

# THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

**SCRIPTURE:** REVELATION 2:1-7

## INTRODUCTION

HERE BEGINS SEVEN MESSAGES FROM THE LORD TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR. TO THE EPHESIAN CHURCH THERE IS BOTH COMMENDATION AND CENSURE, AND A STRONG EXHORTATION TO REPENT. LISTEN TO WHAT THE LORD IS SAYING:

### I. I KNOW THY WORKS

**HEBREWS 4:13** NEITHER IS THERE ANY CREATURE THAT IS NOT MANIFEST IN HIS SIGHT: BUT ALL THINGS ARE NAKED AND OPENED UNTO THE EYES OF HIM WITH WHOM WE HAVE TO DO.

- A. THE COMMENDATION
  - 1. FOR THEIR TOIL
  - 2. FOR THEIR PATIENT ENDURANCE
  - 3. INTOLERANCE OF EVIL
  - 4. DOCTRINAL PURITY
- B. HE IS ALWAYS AWARE OF OUR WORKS

### II. I HAVE SOMEWHAT AGAINST THEE

**MATTHEW 23:39** O JERUSALEM JERUSALEM ... HOW OFTEN WOULD I HAVE GATHERED THY CHILDREN TOGETHER, EVEN AS A HEN GATHERED HER CHICKENS UNDER HER WINGS, AND YE WOULD NOT.

- A. THE LAMENT OF A SPURNED LOVE
- B. A LOVE GROWN COLD
  - 1. WORKING FOR HIM
  - 2. PROFESSING ALLEGIENCE TO HIM
  - 3. YET INSENSITIVE TO HIS PRESENCE

### III. REPENT ... OR ELSE

**REVELATION 2:5** REMEMBER THEREFORE FROM WHENCE THOU ART FALLEN, AND REPENT AND DO THY FIRST WORKS; OR ELSE I WILL COME UNTO THEE QUICKLY AND REMOVE THY CANDLESTICK OUT OF HIS PLACE, EXCEPT THOU REPENT.

- A. THE CHURCH'S "EMPLOYEE SYNDROME"

- B. CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE FRIENDS OF GOD
  - 1. WORSHIPPING
  - 2. VALUING HIS PRESENCE
  - 3. DEVELOPING AN EVER DEEPENING RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM
- C. THE VALUE OF WORSHIP
  - "WHEN IT BECOMES AN ACT OF WORSHIP TO DO THE WILL OF GOD, THEN WE ARE HEADED FOR 'CAMP MEETING' VICTORY" --DON BRANKEL--
- D. THE PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER
  - 1. OVERCOMING AN APATHETIC ATTITUDE TOWARD JESUS CHRIST
  - 2. EATING OF THE TREE OF LIFE

## THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA

**SCRIPTURE:** REVELATION 2:8-11

### INTRODUCTION

THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA IS ONE OF TWO CHURCHES IN THE REVELATION WHO RECEIVED A MESSAGE WITH BEING REPRIMANDED. THE SMYRMAN CHURCH RECEIVED A COMMENDATION AND AN EXHORTATION.

### I. FAITHFUL IN COMMUNION WITH GOD

**ACTS 6:4** BUT WE WILL GIVE OURSELVES CONTINUALLY TO PRAYER, AND TO THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

#### A. A FAITHFUL PRAYER LIFE

EPHESIANS 6:18A PRAYING ALWAYS WITH ALL PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION IN THE SPIRIT....

#### B. FAITHFULLY STUDYING GOD'S WORD

2 TIMOTHY 2:15 STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD, A WORKMAN THAT NEEDETH NOT TO BE ASHAMED, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.

#### C. A CONSISTENT ATTITUDE OF WORSHIP

### II. FAITHFUL IN GIVING

**2 CORINTHIANS 9:7B** FOR GOD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER.

#### A. CONSISTENT IN CONTRIBUTING OF FINANCES

1. AS WE PURPOSE IN OUR HEARTS
2. WE ARE NOT OUR OWN

#### B. CONSISTENT IN GIVING OF OURSELVES

1. THE "HIRED SERVANT" ATTITUDE
  - A. FIVE O'CLOCK AND PAYDAY
  - B. NOT ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY
2. THE SON VS. THE HIRED SERVANT

### III. FAITHFUL IN SERVICE

**EZEKIEL 22:30** AND I SOUGHT FOR A MAN AMONG THEM, THAT SHOULD MAKE UP THE HEDGE, AND STAND IN THE GAP

BEFORE ME FOR THE LAND, THAT I SHOULD NOT DESTROY IT, BUT I FOUND NONE.

