history from the apostle's life through the end of the age. The symbols in the apocalypse correspond to events in the history of Western Europe, including various popes, the Protestant Reformation, the French Revolution, and rulers such as Charlemagne. Most interpreters place the events of their day in the later chapters of Revelation.

## E. Conclusion

# 5. THE STRUCTURE OF THE REVELATION

## 1. The Main Phrase "In the Spirit"

1:10

4:2

17:3

21:10

## 6. THE VISIONS OF JOHN

| <u>Reference</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Vision/Concept</u>   |
|------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1:9 - 3:22       | Patmos          | One like unto<br>The Son of God<br><b><i>Christ is Lord of<br/>The Church</i></b>                     |
| 4:1 - 16:21      | Heaven          | The Throne and<br>The Lamb<br><b><i>Christ is the<br/>Lamb/Wrath</i></b>                              |
| 17:1 - 21:8      | Wilderness      | The Woman and<br>The Beast<br><b><i>Christ is King &amp;<br/>Victor over all<br/>Enemies</i></b>      |
| 21:9 - 22:6      | Mountain        | The New<br>Jerusalem<br><b><i>Christ is the<br/>Bridegroom -<br/>With His Bride<br/>In Glory.</i></b> |

## 7. THE OUTLINE OF THE REVELATION

A. Introduction 1: 1-8

B. First Vision 1:9 - 3:22

*The Risen Christ and the Seven Churches*

C. Second Vision 4:1 - 16:21

*The Risen Christ and Earth Judgments*

D. Third Vision 17:1 - 21:8

*The Risen Christ and His Victories*

E. Fourth Vision 21:9 - 22:5

*Christ and His Bride*

F. Conclusion 22:6 - 20

## LESSON TWO: The First Vision of the Revelation

### 1. EASIER TO UNDERSTAND THAN THE OTHERS

### 2. THE SEVEN CHURCHES ARE ANALYZED

#### A. Seven Churches are Featured

1. Rev. 1:4 & 1:11
2. Other Churches of Asia not mentioned

Colossae - Col. 1:2

Hierolopolis - Col. 4:13

Troas - 2 Cor. 2:12

Miletus - Acts 20:17

#### B. Why these seven?

1. Centers of 7 Postal Districts
2. 7 is a complete number (54 x in Rev.)

#### C. The Seven Churches represent three different Aspects of Christ's church.

1. The Church as it existed in John's Day
2. The Church age as a whole

3. Seven Periods of History (prophetic)
4. Seven kinds of churches existing  
In all ages.
5. Seven spiritual states in which believers  
Find themselves in their walk.

**3. THE MESSAGE TO THE 7 CHURCHES ARE  
DIVIDED INTO 2 SECTIONS OF 3 AND 4 LETTERS**

**4. EACH CHURCH HAS ITS OWN PECULIAR  
PREDOMINANT CHARACTERISTIC**

- A. Ephesus - the church in decline
- B. Smyrna - the church in persecution/suffering
- C. Pergamus - the church rich and popular
- D. Thyatira - the church in compromise
- E. Sardis - the dead and lifeless church
- F. Philadelphia - the faithful church/revival
- G. Laodicea - the complacent church; blind &  
Self-satisfied.



## 5. EACH LETTER FOLLOWS A SIMILAR PATTERN

- A. Greeting
- B. Title
- C. A Section headed "I know"  
Exception - Laodicea
- D. A Criticism of the church  
Exception - Smyrna & Philadelphia
- E. A Warning
- F. An Exhortation
- G. A Promise

## 6. THE 'ANGELS' OF THE CHURCHES

## 7. THESE CHURCHES ILLUSTRATE AND POSE THIS QUESTION:

"What condition will the church be in as it meets  
Its final great trial?"

