

Greeting to the Seven Churches
Rev 1:4-6 / 3-21-18

I. FIRST, "TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN"

- A. John wrote to the seven churches in Asia. These are the churches located in modern day Turkey-v.4.

- B. Why 7 churches...why not 6 or 8?

- C. Numbers, in biblical terms, always have a significant meaning other than the quantity. The number 7 is seen some 54 times in the book of revelation. The number 7 always represents completeness.

- D. But why these seven churches? What purpose do these messages serve?
 - 1. First, there is a "**Contemporary Purpose**" - Christ had a direct message to a specific church.
 - 2. Second, there is a "**Composite Purpose**" - These messages are meant to be applied to all churches or all Christians.
 - 3. Third, there is a "**Chronological Purpose**" - These 7 churches give us a prophetic preview of the church age from Pentecost to the rapture.

- E. What do we know about these seven churches? (i.e. "Church" Meaning Time Description).
 - 1. Ephesus "desirable", 30-300AD, the young church.
 - 2. Smyrna "myrrh", 100-313AD, the martyr church.
 - 3. Pergamos "marriage", 314-590, time when the church married the world.
 - 4. Thyatira "continual sacrifice", 590-1517.

5. Sardis "remnant", 1517-1700, reformed church.
6. Philadelphia "brotherly love", 1700-1900, revival church.
7. Laodicea "people's rights", 1900, rapture worldly church.

II. SECOND, GREETINGS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

A. W.A Creswell said, "This is the most beautiful greeting ever written" **v.4...."Grace and peace be to you"...**

1. Peace always follows Grace; PEACE IS A RESULT OF GOD'S GRACE.
2. Grace is the Greek word "Charis" for "Peace" – it is the Hebrew greeting "Shalom".

B. This greeting comes from three sources-**v.4ff**

1. **God—v.4...from him who is, and who was, and who is to come---** this stresses the eternity of God.
2. **The Holy Spirit—v.4...and from the seven spirits--**showing completeness.
3. **Jesus Christ--v.5a.... and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.** Here we see three titles of Jesus.
 - a. **the faithful witness"**-Jesus perfectly revealed God the Father—**John 14:6-- if you have seen me you have seen the Father.**
 - b. **"firstborn of the dead"**-this is referring to the resurrection and "Firstborn" in biblical terms **always** has absolute ruler ship; and is the rightful heir.
 - c. **"the ruler (prince) over the Kings of the earth"**- this speaks of His ultimate authority.

4. Two more descriptions of Jesus-**v.5b**—**“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood”**
 - a. **“To Him who loved us”** - is actually in the present tense.
 - b. **“And has freed us from our sins”**-The blood of Christ is very important. It is not just a symbol.
5. There is even a description of us-**v.6** **and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.**
6. This greeting closes with an expression of eternal praise-**v.6** **to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.**