

Revelation

Prologue

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which he gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ²who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ³Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Greetings and Doxology

⁴John,
To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and among the lampstands was someone “like a son of man,” ^bdressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun, shining in all its brilliance.

... his feet as though dead. Then he ... his right hand on me and said: “Do not ... I am the ...

in your favor: You hate the
the Nicolaitans, which

⁷He who has an ear,
what the Spirit says to
To him who overcomes,
right to eat from the tree
is in the paradise of God

To the Church in Smyrna

⁸“To the angel of the church
write:

These are the words of
the First and the Last, who
came to life again. ⁹I know
your afflictions and your poverty-
rich! I know the slander
say they are Jews and are
a synagogue of Satan.
I am afraid of what you are
I tell you, the devil will put
in prison to test you, and
for persecution for ten days.
I will give you the crown

¹¹He who has an ear,
what the Spirit says to
He who overcomes will
all by the second death

QUESTION FROM LAST WEEK

- What does removing a lampstand mean?
 - Salvation does not belong to the church
 - Does not imply all believers in the church are removed from heaven
 - For individuals, a faith that does not shine the light of Christ cannot be genuine faith

CHURCH AT SMYRNA

Second only to Ephesus as
“greatest” city in Asia Minor

One of the few “planned”
cities in antiquity

Ally to Rome even before
becoming part of Rome

One of the first cities to
institute imperial cult

GREETING

- To the angel

DESCRIPTION OF JESUS

First and
Last

- Showing sovereignty over history
- Christ is in control

Who
died and
came to
life again

- Power over the grave

INSIGHTS OF CHURCH LIFE

- Faithful in Adversity
 - Jews viewed Christians as worshiping a false Messiah, distorting the law, and giving an easy path to salvation
 - After Nero, no “new” religions were allowed
 - Jews were given reprieve from certain cultic practices and instead paid “honor” to emperors as leaders
 - Jews said that Christians were not Jewish and were therefore a new religion
 - Christians were forced to worship emperors as gods

INSIGHTS OF CHURCH LIFE

- Rich, spiritually, being strong under oppression
- False Jews
 - Ethnicity was not sufficient to be part of the church
 - Christ is clarifying who are His “people” and the lineage is determined not by man, but by Christ
 - If the Jews rejected Christians, they were effectively cutting themselves off from the church of Christ

INSIGHTS OF CHURCH LIFE

Synagogue of Satan

- Satan translated as “accuser”, or more accurately, “false accuser”

Unbelieving, oppressive Jews are called the Synagogue of Satan

- Implies that church, comprised of believing Jews and Gentiles, is temple where the lampstands reside.

WARNING/INSTRUCTION

Do not be
afraid

Keep their perspective on Christ and their citizenship in Heaven



Devil is at
work, but...

He has already been defeated

Can only be used for the purposes of bringing about God's sovereign plan in Christ

Suffering is not merely persecution, but is a divine test of the church

WARNING/INSTRUCTION

Ten Days

Daniel 1:12-
15

10 Days describes
the temporary
nature of test

- Daniel and 3 friends invited into pagan culture
- Instituted a 10 day test to see if they could not only survive, but thrive without the pagan culture
- Used as the model for those who choose persecution over exalting anything above God

EXHORTATION

- Ears to Hear

PROMISE/ ASSURANCE

Life as Victor's
Crown

What Christ has redeemed can never be lost regardless of world's judgement

Not hurt by the
2nd death

Only One who has defeated death can give a promise of conquering death

It is Christ who holds the keys to death and Hades, not the devil.

IMPACT OF LETTER

- Polycarp – Bishop to Smyrna in AD 115
- Refused to acknowledge Caesar as god and martyred in AD 155
 - But the jealous and envious Evil One... [saw] how **he was crowned with the crown of immortality and had won a reward**

IMPACT OF LETTER

- ...knowing that it will be impossible for us either to forsake at any time the Christ who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of those that are saved—suffered though faultless for sinners—nor to worship any other.

IMPACT OF LETTER

- For Him, being the Son of God, we adore, but the martyrs as disciples and imitators of the Lord we cherish as they deserve for their matchless affection towards their own King and Teacher. **May it be our lot also to be found partakers and fellow-disciples with them.**