1 Peter 4:12 - 5:11 (esp. 17 - 19)

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; <sup>13</sup> but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. <sup>14</sup> If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. <sup>[a]</sup> On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. <sup>15</sup> But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. <sup>16</sup> Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. <sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>17</sup> For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup> Now

"If the righteous one is scarcely saved,  
Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" <sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

5 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly,<sup>[d]</sup> not for dishonest gain but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; <sup>4</sup> and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

<sup>5</sup> Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

“God resists the proud,  
But gives grace to the humble.”<sup>[e]</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because<sup>[f]</sup> your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. <sup>10</sup> But may<sup>[g]</sup> the God of all grace, who called us<sup>[h]</sup> to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. <sup>11</sup> To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

**LAODICEA**  
**COMPLACENT; CONTENT**  
 (END-TIME CHURCH; APOSTASY) TIL THE END

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**PHILADELPHIA**  
**AWAKENING**  
 (BIBLES PRINTED, GREAT MISSION WORKS) TO MID 1800'S

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NOTABLE NAME:  
 MARTIN LUTHER

**SARDIS**  
**DEAD BUT WITH A REMNANT**  
 (PROTESTANT REFORMATION) TO LATE 1700'S

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NOTABLE NAME:  
 CONSTANTINE

**THYATIRA**  
**PAPAL SUPREMACY**  
 (DARK AGES) TO MID 1500'S A.D.

JEZEBEL...THE GREAT  
 PROSTITUTE SEDUCES  
 GOD'S PEOPLE INTO  
 IDOLATRY

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DOCTRINES OF  
 BALAAM &  
 NICOLAITANS

**PERGAMOS**  
**PAGANISM ENTERS THE CHURCH**  
 TO AD 500+

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**SMYRNA**  
**PAGAN PERSECUTION**  
 TO AD 313

REMEMBER: TEN INTENSE  
 PERSECUTIONS UNDER  
 TEN ROMAN EMPORERS

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**EPHESESUS**  
**APOSTOLIC AGE**  
 EARLY CHURCH TO AD 100

## LESSON THREE: EPHEBUS

Text : Revelation 2: 1 - 7

Title: "Ephesus: Forsaking Your First Love"

Topic: Remembrance, repentance, and repeating our earliest commitment as the way back to God for erring people.

Theme: The warmth of Christian love must be regained if we would live victorious Christian lives.

John was in Ephesus 70 - 95 A.D.

Church in Ephesus founded 55 A.D.

Apostle Paul's prophetic word - Acts 20: 29

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Ephesus has been called:

1. It's commercial importance

A.

B.

2. It's great political importance

A.

B.

3. It's religious importance

A.

B.

B. Ephesus was also a city of :

## 2. THE LETTER

In the case of each letter the Lord designates Him self from terms taken from Chapter 1, the original vision to John.

In each case the designation is different...no two are alike.

Each designation has a direct and unique bearing on the individual church addressed.

A. Commendation

1. A Center of Christian Energy

A. Works of:

B. Works of:

2. A Center of Christian Orthodoxy

B. Condemnation

1. Two meanings

C. Command

1. Remember

2. Repent

3. Do the first works

Read your Bible to know Him

Pray about everything

Respond to needs around you with compassion and love

Praise God from the heart

This requires putting your eyes upon Him.

The cure for lost love is not to quit laboring.

The cure for lost love is repentance.

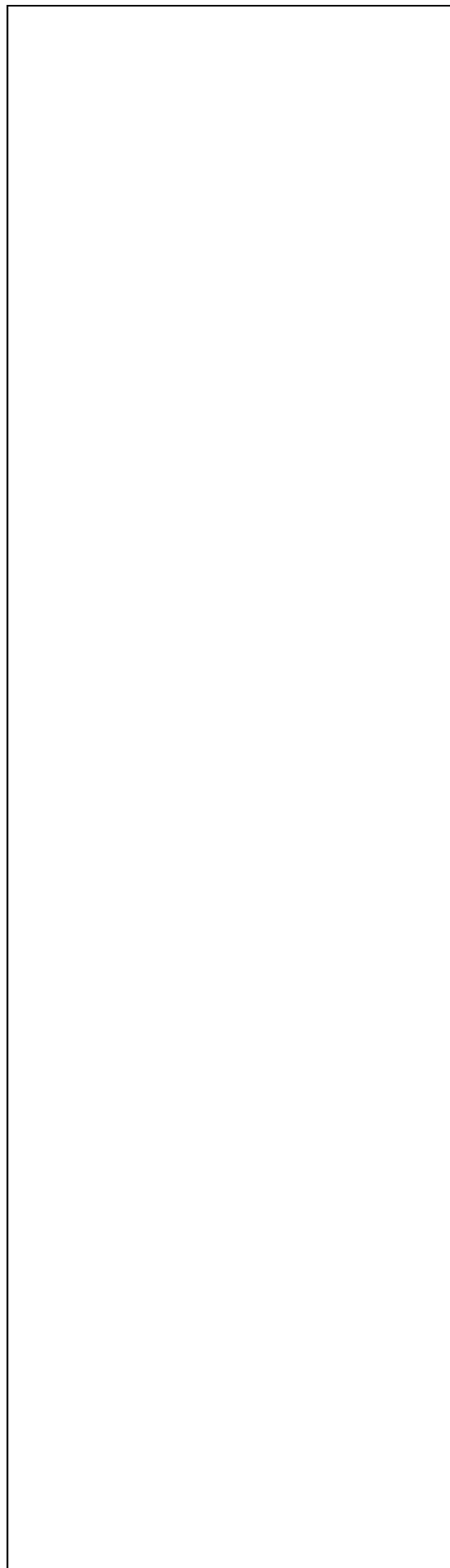
Continue to labor, but not out of duty...instead out of love.

