

Accurately Handling the Word of Truth

Notes for Revelation 2 and 3 -expanded

Outline:

- A. Subjects: comparing Scripture with Scripture
- B. The TREND LINE from Ephesus to Laodicea, mostly through the five churches who receive warnings from Jesus.
- C. The nature of the promises to the one who overcomes
- D. What does it mean to overcome?
- E. Coming to terms with the Jewishness of Revelation 2 & 3, both in its character and its references
- F. Submitting to Christ's counsel to the churches
- G. Drawing conclusions

A. Scriptural study of subjects in Revelation 2 and 3

1. **Balaam:** Numbers 25:1-3; 31:8-16. 2 Peter 2:1-16; Jude. Readings from Encyclopedias (see also *Nicolaitans*).
2. **Jezebel:** 1 Kings 16, 21; 2 Kings 9. Readings from Encyclopedias
3. **Eating foods sacrificed to idols, and committing adultery and fornication:** Numbers 25:1-3; Acts 15:1-29; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; 8; 10:1-33.
4. **Coming like a thief:** Matthew 24:37-44; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4; 2 Peter 3:10. [*Second Coming*]
5. **The pillar and the temple:** 1 Tim 3:14-15; 1Cor 3:16-17; 2Cor 6:16; Eph 2:19-22; Rev 3:12; Rev 7:15; Rev 11:1-3. 19; Rev 16:17; Rev 21:22. [*Which temple??*]

B. Trends in Revelation 2 and 3

1. The **lampstand** is not on the scene after the church in Ephesus. When the Lord addresses the angel of the church in Sardis, He has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars – but not the seven lampstands. **The seven Spirits** is referring to the Holy Spirit in relation with Christ governing the earth, not in relation to indwelling the Church. See Isaiah 11:2 and Revelation 5:6. In Revelation 11:4, there are two lampstands. See also Zech 4:1-11.
2. To Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamum, “**he that has an ear**” is addressed to the whole assembly; while after Jezebel is admitted as a prophetess (Thyatira), “he that has an ear comes still more privately, at the end of the letter, after the overcomer has been singled out. The call to hear is issued after the remnant has been addressed, because only real saints will truly give ear to the Lord by His spirit. This is especially the case, with particular difficulty, when deadness holds most of the professors of Christianity.
3. As things proceed from Ephesus to Pergamum to Thyatira, the influence and damage of the false teachers gets greater:
 - **Ephesus** – does not tolerate false apostles and hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans
 - **Pergamum** – there are some – a minority - who hold the false teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. Balaam tried to corrupt God’s people from the outside.
 - **Thyatira** - the false prophetess is teaching the assembly! She has great influence over the leadership of the assembly, and leads much of the congregation astray, having convinced them to live according to the false teaching. Jezebel married Israel’s king and took over the reins of power. Jezebel corrupted nearly all of God’s people from the inside.
 - Note: Balaam, the Nicolaitans, and Jezebel stand for the **same common apostasy**: eating things sacrificed to idols and committing acts of immorality.

4. The last four churches look toward the end - that is, to the closing of church testimony to give way to the kingdom.
 - Impenitent Thyatira is threatened with *tribulation*
 - Sardis, with *Christ's coming as a thief* (after the true Church has been raptured)
 - Philadelphia, faithful though weak, has the *promise of the Rapture*, to escape all the trouble of the terrible hour that is coming
 - Laodicea is *spewed out as lukewarm, irrecoverable* -ending the history of the Church as Christ's earthly witness.

5. There is a clear progression in the Old Testament references that corresponds to Old Testament history, particularly concerning the nation of Israel. From Paradise – to the wilderness [Balaam, manna] - to the Promised Land [Jezebel, David, and the Temple]

6. Our Lord's words of correction to the churches reflect an **increasing imminence of His return:**

Ephesus	Rev 2:5 or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place	
Smyrna	{ none }	
Pergamum	Rev 2:16 or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them	
Thyatira	Rev 2:25 hold fast until I come.	
Sardis	Rev 3:3 I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.	
Philadelphia	Rev 3:11 ' I am coming quickly;	
Laodicea	Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock;	

7. The **warnings get more severe** as you move from Ephesus to Laodicea.

Ephesus	Rev 2:5 or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent.	
Smyrna	{ none }	
Pergamum	Rev 2:16 16 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.	
Thyatira	Rev 2:22-23 22 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 23 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.	
Sardis	Rev 3:1 you are dead. Rev 3:3-4 Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. 4	
Philadelphia	{ none }	
Laodicea	Rev 3:16 I will spit you out of My mouth. Rev 3:17 and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,	

8. The **promises** to the overcomer have **increasing honor** attached to them.

Ephesus	Rev 2:1 To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'	
Smyrna	Rev 2:11 He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'	
Pergamum	Rev 2:17 To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'	
Thyatira	Rev 2:26-28 26 ' He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON,AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star.	
Sardis	Rev 3:5 5 ' He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.	
Philadelphia	Rev 3:12 12 ' He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.	
Laodicea	Rev 3:21-22 21 ' He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.	