**ISAIAH 6:8** ALSO I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD, SAYING, WHOM SHALL I SEND, AND WHO WILL GO FOR US? THEN SAID I, HERE AM I; SEND ME.

#### A. FINDING OUR NICHE AND BEING FAITHFUL THERE

#### B. THE DANGER OF THE "SPECTATOR" ATTITUDE

## THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

SCRIPTURE: REVELATION 2:12-17

### INTRODUCTION

THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS WAS CHARACTERIZED BY TWO THINGS: IT TENACIOUSLY CLUNG TO THE NAME OF JESUS) WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PERMISSIVELY ALLOWING SINFUL PRACTICES IN ITS MIDST.

#### I. ITS TENACITY IN THE FAITH

**1 TIMOTHY 6:12** FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, LAY HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE.

**2 PETER 1:10** WHEREFORE THE RATHER, BRETHREN, GIVE DILIGENCE TO MAKE YOUR CALLING AND ELECTION SURE: FOR IF YOU DO THESE THINGS, YOU SHALL NEVER FALL.

**REVELATION 3:11** BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY: HOLD THAT FAST WHICH THOU HAST, THAT NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN.

- A. AN UNSHAKEABLE FOUNDATION IN THE WORD  
MINISTRY GIFTS OF EPHESIANS 4:11-15
- B. "BULLDOG" TENACITY IN CLINGING TO JESUS

#### II. ITS PERMISSIVE ATTITUDE

**EZEKIEL 3:20** WHEN THE RIGHTEOUS MAN DOETH TURN FROM HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND COMMIT INIQUITY, AND I LAY A STUMBLINGBLOCK BEFORE HIM, HE SHALL DIE IN HIS SIN, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH HE HATH DONE SHALL NOT BE REMEMBERED; BUT HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THINE HAND.

- A. THE MORAL RELATIVITY OF THE "CHRISTIAN" LIBERTINES
  - 1. GOD'S WORD IS A BOOK OF ABSOLUTES
  - 2. MAN'S MAKEUP DEMANDS ABSOLUTES
- B. THE CHURCH'S REQUIRED ATTITUDE TOWARD EVIL
  - 1. CANNOT BE PASSIVE

- 2. MUST ALIGN WITH GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD EVIL

#### III. ITS ERRANCY PROMISED DISCIPLINE

**REVELATION 2:16** REPENT OR ELSE I WILL COME UNTO THEE QUICKLY, AND WILL FIGHT AGAINST THEM WITH THE SWORD OF MY MOUTH.

- A. GOD'S ATTITUDE AGAINST EVIL IS UNCHANGED
- B. GOD IS GOING TO PUNISH EVIL

#### CONCLUSION

**EZEKIEL 3:17** SON OF MAN, I HAVE MADE THE A WATCHMAN UNTO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL: THEREFORE HEAR THE WORD AT MY MOUTH, AND GIVE THEM WARNING FROM ME.

## THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA

SCRIPTURE: REVELATION 2:19-29

### INTRODUCTION

IN THE MIDST OF A CHURCH CHARACTERIZED BY LOVE, SERVICE, PATIENCE, FAITH, AND GOOD WORKS, THE LORD HAS PERCEIVED A CONDITION AS DEADLY AS A FESTERING, CANCEROUS SORE. THIS CHURCH WAS BEING SEDUCED BY FALSE PROPECY, ITS VITALITY BEING DESTROYED BY FALSE TEACHING.

#### I. IT WAS A CHURCH OF COMMENDABLE WORKS

**REVELATION 2:19 AMPLIFIED** I KNOW YOUR RECORD AND WHAT YOU ARE DOING, YOUR LOVE AND FAITH AND SERVICE AND PATIENT ENDURANCE, AND THAT YOUR RECENT WORKS ARE MORE NUMEROUS AND GREATER THAN YOUR FIRST ONES.

- A. IT WAS A LOVING BODY OF BELIEVERS
- B. IT WAS A CHURCH OF STRONG FAITH
- C. IT WAS CAUGHT UP IN THE SERVICE OF GOD
- D. IT PATIENTLY ENDURED AFFLICTION, TRIALS, PERSECUTION
- E. ITS GOOD WORKS WERE EVER INCREASING

#### II. IT WAS A CHURCH OF IMPURE DOCTRINE

**REVELATION 2:20** ...THOU SUFFEREST THAT WOMAN JEZEBEL, WHICH CALLETH HERSELF A PROPHETESS, TO TEACH AND TO SEDUCE MY SERVANTS....