### 3. CONCLUSION

A. No Christian church in Ephesus today. It lies in ruin.

B. The light of Ephesus as a church went out.

C. There are many such darkened lampstands to day standing on corner after corner.



## Symptoms of the beginning of Loss of First Love:

### **1. Loss of the joy and glow of the Christian life**

The Christian life becomes humdrum and routine...f

You begin to feel like you've heard it all before...

Even the church service loses its impact...becomes dull, drab, routine, Mechanical..

### **2. You lose your ability to love others.**

We love others because we have first been loved by Christ.

When we lose the consciousness of the wonder of Jesus' love we will  
Find our love for others beginning to wane.

We become critical, easily offended, complaining and we begin  
To choose our friends more closely and only associate with  
Those we like.

### **3. We lose a healthy perspective of ourselves**

We become more and more important in our own thinking.

Instead of what the Lord wants and what pleases Him we begin to  
Think of what we want and what pleases us.

Gradually we become more and more sensitive and touchy, unable to  
Bear criticism...this begins to make for divisions in the  
Congregation.

Individuals are no longer interested in evangelism.

They are no longer concerned about those around them  
Without Christ, but are focused on themselves...





*Ephesus Today*





## LESSON FOUR: SMYRNA

Text: Revelation 2: 8-11

Title: "Smyrna: Faithful Unto Death"

Topic: My responsibility in trouble is to hold on to Christ;  
He will do the rest.

Theme: Jesus is the Hope and Joy of the Christian in  
Times of trouble.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Smyrna has been called:

Myrrh = bitter

Population = 250,000

1. Smyrna was the most beautiful  
City in Asia.

A.

B.

C.

2. Smyrna had the largest public theater  
In Asia.

A. First to institute Caesar worship.

B. Claimed to be birthplace of Homer

3. Smyrna had a large Jewish population.

## 2. THE LETTER

A. Two Titles of the Risen Christ

1.

2.

B. Commendation

The three suffering works of the Christians in  
Smyrna:

1. Tribulation

2. Poverty

3. Blasphemy of the Jews

C. Covenant

1. Suffer
2. Ten Days
3. The Devil
4. Crown

### **3. CONCLUSION**

The second death

### **4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PERSECUTION**

The Five Stages That Lead to Persecution

THE FIVE STEPS TOWARD PERSECUTION

There are five stages which are common to all nations which have eventually persecuted Christians and Jews. America is now in the third and fourth stages of this downward spin. Paul Schenck, in his book "The Extermination of Christianity", presented these stages as follows:

- 1. Identifying and stereotyping the group.**
- 2. Marginalizing the group...pushing it out of the mainstream to the margins of society.**

**3. Vilification: slandering and trashing the group.**

**4. Passing discriminatory legal restrictions and eventually criminalizing the activities of the group.**

**5. Outright persecution of the group.**

There are incredible parallels between the methods used by Hitler in pushing the Jews through these stages in Germany and the methods which are currently being used in the United States. Most Christians are at least aware that Bible-believing Christians are portrayed on television as uneducated, bigoted idiots. The effect this is having on our children in school and society is horrendous.

