

Warning to the Churches

Revelation 1:20 (NASB95) *“As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.*

I. Overview

1.) The seven lampstands

Christ spelled this out emphatically. They are the individual churches in their respective areas.

Churches: ekklēsia; *an assembly, a (religious) congregation, congregations*

Lampstands: luchnia; *a lampstand*

Churches are more than individuals or social organizations. They have a corporate and divine purpose.

Ephesians 3:10-11 (NLT) *God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display His wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was His eternal plan, which He carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The Local Church has more of an eternal purpose!

2.) Christ knows the state of each church

Revelation 2:2 (NLT) *“I know all the things you do...*

Seven times we see that Christ knows what is going on. God know everything good and bad!

3.) The call for repentance, obedience and its reward

Revelation 2:7 (NLT) *“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what He is saying to the churches.*

Obedience demands repentance!

II. What are the conditions of the churches?

1.) Smyrna & Philadelphia

Praise: **Revelation 3:8 (NASB95)** *‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.*

Revelation 3:10 (NASB95) *“Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

The Faithful Church! There is no complaint! We must press on!!

Philippians 3:12 (NASB95) *Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.*

2.) Ephesus, Sardis & Laodicea

Praise: **Revelation 2:2-3 (NLT)** *...I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance. I know you don’t tolerate evil people. You have examined the claims of those who say they are apostles but are not. You have discovered they are liars. You have patiently suffered for Me without quitting.*

****1 Corinthians 13:1 (NLT)** *If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*

If you have all the gifts in the world but have no love, you are nothing! No Evangelism!

Galatians 5:14-15 (NLT) *For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

Sardis & Laodicea: The Dead Church, The Famous Lukewarm church!!

There is NO change taking place in congregants’ lives!

Complaint: **Revelation 3:1 (NLT)** *“Write this letter to the angel of the church in Sardis. This is the message from the one who has the sevenfold Spirit of God and the seven stars: “I know all the things you do, and that you have a reputation for being alive—but you are dead.*
Revelation 3:15 (NKJV) *“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*

They are deceiving themselves. They have just enough gospel to think they are OK! I have all of God I need!

The Spirit of Apathy/ Religious Spirit!

Revelation 3:17-18 (NKJV) *Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

Jude 12 (NLT) *They are like clouds blowing over the land without giving any rain.*

Matthew 23:13 (NASB 2020) *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut the kingdom of heaven in front of people; for you do not enter it yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.*

At home, the real personalities are revealed! They are disobedient, stubborn, prideful, competitive, angry, and discontented. They make the lives of their spouse and children miserable.

Romans 2:21-24 (NASB 2020) *..you, therefore, who teach someone else, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one is not to steal, do you steal? You who say that one is not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who loathe idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.*

3.) Pergamum and Thyatira

Praise: **Revelation 2:13 (NLT)** *"I know that you live in the city where Satan has his throne, yet **you have remained loyal to Me.** You **refused to deny Me** even when Antipas, My faithful witness, was martyred among you there in Satan's city.*

Praise: **Revelation 2:19 (NLT)** *"I know all the things you do. **I have seen your love, your faith, your service, and your patient endurance.** And I can see your **constant improvement** in all these things.*

Complaint: **Revelation 2:14 (NLT)** *"You tolerate some among you whose teaching is like that of Balaam..."*

Complaint: **Revelation 2:20 (NLT)** *You are permitting that woman—that Jezebel who calls herself a prophet—to lead My servants astray.*

Pergamum & Thyatira: – Tolerating Sin, The Corrupt & Compromising Church! This is also a serious offense!

Characteristics of the Spirit of Balaam: an evil eye, a haughty orientation, and a greedy spirit.

Spirit of Jezebel: deception, manipulation, control, rebelliousness, fake repentance, sexual immorality, pride, and never forgiving.

We are dealing with the Spirit of Jezebel more today than ever!

Matthew 7:15 (NLT) *"Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves.*

Matthew 15:8 (NLT) *"These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God."*

The Jezebel/Balaam spirit is attracted to power, cannot stand in the presence of the true prophets of God, is revengeful, and will try to persecute the people who expose them! These spirits are lying, deceitful, and slanderous.

None of the spirits have respect for Spiritual Authority! Satan had no respect for Spiritual Authority!

*****Jude 1:4 (NLT)** *I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

4.) Blessing for obedience

Revelation 2:7 (NLT) *"Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what He is saying to the churches.*

Deuteronomy 28:1-2 (NLT) *"If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully keep all His commands that I am giving you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the world. You will experience all these blessings if you obey the LORD your God:*

Haggai 1:3-5 *Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" **Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways!***

Mark 10:29-30 (NLT) *"Yes," Jesus replied, "and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life.*