BIBLE TOPICS · NEW TESTAMENT

The Seven Churches of Revelation

He That Hath an Ear, Let Him Hear · Revelation 2:7

Where	When	Written by	Letters
The province of Asia	About A.D. 95	John, on Patmos	Revelation 2–3

REVELATION 1

How Christ Appeared to John

Each letter to the seven churches of Revelation opens with a picture of Jesus taken from John's vision in chapter 1, chosen to fit that church.

EPHESUS

Among the Candlesticks

He holds the seven stars.

"He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand"

REVELATION 2:1

SMYRNA

The First and the Last

He died and lives again.

"the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive"

REVELATION 2:8

PERGAMOS

The Sharp Sword

His Word judges false teaching.

"He which hath the sharp sword with two edges"

REVELATION 2:12

THYATIRA

Eyes like a Flame

He searches the heart.

"I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts"

REVELATION 2:23

SARDIS

The Seven Spirits

He gives life to the dead.

"He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars"

REVELATION 3:1

PHILADELPHIA

The Key of David

He opens doors no one can shut.

"He that openeth, and no man shutteth"

REVELATION 3:7

LAODICEA

The Faithful Witness

He tells the truth about us.

"the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God"

REVELATION 3:14

JOHN

Alive for Evermore

Fear not.

"I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore"

REVELATION 1:18

THE MEANING

Stars and Candlesticks

The messengers and the churches.

"the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

REVELATION 1:20

KEY VERSE

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Revelation 2:7 (KJV)

The Seven Churches Chart

REVELATION 2 – 3

The Seven Churches of Revelation

What the Spirit saith unto the churches

Praise, warning and promise in each letter · King James Version

The Seven Letters, in Order

1 Ephesus: Left Its First Love

Praised for labour and patience. Warned: remember, repent, do the first works. Promise: the tree of life.

REVELATION 2:1–7

2 Smyrna: Faithful in Suffering

Poor, yet rich; no rebuke. Be thou faithful unto death. Promise: a crown of life, not hurt of the second death.

REVELATION 2:8–11

3 Pergamos: Where Satan's Seat Is

Held fast His name. Warned against the doctrine of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. Promise: hidden manna, a white stone.

REVELATION 2:12–17

4 Thyatira: Tolerated Jezebel

Praised for charity, service and faith. Warned about the false prophetess. Promise: the morning star.

REVELATION 2:18–29

5 Sardis: A Name, but Dead

A few undefiled. Be watchful, strengthen what remains. Promise: white raiment, name kept in the book of life.

REVELATION 3:1–6

6 Philadelphia: An Open Door

Kept My word; no rebuke. Kept from the hour of temptation. Promise: a pillar in the temple of My God.

REVELATION 3:7–13

7 Laodicea: Lukewarm

Nothing praised. Neither cold nor hot. I stand at the door, and knock. Promise: to sit with Me in My throne.

REVELATION 3:14–22

KEY VERSE

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

REVELATION 3:20 (KJV)

BibleStudyForAll.com · Scripture quotations from the King James Version

Map of the Seven Churches

MAP

Map of the Seven Churches

The seven churches of Revelation stood in a loop about a hundred miles across, joined by Roman roads. A messenger from Patmos could land at Ephesus and visit them in the order of the letters.

REVELATION 1 – 3 · ABOUT A.D. 95

Map of the Seven Churches

Seven churches which are in Asia

Patmos and the seven cities of Revelation 2–3



The road through the seven cities
In the order of the letters (Revelation 2–3)

From Patmos to Ephesus
About 60 miles by sea

The seven churches
Numbered 1–7 in the order of the letters

Patmos
Where John saw the vision (Revelation 1:9)

"What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia"

REVELATION 1:11 (KJV)

BibleStudyForAll.com · Map positions approximate · Scripture from the King James Version

Positions and roads are approximate.