It is virtually impossible for a born-again, evangelical or pentecostal Christian to get a job in the entertainment industry, at any major university, or even most large law firms. If their beliefs are discovered they will be quickly told to keep it quiet and never verbalize it or they may lose their jobs.

Since September 11, 2001, Americans have been urged to join with all religions in turning to God. Those who proclaim that Jesus is the only way to the Father are considered mentally unstable and a hindrance to society. The message of love which is called The Gospel is now perceived to be a message of intolerance, bigotry and hatred.

### **OMINOUS PARALLELS WITH GERMANY**

For years now American Christians have been warned, but those who were warning were considered extreme and fanatical by mainstream Christianity. During the seventies and eighties Dr. Francis Schaeffer, a Christian apologist and philosopher, chronicled America's decline as a Christian nation, the resulting fallout, and also warned of what is to come. He never claimed to be a prophet, and yet in hindsight his works have proven to be strikingly accurate and prophetic indeed. Schaeffer and others like him have shown us what happens to any great nation which forsakes its moral and spiritual foundations. He also pointed out the parallels between Hitler's low view

of human life and the results of our own Roe Vs. Wade ruling which legalized abortion-on-demand.

The following parallels with Nazi Germany were presented in the book "Storm Warning", by Don McAlvany. Please note: while we are not followers of McAlvany and some of his propositions may be debatable, we do believe that the following analysis is insightful and helpful:

## **PARALLELS WITH NAZI GERMANY**

**A PREOCCUPATION WITH DEATH** - In the 1930's, the German people began to have a preoccupation with death. Via abortion they killed forty percent of all babies conceived. They then moved to euthanasia, then to the killing of those crippled, deformed or handicapped. Then came the extermination of Jews. All of this was before the concentration camps were ever utilized. America aborts 1.6 million babies per year and is quickly degenerating from a society which once valued life as sacred. We see massive gratuitous violence and murder on television and in the movies, and most people barely take note of it or see anything wrong with it. Drive-by shootings and violent murder are commonplace, and America has even watched an assisted suicide on national television.

## **THOUSANDS OF LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS:**

The Nazi's passed thousands of laws, rules and regulations to govern every aspect of the German people's lives. The same thing has happened in America in the past couple of decades. At least 2500 new laws are passed each year by Congress. The bureaucracy, consisting of dozens of agencies (i.e. EPA, FDA, OSHA, BATF, IRS, FBI, DEA, etc.), then writes over 86,000 pages of regulations each year to implement these new laws. As a result, it is highly likely that any American is in violation of a number of regulations at any time without even being aware of it.

**A PREOCCUPATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND ANIMAL RIGHTS** - The Germans in the 1930's were preoccupied with environmentalism and animal rights, with

the Nazis passing all sorts of laws, rules and regulations to protect the environment (while restricting the rights of the people). There is an ominous parallel between the animal rights legislated by the Third Reich and the Endangered Species Act in America today.

**THERE WAS AN OCCULTIC DIMENSION TO THE THIRD REICH** - The Nazi Third Reich was not just a political movement or regime - it was also a supernatural, occultic movement and was in strong opposition to Bible-based Christianity and Orthodox Judaism. The religious foundation of the Nazi Third Reich was from the same Eastern religions that form the foundation for the present-day New Age movement, or the New Spirituality. This occultic dimension permeates western society now and provides the dynamic behind the New World Order.

**IGNORING THE CONSTITUTION** - Hitler completely ignored the Constitution of Germany, just as our politicians and courts are doing in America today. Whenever he wanted to do something, he would just do it. This is no different than when a Clinton, or a Bush, or any other president issues executive orders, circumventing Congress and setting the stage for a police state.