- A. THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY TO JUDGE THOSE WHO MINISTER

**1 THESSALONIANS 5:12** AND WE BESEECH YOU, BRETHREN, TO KNOW THEM WHICH LABOR AMONG YOU, AND ARE OVER YOU IN THE LORD, AND ADMONISH YOU.

**2 TIMOTHY 3:10-11A** BUT THOU HAST FULLY KNOWN MY DOCTRINE, MANNER OF LIFE, PURPOSE, FAITH,

LONGSUFFERING, CHARITY, PATIENCE, PERSECUTIONS, AFFLICTIONS, WHICH CAME UNTO ME....

#### B. PAUL'S ANALYSIS OF FALSE TEACHERS

**2 TIMOTHY 6:6-7** FOR OF THIS SORT ARE THEY WHICH CREEP INTO HOUSES, AND LEAD CAPTIVE SILLY WOMEN LADEN WITH SINS, LED AWAY WITH DIVERS LUSTS, EVER LEARNING, AND NEVER ABLE TO COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.

1. THE MINISTRY OF THE TEACHER IS TO BRING US TO CHRIST
2. IF THE TEACHING WE ARE RECEIVING IS NOT MAKING US TO KNOW CHRIST, THE TRUTH, WE HAD BETTER CHECK OUT THE TEACHING AND THE TEACHER

#### C. SOME MODERN HERESIES

1. SALVATION WITHOUT SEPARATION
2. THE CROWN WITHOUT THE CROSS
  - A. THE PROSPERITY TEACHING
  - B. POSITIVE CONFESSION

### III. TWO PROMISES TO THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA

#### A. TO THE FALSE PROPHETESS AND HER FOLLOWERS

1. GREAT TRIBULATION WILL FALL UPON THEM
2. DEATH
  - A. PHYSICAL
  - B. SPIRITUAL
3. HER DOWNFALL WILL REVEAL GOD'S JUDGEMENT TO THE CHURCH

#### B. TO THE CHURCH, UNTARNISHED BY HER DOCTRINE

1. NO OTHER BURDEN WILL BE PLACED ON THEM
2. POWER OVER THE NATIONS TO OVERCOMER

## THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT SARDIS

SCRIPTURE: REVELATION 3:1-6

### INTRODUCTION

GOD QUICKLY RENDERS AN INDICTMENT AGAINST THE CHURCH AT SARDIS. IT HAD BEEN BORN IN THE FIRES OF REVIVAL AND REPENTANCE, BUT THE FIRES WERE NOW ONLY A FEW SCATTERED, DYING EMBERS. THIS CHURCH RECEIVES NO COMMENDATION, ONLY AN EXHORTATION TO "STRENGTHEN THE THINGS THAT REMAIN."

SATAN HAD VICTIMIZED THIS CHURCH BY ALLOWING IT TO MAINTAIN THE ILLUSION OF BEING ALIVE WHEN IN REALITY IT WAS DEAD.

### I. IT WAS A CHURCH WITH A REPUTATION FOR VITAL SPIRITUAL LIFE

**REVELATION 3:1A** ...THOU HAST A NAME THAT THOU LIVEST....

- A. IT HAD SEEN THE SALVATION OF MANY SINNERS
- B. IT HAD WITNESSED OUTPOURINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
- C. IT WAS NO STRANGER TO THE MIRACULOUS
- D. IT HAD MANIFESTED THE CHRISTIAN GRACES

### II. ITS MANIFESTATION OF VITAL SPIRITUAL LIFE WAS A CHARADE

**REVELATION 3:1B** ...AND ART DEAD....

- A. GOD COULD NOT RECOGNIZE ITS RITUAL AS LIFE
- B. IT HAD CEASED TO COMMUNICATE WITH ITS ENVIRONMENT
  1. NO SPIRITUAL WORSHIP
  2. LACKING IN PRAISE
  3. UNFAITHFUL IN PRAYER
  4. UNCOMMITTED IN THE STUDY OF THE WORD
- C. GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED BY LACK OF COMMITMENT

### III. THE EXHORTATION TO THE CHURCH AT SARDIS

**REVELATION 3:2** BE WATCHFUL, AND STRENGTHEN THE THINGS WHICH REMAIN, THAT ARE READY TO DIE: FOR I HAVE NOT FOUND THY WORKS PERFECT BEFORE GOD.

