

7 Churches



Jesus Christ Prison Ministry

P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

PUBLISHER
Jesus Christ Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

E-mail: ministry@icpm.com
Web Page: www.icpm.com



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Starting in Revelation chapter two we read about the seven churches. The seven churches are all located in present day Turkey. John was given this message for them. But beyond the local message is a broader message for the “church of God” in prophetic description. This is understood in chapter 1:1, 19. The churches represent the spiritual side of the prophecy and what would happen spiritually in the church.

Each church covers a specific time period of the Christian church in prophecy. God wanted His people to know what would happen in the future. He wanted them to read and to take courage in the fact that they were not forgotten.

EPHESUS: AD 31 to AD 100

- Hard work and perseverance
- Can't tolerate wicked people
- Tested false prophets and found them false
- Yet they began to forsake their first love
- Must overcome to get to heaven

During this time Christianity spread over the whole world. It was the pure and true church of the Apostles

SMYRNA: AD 100 to AD 313

- Afflictions and poverty
- Slander of those who claim to be Jews (Christians), and are not, but of Satan
- Suffer persecution for ten days (years). “Diocletian sponsored a series of reforms to rehabilitate imperial institutions. A less constructive measure was the great persecution of the Christians that he ordered in 303.”* This persecution lasted for ten years, 303 – 313.
- Be faithful unto death
- Must overcome to get to heaven

Christians suffered a lot of persecution during these years. First

from the Jews, then from the Romans.

PERGAMUM: AD 313 to AD 538

- Faithful witness
- Yet, people who hold to teachings of Balaam
- Eating food sacrificed to idols
- Committing sexual immorality
- Must overcome to get to heaven

During this period of time, the church was accepted by civil authority and made legal by Constantine. No longer under pressure of persecution, the church started to fall. It began to accept the teachings and practices of paganism. Food sacrificed to idols and sexual sins are all allegories of unfaithfulness to the truth and the acceptance of false ideas and practices, including the keeping of the 1st day pagan sabbath.

THYATIRA: AD 538 to AD 1517

- Love, faith, service and perseverance
- Tolerates the woman Jezebel
- Calls herself a prophetess (Christian) but is not
- Misleads God's people by her teachings.
- People who listen to her (commit adultery with her) will suffer.
- Do not hold to her teachings and do not learn Satan's so-called deep secrets

During this time the Catholic Church was ruling and was teaching false doctrines of paganism. The true church was persecuted by the Catholics. The true Christians refused to accept the teachings and the false sabbath of the Catholic Church.

- Must overcome to get to heaven

SARDIS: AD 1517 to AD 1755

- You have a reputation of being alive, but are dead
- Wake up! Strengthen what remains
- Deeds not complete in God's sight
- Remember the truth and obey it and repent
- There are a few people who have not soiled their clothes
- Must overcome to get to heaven

During this period of time the people were beginning to wake up. The great Protestant reformation was beginning to bring people

out of the false teachings of the Catholic Church. However, it had not come out all the way. It claims to be “alive” but isn’t yet.

PHILADELPHIA: AD 1755 to AD 1950’s

- What He opens no one can shut
- What He shuts no one can open
- You have kept My word
- You have not denied My name
- Keep you from the hour of trial to come
- Hold on to what you have
- Must overcome to get to heaven

During this period, the Christian church was awakening and becoming active in teaching the Bible. The Bible had been literally chained by the Catholic Church for over 1000 years. If you were caught reading it, you could be killed. The door was opened to the scriptures and no one could close it. But God was about to do a special work. In 1844 Jesus opened the door to the Most Holy Place in Heaven and began His special work of “Investigative Judgment”.

LAODICEA: AD 1950’s to the end of time

- Your deeds are neither cold nor hot
 - I wish you were one or the other
 - You say you are rich, wealthy, in need of nothing
 - You are poor, wretched, blind, naked
 - Buy gold from me to be rich
 - Put on white clothes to cover your nakedness
 - Be earnest, repent
 - I stand at the door. If you hear Me knock, open it.
- (Notice, Jesus has no part in the churches of this time. He is standing outside knocking to get in.)
- You must overcome to get to heaven

We are now living in this time period. The churches are wealthy. Look at the crystal cathedral and the other churches. Carpeting, organs, pews and many other luxuries. People look at these material things and think they are spiritually blessed and wealthy. But they are blind, naked, wretched and pitiful in their spirituality. Gold is the truth of God. Not one organized “church” is teaching the Gold of God’s Word. White clothes are

the character of Christ. Very few people are wearing the perfect, righteous and sinless character of Christ. The churches refuse to teach the teachings of Jesus.