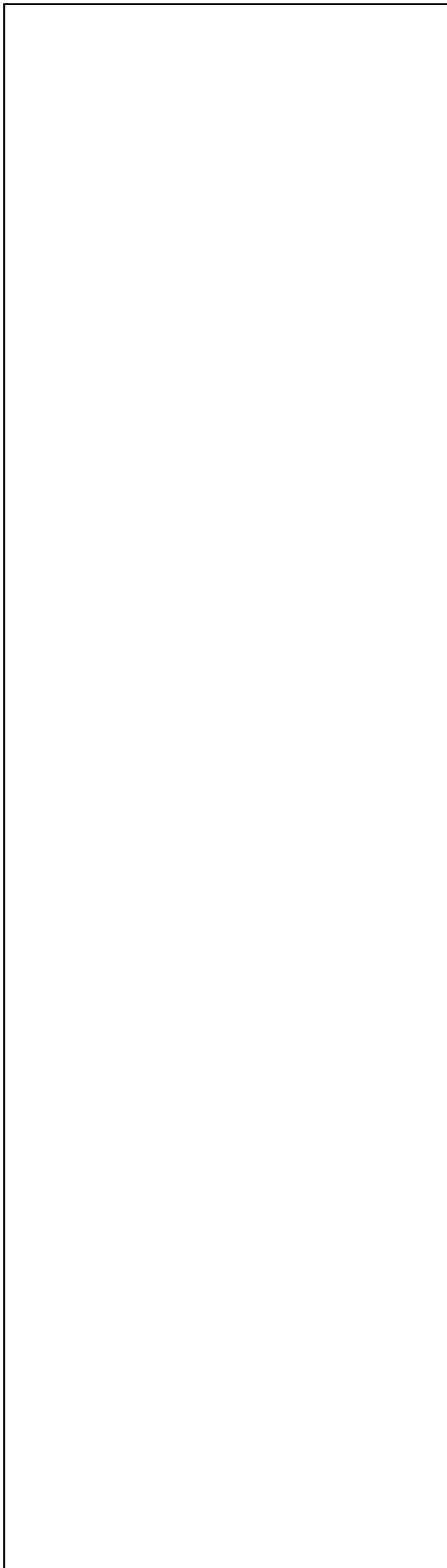
**REJECTION OF THEIR HERITAGE** - The German people, before and during the Nazis rise to power, began to reject their Christian heritage, their history, their national heroes, and their traditions. This is precisely what the liberals, socialists, and the globalist crowd in America have been doing in recent years.

**GUN CONTROL LAWS** - The Nazis passed sweeping gun control laws to disarm the German people so that they could control them and set up their dictatorship. Hitler bragged that "1935 will go down in history! For the first time a civilized nation has full gun registration! Our streets will be safer, our police more efficient, and the world will follow our lead in the future." And the Nazi dictatorship was ushered in. America is following Hitler's lead as the political left today pushes Nazi-style gun control laws and talks openly about disarming the American people.

**HITLER USED HOMOSEXUALS, DRUG ADDICTS AND CRIMINAL ELEMENTS TO DESTABILIZE THE COUN-**

**TRY AND ADVANCE THE NAZI POLITICAL MACHINE -**

Hitler organized these groups into the S.A. (the Brown Shirts) and for 11 years they did his dirty work - breaking up opponents' meetings, beating up or killing the opposition, and intimidating the people. After he was forced by the military to eliminate the Brown Shirts, there remained many homosexuals in the upper echelons of the Third Reich - a number of them very close to Hitler.





**To the Church in Smyrna:**  
**You Will Be Persecuted TEN DAYS**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| The First Persecution   | Under Nero, A.D. 67                       |
| The Second Persecution  | Under Domitian, A.D. 81                   |
| The Third Persecution   | Under Trajan, A.D. 108                    |
| The Fourth Persecution  | Under Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, A.D. 162 |
| The Fifth Persecution   | Commencing with Severus, A.D. 192         |
| The Sixth Persecution   | Under Maximus, A.D. 235                   |
| The Seventh Persecution | Under Decius, A.D. 249                    |
| The Eighth Persecution  | Under Valerian, A.D. 257                  |
| The Ninth Persecution   | Under Aurelian, A.D. 274                  |
| The Tenth Persecution   | Under Diocletian, A.D. 303                |

*Smyrna Today*



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## LESSON FIVE: PERGAMOS

Text: Revelation 2: 12 - 17

Title: Pergamos: Holding fast My Name

Topic: It is often impossible to escape trouble; then the Christian must conquer it.

