

REVELATION 2 AND 3
Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia

Ephesus, 2:1-7, represents the very earliest Christian churches. From the days of Pentecost and into great persecution under the Roman emperors Nero 64-68 and Domitian 95-96. The Pentecostal church was on fire, loved the Lord and went into all the world spreading the gospel. The parable of the Sower relates to this church

Smyrna, 2:8-11, is the church that suffered much persecution under the following emperors: Trajan (104-117) had Ignatius burned at the stake; Marcus Aurelius (161-180) had Polycarp killed; Severus (200-211); Maximinius (235-237); Decius (250-253); Valerian (257-260); Aurelian (270-275); Diocletian (303-313) was the worst emperor of all. This church was rich spiritually and received no complaint or threatened judgment from Christ. The parable of the enemy planting bad seed among the good seed (Wheat and Tares) applies to this church.

Pergamum, 2:12-17, is the church that took in the world. Constantine did not do a work of God when he caused unbelievers to be baptized into the church. Because of this, there was great external growth to the church. The parable of the Mustard Seed applies to this church period.

Thyatira, 2:18-29, is the church during the Dark Ages when Roman Catholics controlled Christian religious expression. Jesus is the Son of God, but they called Him the Son of Mary. Leaven always represents corruption and this church is represented in the parable of Leaven.

Sardis, 3:1-6, is the church of the Reformation. Sardis means remnant, and God always has a remnant that remains true to Him. In Sardis, there were a few who had not spoiled their garments, but they were marked by outward ritualism and inward deadness. God always has a remnant in Israel. Israel is the Hid Treasure of Matthew 13.

Philadelphia, 3:7-13, is the church of the great missionary effort. They are judged faithful and Christ has no condemnation of them. This is the true church of believers and they will be taken out of the earth before the time of tribulation. They are the Pearl of Great Price.

Laodicea, 3:14-22, is the unbelieving church that is on earth during the last days before the rapture. They do not realize how poor, wretched, and blind they really are. They think they are doing good and they have everything they need. This church will be on earth during the tribulation time and will be in the great dragnet at the end of time. The parable of the Dragnet applies to this church.