



Hope in Troubled Times

“A Study in the Book of Revelation”

Listen Up, Churches (The Great & the Good in the land of the Bad)!

Intro:

- Performance evaluation from Jesus
- Letters to real churches, real Christians, in a real place, at a real time, dealing with real things.
 - Showplace homes vs. Messy lived in homes
- The role of lampstands is to showcase the light, not to be the light itself.
 - The tarnish of the lampstand does not negate the light itself.
- The church is a work in progress, with lessons to constantly learn.
- Jesus' message typically gives spiritual direction by:
 - Establishing authority (ch 1)
 - Affirming
 - Correcting
 - Promise (ch 20-22)
- Every church stands in need of a Message from Christ that includes all aspects.
- Things to Keep in mind in these Letters to the 7 Churches:
 - Jesus Knows all there is to know about us. (Jn 2:25)
 - Truth told us to confront a false self-impression
 - Jesus Has a Deep Love for His Church (Eph 5:25-27)
 - Confront/Comfort in love (Heb 12:5-6)
 - Detachment and Apathy displays a lack of love.
 - The Message for One is a Lesson for All
 - Learning from others dirty laundry and clean clothes
 - The Cosmic Battle taking place in the church (Eph 6:12)
 - Angel = “Angelos” = Messenger
 - Pastor (Matt 11:10)
 - Angel over church (Dan 10)
 - The church is in the Hand of Christ (Rev 2:1)

I. The Church of Ephesus (Rev 2:1-7) (Acts 20)

- The Good
 - Hard Work (Jms 2:15-22)
 - Perseverance (2 Tim 2:12)
 - No Room for Heresy (1 Jn 2:27)

- Doesn't Grow Weary (Gal 6:9) (2 Thess 3:13)
- The Bad
 - You have Forsaken Your First Love (Ps 51:12)
- Action
 - Remember, Repent, Return (Lk 15:11-20)
- Promise
 - Eat from the Tree of Life (Rev 22:2)

II. The Church of Sardis (Rev 2:8-11)

- The Good
 - Jesus knows What they are going through (Is 38:5)
 - Acknowledging tribulation without cheapening or minimizing
 - Endurance and Faithfulness even though falsely accused of wrongs
- The Bad? (Most faithful tend to be in the worst of situations)
- Promise
 - Given Crown of Life and not hurt by 2nd death (Rev 20:14-15)

III. The Church of Pergamum (Rev 2:12-17)

- The Good
 - Faithful in a hostile environment
 - Stayed true even as brothers were martyred for their faith
- The Bad
 - Accommodate and Incorporate the surrounding culture and values into the faith
 - Balaam (Num 22-25) and Nicolaitans
- Action
 - Repent or He will fight against the accommodators (choose losing team)
- Reward
 - Hidden Manna and White Stone (Rev 22:4)

IV. So What?

- Do We Have Ears to Hear?
 - Spiritual Hearing Test (Lk 8:8-10)
- Do We Tolerate Evil for the Sake of Comfort and Ease? (1 Jn 2:15)
 - Conform to World or Confront with Truth and Love (Rom 12:2)
- Do We Remember Why We Do This?

Conclusion:

- What's Your Name? (Is 43:1-2)