Theme: Upholding Jesus' name brings His provision, Pardon, and power into our lives.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Pergamos has been called:

1. Its educational importance
2. Its medical importance



2. Its religious importance

A. The place where





## 2. THE LETTER

### A. Commendation

1. I know where you dwell
2. And you are holding fast my name

### B. Condemnation

1. Doctrine of Balaam

2. Eating things sacrificed to idols
3. To commit fornication
4. "I will come and fight against these teachers"

#### C. Covenant

1. Hidden Manna
2. A White Stone and a New Name

### 3. CONCLUSION

Two weapons the enemy uses against the Assembly:

Persecution  
Enticement

Two Dangers

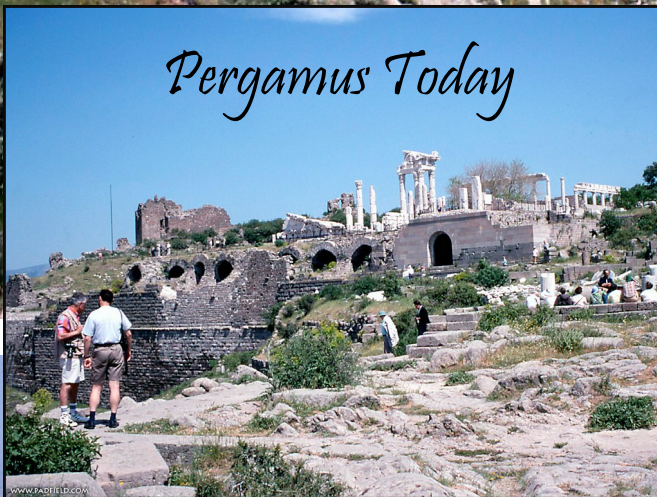
Communism - Complete control of the church by the state.

Catholicism - Complete Control of the state by the church.





*Pergamus Today*





## LESSON SIX: THYATIRA

Text: Revelation 2: 18-29

Title: Thyatira: Temptation to Compromise

Topic: God Himself is the power and light of those who  
Are faithful.

Theme: A Christian must divorce himself from evil even  
If it means that he must face poverty.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Thyatira received the longest letter, but it is  
The smallest and least important of the seven.

1.

2.

3.

B. The one outstanding characteristic of Thyatira  
Was its trade unions.

*Wool, linen, fine linen, dyes, tanners, potters,  
slave dealers, bakers, etc.*

### 2. THE LETTER

## A. Commendation

### 1. Charity and Service

*agape*

### 2. Faith and Patience

diakonia

### 3. All that you do

pistis

### 4. Note the kindness and mercy of Christ

huponome

## B. CONDEMNATIONS

### 1. First Church Council

### 2. The real problem

Rev. 13: 16 - 17

### 3. "I will cast her into a bed, and them That commit adultery with her unto Great tribulation. And I will kill her Children with death."

A. Meaning

B. Outcome



### C. Covenant and the Faithful

1. "He that overcomes and keeps my  
Works unto the end..."

A. Christian is a lifelong trust.  
And commitment, not just a single  
Experience, no matter how  
Wonderful.

2. "I will give power over the heathen"

A. Psalms 2: 8 - 9

3. "I will give you the morning star"

A.

B.

C.

### 3. CONCLUSION

## Timeline of Catholic Doctrine

1. Prayers for the dead .....300 AD
2. Making the sign of the cross .....300 AD
3. Veneration of angels & dead saints .....375 A.D
4. Use of images in worship .....375 A D.
5. The Mass as a daily celebration .....394 AD
6. Beginning of the exaltation of Mary; the term, "Mother of God" applied at Council of Ephesus....431 AD.
7. Extreme Unction (Last Rites) .....526 AD
8. Doctrine of Purgatory-Gregory I .....593 AD
9. Prayers to Mary & dead saints .....600 AD
10. Worship of cross, images & relics .....786 AD
11. Canonization of dead saints .....995 AD
12. Celibacy of priesthood .....1079 AD
13. The Rosary .....1090 AD
14. Indulgences .....1190 AD
15. Transubstantiation-Innocent III .....1215 AD
16. Auricular Confession of sins to a priest .....1215 AD
17. Adoration of the wafer (Host) .....1220 AD
18. Cup forbidden to the people at communion .....1414 AD
19. Purgatory proclaimed as a dogma .....1439 AD
20. The doctrine of the Seven Sacraments confirmed .....1439 AD
21. Tradition declared of equal authority with Bible by Council of Trent .....1545 AD
22. Apocryphal books added to Bible .....1546 AD
23. Immaculate Conception of Mary .....1854 AD
24. Infallibility of the pope in matters of faith and morals, proclaimed by the Vatican Council .....1870 AD
25. Assumption of the Virgin Mary (bodily ascension into heaven shortly after her death) .....1950 AD
26. Mary proclaimed Mother of the Roman Catholic Church .....1965 AD





*Thyatira Today*

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## LESSON SEVEN: SARDIS

Text: Revelation 3: 1 - 6

Title: Sardis: The Peace of Death

Topic: Our faith faces its greatest dangers when  
Life is too easy.

