

Lessons From Revelation

The Seven Churches Of Asia Pt 1

(Rv 2:11)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Evening,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of “Lessons From Revelation.”
 - a. Some things that we must always keep in mind when studying this book.
 - i. The book was written to be fulfilled “shortly.”
 1. **Rv 1:1a** “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place...”¹ (NKJV)
 - ii. The book was written as “signs” or in an “apocalyptic” style.
 1. **Rv 1:1b** “...And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John” (NKJV)
 - iii. The book was written so all understand that even when things seem their worse Christ is still in control and He will always come out as the victor.
 1. **Rv 6:10** “They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?””
 2. **Rv 6:12-17** “When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood...17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”
 - b. Last week we examined some of the characteristics that make the Son of God worthy to be the Revelator.
 - i. This week we are going to examine the Revelator’s charge to four of the churches of Asia.
3. With that in mind let us examine what the Christ had to say to the first four churches of Asia.

I. The Church At Ephesus

- A. The good
 1. They were a very active church.
 - i. The idea here is laboring to the point of exhaustion.
 - ii. They were not a sit back and see what happens congregation but rather had an exhaustive work ethic.
 2. They were a patient church.
 - i. The idea here is an active endurance under stress.
 - ii. They were patiently enduring the immense persecution.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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3. They were a discerning & intolerant church.
 - i. The idea here is one that scrutinized each teacher and hated those that were found to be false.
 - ii. They were not satisfied with simply taking a teachers word for it and when one was found guilty of being a false teacher they quickly removed them.
 4. They were a mentally strong church.
 - i. The idea is that though they were laboring to the point of exhaustion they were not exhausted.
 - ii. They were mentally strong.
- B. The bad
1. They had left their first love as a church.
 - i. Though they were staunch on the text they were now apathetic toward the reasons for being staunch.
 - ii. “They had lost the zeal and enthusiasm that once characterized their service. They had lost the motivation of love that ought to typify Christian service.” (Restoring A Congregation by Parrish, Eddie pg. 1)
- C. Restoring one’s first love
1. One must “remember” or “recall” how they first felt.
 - i. The zeal, joy, and excitement that comes from becoming a child of God and wanting to tell the world.
 2. One must “repent” or “stop the sin.”
 - i. When one reflects on how much zeal they have lost it should spurn them to repentance.
 3. One must “do the works you did at first.”
 - i. This would be actively caring for someone’s soul. Nothing is more pure and gives more zeal/excitement than this.
- D. Thus...
1. **Ro 12:11** “Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.”

II. The Church At Smyrna

- A. The good
1. They were spiritually rich.
 - i. The idea here is that they were mature in their spirituality.
 - ii. They had the knowledge and the wisdom that was expected of them.
 2. They suffered for Christ.
 - i. The idea here is that they were mature spiritually because they had suffered persecution and not given into it.
 - ii. They needed this maturity because death was knocking at the door for some of them.
- B. The bad
1. There was no bad qualities about this congregation.
 2. There can be no greater accomplishment other than staying that way unto death.

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C. Thus...

1. **II Ti 4:7-8** “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.”

III. The Church At Pergamum

A. The good

1. They held fast to the name of Christ.
 - i. The idea here is that though Caesar wanted to be addressed as God they did not yield but rather held fast to the name of Christ.
 - ii. Domitian required all to call him “lord god Domitian.”
2. They did not deny Christ’s faith ie the faith.
 - i. The idea here is that they did not “give up” on Christianity because of the persecution.

B. The bad

1. Some were holding to the doctrine of Balaam (Nu 22).
 - i. The idea here is that they were materialistic and were willing to “bend” truth for fortunes.
2. Some were holding to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.
 - i. The idea here is that of there being no law for the Christian.
 - a. They taught that fornication & eating meat sacrificed to idols was no problem because there was no law for Christians.
 - ii. This has been suggested as the first “once saved always saved doctrine.”

C. Restoring one back from materialism and bad hermeneutics.

1. One must repent of materialism.
 - i. This is recognizing there is a problem of putting things above God and making the decision to put God first.
2. One must repent of ignorance.
 - i. This is realizing that we could be wrong and verifying we are right by scrutinizing the Scriptures.

D. Thus...

1. **He 13:5** “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.””
2. **Ga 5:4** “You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.”

IV. The Church At Thyatira

A. The good

1. They labored in love.
 - i. The idea is that their motives were pure and full of zeal in desiring the best for ones soul.
2. They labored in faith.
 - i. The idea is that they worked hard to be faithful.
3. They labored in service.
 - i. The idea is that they were ministers to each other.

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4. They labored in patient endurance.
 - i. The idea is that they refused to surrender to persecution.
- B. The bad
 1. They were tolerating a Jezebel.
 - i. The idea here is that this woman was leading the church into thinking fornication was ok and idolatry is tolerable or insignificant.
- C. Restoring one back from sexual sins and idol acceptance.
 1. One must repent of the sexual sins.
 - i. This is done by recognizing our bodies are the temple of God ie the house of God and not letting it become defiled.
 2. One must repent of being tolerant of idolatry in any way.
 - i. This is done by recognizing idolatry is taking us away from God being first in our lives and correcting it.
- D. Thus...
 1. **I Co 6:16-20** “Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” 17 But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 18 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”
 2. **Co 3:5** “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

CONCLUSION

1. Let it be said of us here in Ramona that we...
 - a. Active, patiently enduring, discerning with intolerance false teachers, mature, holding fast the name Christian, never denying the faith, laboring in love, faith, service, and long suffering.
2. Question: Are you striving to be all the good qualities of these congregations or are you fitting more closely to the bad qualities?
 - a. If the good continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If the bad why?
3. Invitation²
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**

² Eddie Parrish's great work called "Restoring a Congregation" was vital to the development of this sermon.

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| ii. Have Faith In Jesus | Jn 3:16; 8:24 |
| iii. Repent/Turn To God | Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47 |
| iv. Confess Jesus As Lord | Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9 |
| v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins | Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21 |
| vi. Live A Faithful Life | I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8 |