9. There is **increasing apostasy** in the “problem” churches – the remnant gets smaller and smaller.

- The **remnant** of believers:

Ephesus	Most or all the assembly	
Pergamum	The majority (“them” is the minority)	
Thyatira	A significant minority – “the rest”	
Sardis	A small minority - “a few”	
Laodicea	None or a handful – “if anyone”	

10. The relationship between Christ and the assembly gets more and more distant. In Ephesus He is walking amidst the lampstands, while in Laodicea he is completely outside trying to just get in.

C. The nature of the promises to the one who overcomes

More comparing Scripture with Scripture

Church	Promise	See also
Ephesus	Eating of the tree of life	Rev 22, esp Rev 22:14-15
Smyrna	Not hurt by the second death	Rev 20:6,11-15 Rev 21:8
Pergamum	Hidden Manna	John 6:27-35,47-51
	New name	Isa 62:2
Thyatira	Authority over the nations/rule with a rod of iron	Rev 5:8-10; Rev 20:4-6; 1Co 6:1-3
	Morning star	2Pe 1:19; Rev 22:16
Sardis	Clothed in white garments	Rev 7:9-17; Rev 19:14; Rev 22:14
	Name in book of life	Psa 69:21-29; Php 4:3; Rev 13:8; Rev 17:8; Rev 20:12,15; Rev 21:22-27;
	Confess his name before My Father and before His angels	Mat 10:32; Mat 16:24-28; Mar 8:38;
Philadelphia	I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God,	{see above on pillar and temple}
	I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.	Eze 48:35 John 17:9-12 Rev 22:3-5
Laodicea	I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.	Luk 22:28-29; Rev 4:2-10; Rev 5:8-10; Rev 7:9-17; Rev 20:4-6; Rev 21:3-5; Rev 22:1-5

Seven Churches Chart - <http://www.revelationbibleprophecy.org>

Name	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Period	31 A.D to 100 A.D.	100 to 313 A.D.	313 to 538 A.D.	538 to 1798 A.D.	1798 to 1833 A.D.	1833 to 1844 A.D.	1844 to end of time
Meaning	First or Desirable	Myrrh or Sweet Smelling Savour	Height or Elevation	Savour of Labour or Sacrifice of Contrition	Song of Joy or That Which Remains	Brotherly Love	A Just People or A People Being Judged
Description of Christ	Holds 7 stars and walks among the candlesticks	First and Last died and came to life	Has a sharp sword with two edges	Son of God Flaming eyes Bronze feet	Has the 7 Spirits of God and the 7 Stars	Holy and True Key of David Opens and Shuts	Amen, True Witness, Beginning of Creation
Christ Knows	Works, Toil and Endurance	Works, Tribulation, Poverty, Coming Trouble	Works, Dwell where Satan is	Works, Love, Faith, Service, Patience	Works	Works	Works, False claims, True condition
Praise	Not weary Test Teachers Hate Nicolaitans	You are rich	Hold fast My name Did not deny faith	Later works exceed first works	A few are worthy	Kept my words Did not deny name Endured	
Rebuke	Abandoned first love		Some Balamites and Nicolaitans	Tolerates Jezebel Won't repent	Works imperfect Seems alive but dead		Lukewarm, Poor, Blind and Naked
Counsel	Repent, remember Return to first love & first works	Don't fear be faithful unto death	Repent	Repent, Hold Fast	Repent, Remember, Awake and Strengthen!	Hold fast	Repent, Buy of me, Open the door
Warning	I will remove candlestick		I will make war	Sickbed, Great Tribulation, Death	I will come as a thief		I will spew thee out of my mouth
Promise to Overcomer	Eat from Tree of Life	Crown of Life	Eat Hidden Manna, White stone with new name	Rod to rule the nations, Give him the Morning star	White garments, Walk with me, Not blot out name, Confess name	Pillar in temple, Name of God, Name of city, New name	Sup with me, Sit with me in my throne
Summary	PURE	BLOODY	CORRUPT	DEATH	LACK OF FAITH	LOVE	LUKEWARM