Theme: God always has His faithful witness in every  
Situation; it is up to us to *be* that witness.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Sardis has been called “The city of past  
splendor and present decay”

1. Sardis had been the richest city of Asia;  
Home of the legendary Croesus.
2. Hyeroades

### 2. THE LETTER

A. Condemnation

1. “You have a name that you live and are  
Dead”

i.e. “You have a reputation, perhaps a glorious past, of  
being alive, but you are Dead....zombies...the church of  
the living dead”.

Sardis means “remnant”, “escaping ones”

A. Sin = DEATH

1 Tim. 5:6

Luke 15:24

Romans 6:13

Eph. 2:1,5

2. Sin brings \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_

3. Sin brings \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_

“A church is in danger of death when it begins to worship its own past; when it is more concerned with *forms* than with *life*; when it love systems more than Jesus; when it is more concerned with material than spiritual things”.

-William Barclay

B. Command

1.

2.

3.

C. Covenant with the Faithful

1.

## 2. Three parts of the Covenant:

A.

B.

C.

## 3. CONCLUSION

No commendation for Sardis.

There is no Sardis today.

### **THIS PERIOD IN CHURCH HISTORY... CONTINUING FROM PREVIOUS, (THYATIRA)**

#### **From 1500's to the 1700's**

#### **The Protestant reformation**

- The church was dead, corrupt, under Roman Catholic Domination
- But there was a remnant hearing Christ's voice which said "Watch"!
- The power of the Pope had increased to control entire governments.
- St. Peter's Basilica in Rome had been built through the sale of indulgences (payment for forgiveness of sin)
- A few groups had held to the purity of the faith.
- As early as the 1100's, the Waldensians had resisted

the Pope's authority. They translated the scriptures for themselves and were hunted down and killed by the Roman Catholic church.

- The Moravians—were simple Bible believing Christians who started a round the clock prayer meeting which lasted for 100 years!
- John Wycliff (1300's) had attacked the worship of the wafer and other doctrines of the church. He translated the Bible into English and was expelled from his teaching position at Oxford. Forty-four years after he died, the Pope ordered his bones to be exhumed and burned in order to stamp out his work. But it only paved the way for Martin Luther.
- Martin Luther sparked the Reformation when he nailed his 99 complaints to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany following his revelation concerning justification by faith.
- In Luther's day the gospel spread like wildfire...His followers, the Reformers, would preach in the power of the Spirit.
- Luther in Germany, Count Zwingli in Switzerland, John Calvin in Geneva and John Knox in Scotland...all were powerful preachers who preached justification by faith.

The good news spread rapidly but lasted a relatively short time. A fatal error had been made. They grabbed hold of ONE truth but stopped short of the other reformations needed.

They, in fact, continued to make some of the same mistakes made by the Roman Catholic church. They began to link the oversight and leadership of the church with the government of the country in which they lived:

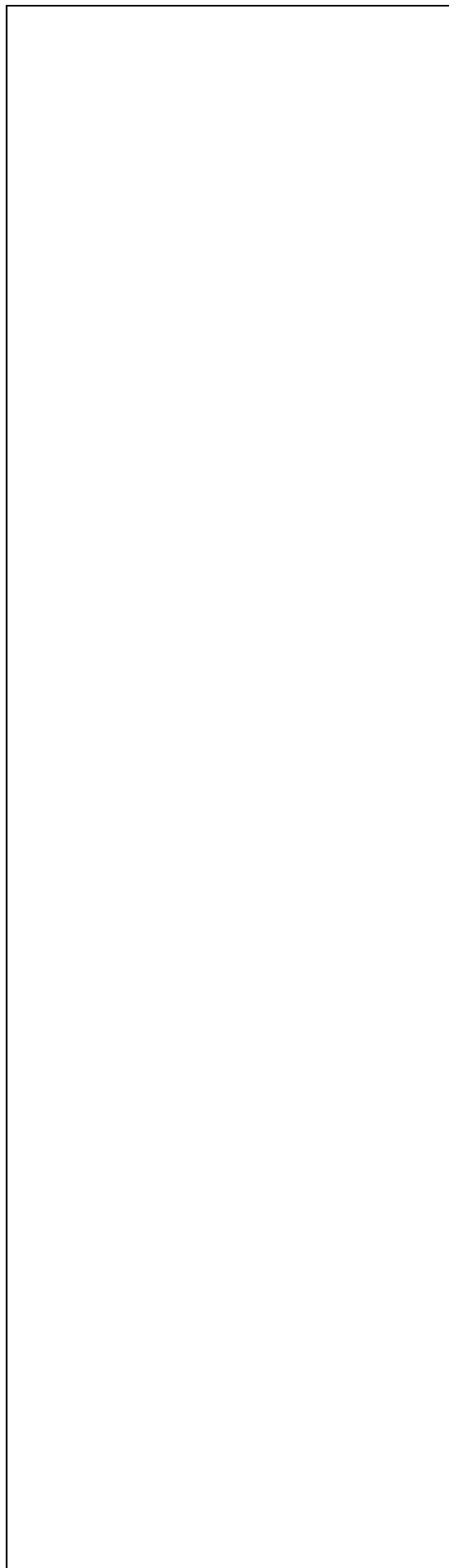
Luther did it in Germany; Zwingli did it in Switzerland; Calvin did it in Geneva and Knox did it in Scotland. And the system of the STATE CHURCH was adopted, such as the Church of England.

They also did not change many of the customs and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Infant baptism

Sprinkling for adults

Ritualism and Formality (characteristic of pagan worship)







## LESSON EIGHT: PHILADELPHIA

Text: Revelation 3: 7 - 13

Title: Philadelphia: Keeping the Faith

Topic: God's covenant promise of strength, assurance  
And character are our only as we serve Him  
And others.

Theme; Christ offers us an open door of witness through  
Which we ourselves find strength, assurance  
And character.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Philadelphia has been called:

1. Its founding
2. Meaning

B. "The Burnt Land"

1. Rich and fertile land
2. Earthquake prone
3. Disadvantages

## 2. THE LETTER

### A. Claims of the Risen Christ

1.

2.

3.

### B. Challenge to the Church

1. Door

A. Truth #1

B. Truth #2

### C. Covenant with the Faithful

1. 'I will make him a pillar in the  
Temple of my God"

2. 'He shall go out no more'

3. "He shall have a 3-fold new name"

## 3. CONCLUSION

The church at Philadelphia was characterized by their faithfulness to the word of God. For the first time in several hundred years the common man had access to the Bible and could read it for himself. As a result of this, if you look at the period of time from the Protestant Reformation in 1517 right up to the early 20th century you will see a church that was faithfully preaching and teaching the word of God. Jesus told the church at Philadelphia that He placed an open door before them, and that is exactly what happened during this period of time. All of the great revivals and prayer movements that we know about took place in this time. Men like Moody, Spurgeon, and Matthew Henry all came out of this period of church history. They had an open door and they took full advantage of the opportunities they were given. But around the turn of the 20th century things began to change, which leads us to the last phase of church history, the Laodicean age.



*Philadelphia Today*



## LESSON NINE: LAODICEA

Text: Revelation 3: 14 - 18

Title: Laodicea: When there is Nothing good to say

Topic: The one impossible attitude toward Christ is  
Neutrality

Theme: The beginning of all true progress is to see  
Ourselves as we really are and repent.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A. Laodicea has been called the most self-  
Sufficient city of the ancient world.

B. Laodicea was a great banking and financial  
Center.

1.

2.

3.

4.

### 2. THE LETTER

A. Claims of the Risen Christ

1.

2.

B. Condemnation

1. Neither Cold nor Hot

A. Cold

B. Hot

C. Lukewarm

2. What you say and what you are

A.

B.

C.

C. Challenge

1. Buy of me

2. Buy of me

3. Buy of me



*Laodicea Today*