P — Patmos
John sees the vision and writes
REVELATION 1:9

1 — Ephesus
Left its first love
REVELATION 2:1

2 — Smyrna
Faithful unto death
REVELATION 2:8

3 — Pergamos
Where Satan's seat is
REVELATION 2:12

4 — Thyatira
Tolerated Jezebel
REVELATION 2:18

5 — Sardis
A name, but dead
REVELATION 3:1

6 — Philadelphia
An open door
REVELATION 3:7

7 — Laodicea
Neither cold nor hot
REVELATION 3:14

What He Praised and What He Warned

PRAISE AND WARNING

What He Praised and What He Warned

The Lord knew the works of each of the seven churches. Two received no rebuke, and one received no praise.

WHAT HE PRAISED	WHAT HE WARNED
Ephesus: labour, patience, and testing false apostles Revelation 2:2	**Thou hast left thy first love** Revelation 2:4
Smyrna: rich in faith though poor and persecuted Revelation 2:9	**No rebuke. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer** Revelation 2:10
Pergamos: held fast My name, like Antipas the martyr Revelation 2:13	**Some hold the doctrine of Balaam and of the Nicolaitans** Revelation 2:14–15
Thyatira: charity, service, faith and growing works Revelation 2:19	**Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel** Revelation 2:20
Sardis: a few names which have not defiled their garments Revelation 3:4	**Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead** Revelation 3:1
Philadelphia: kept My word, and not denied My name Revelation 3:8	**No rebuke. Hold that fast which thou hast** Revelation 3:11
Laodicea: nothing praised Revelation 3:14	**Thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot** Revelation 3:16

Promises to Him That Overcometh

TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH

Promises to Him That Overcometh

Every one of the seven letters ends with a promise for the believer who overcomes, that is, who keeps trusting Christ to the end.

EPHESUS

The Tree of Life

Lost in Eden, given back.

"will I give to eat of the tree of life"

REVELATION 2:7

SMYRNA

No Second Death

Safe from the lake of fire.

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

REVELATION 2:11

PERGAMOS

Hidden Manna

And a new name.

"will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone"

REVELATION 2:17

THYATIRA

The Morning Star

Christ Himself.

"And I will give him the morning star."

REVELATION 2:28

SARDIS

White Raiment

A name never blotted out.

"I will not blot out his name out of the book of life"

REVELATION 3:5

PHILADELPHIA

A Pillar in the Temple

Never to be moved.

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God"

REVELATION 3:12

LAODICEA

A Seat on His Throne

Reigning with Christ.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne"

REVELATION 3:21

WHO OVERCOMES

Faith Overcomes

Every true believer.

"and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

1 JOHN 5:4

THE END

Inherit All Things

The promise at the end of the book.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things"

REVELATION 21:7

Lessons for Churches Today and Key Themes

FOR TODAY

Lessons for Churches Today

The seven churches of Revelation are gone, but their letters still speak. Here is what the Spirit says to churches and believers now.

1
Keep Your First Love
Love Jesus more than the work.

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent"

REVELATION 2:5

2
Do Not Fear Suffering
He sees and rewards.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer"

REVELATION 2:10

3
Guard the Truth
False teaching spreads quietly.

"Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly"

REVELATION 2:16

4
Wake Up
A good name is not life.

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain"

REVELATION 3:2

5
Walk Through Open Doors
He opens what no one can shut.

"I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it"

REVELATION 3:8

6
Open the Door to Him
He knocks on every heart.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock"

REVELATION 3:20

> *"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."*
>
> Revelation 3:11 (KJV)

KEY THEMES

Six Lessons from the Seven Churches

The seven churches of Revelation were very different, but the same truths run through all seven letters.

1
He Walks Among Them
Christ is present in His churches.

"who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks"

REVELATION 2:1

2
He Knows
Nothing is hidden from Him.

"I know thy works"

REVELATION 2:2

3
Love Comes First
Busy work cannot replace love for Him.

"thou hast left thy first love."

REVELATION 2:4

4
Be Faithful
Even when it costs everything.

"be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

REVELATION 2:10

5
Repent
He rebukes because He loves.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten"

REVELATION 3:19

6
Overcome
A promise in every letter.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne"

REVELATION 3:21