- A. STRENGTHEN THE VITAL SIGNS
  1. TEND TO THE REMAINING SIGNS OF LIFE
  2. MAKE EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE
- B. DO WHAT YOU KNOW BRINGS REVIVAL

**JAMES 4:17** THEREFORE TO HIM THAT KNOWETH TO DO GOOD, AND DOETH IT NOT, TO HIM IT IS SIN.

### IV. THE PROMISE TO THE REMAINING FAITHFUL

**REVELATION 3:4** THOU HAST A FEW NAMES EVEN IN SARDIS WHICH HAVE NOT DEFILED THEIR GARMENTS, AND THEY SHALL WALK WITH ME IN WHITE: FOR THEY ARE WORTHY.

- A. THINGS WHICH DEFILE OUR GARMENTS
  1. DAMAGING OTHERS BY OUR LACK OF COMMITMENT
  2. LIVING A DUAL LIFE
  3. BEING INCONSISTENT WITH OUR TESTIMONY
- B. GOD IS NOTING OUR FAITHFULNESS
- C. THE PROMISE TO THE FAITHFUL

**REVELATION 3:5** HE THAT OVER-COMETH, THE SAME SHALL BE CLOTHED IN WHITE RAIMENT, AND I WILL NOT BLOT HIS NAME OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE, BUT I WILL CONFESS HIS NAME BEFORE MY FATHER, AND BEFORE HIS ANGELS.

# THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA

SCRIPTURE: REVELATION 3:7-13

## INTRODUCTION

THIS IS GOD'S MESSAGE TO THE FAITHFUL CHURCH. WITH GOD, FAITHFULNESS ALWAYS PAYS GREAT DIVIDENDS. BECAUSE OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE PHILADELPHIAN BELIEVERS, GOD PROMISES TO SET BEFORE THEM AN OPEN DOOR. FAITHFULNESS ALWAYS BRINGS EXPANDED OPPORTUNITY.

### I. THE OPEN DOOR OF FELLOWSHIP

**1 JOHN 1:3** THAT WHICH WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD DECLARE WE UNTO YOU, THAT YE MAY ALSO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH US: AND TRULY OUR FELLOWSHIP IS WITH THE FATHER, AND WITH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.

- A. CALVARY'S PURPOSE WAS TO BRING US INTO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD
  - 1. ESTRANGED FROM GOD BY SIN
  - 2. RECONCILED TO GOD BY CHRIST'S BLOOD
- B. HE HAS PROVIDED UNLIMITED ACCESS TO HIM

**HEBREWS 4:16** LET US THEREFORE COME BOLDLY UNTO THE THRONE OF GRACE THAT WE MAY OBTAIN MERCY, AND FIND GRACE TO HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED.

### II. THE OPEN DOOR OF POWER

**ACTS 1:8A** BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU:

- A. GOD MADE HIS POWER AVAILABLE TO THE BELIEVER
- B. GOD'S SUPERABUNDANCE IS NOW OURS

**EPHESIANS 3:20** NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US....

- C. GOD EXPECTS US TO OPERATE IN HIS POWER
  - 1. HIS POWER IS NOT STATIC
  - 2. HIS POWER IS DYNAMIC
    - A. IT IS CONSTANTLY AT WORK IN THE CHURCH
    - B. IT SHOULD BE CONSTANTLY AT WORK IN EACH CHRISTAIN

### III. THE OPEN DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY

**REVELATION 3:9** BEHOLD, I WILL MAKE THEM OF THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATANJ WHICH SAY THEY ARE JEWS, AND ARE NOT, BUT DO LIE; BEHOLD, I WILL MAKE THEM TO COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE THY FEET, AND TO KNOW THAT I HAVE LOVED THEE.

- A. GREATER OPPORTUNITIES ARE GIVEN UNTO THE FAITHFUL
- B. OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK FOR GOD HAVE NEVER BEEN GREATER
  - 1. WE HAVE MORE TOOLS TO USE
  - 2. WE HAVE A GREATER MEANS TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL
  - 3. THERE IS A GREATER HUNGER FOR SPIRITUAL THINGS
- C. THESE OPPORTUNITIES REQUIRE MORE FAITHFULNESS

## THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA

**SCRIPTURE:** REVELATION 3:14-22

### INTRODUCTION

THE LAODICEAN CHURCH WAS A CHURCH THAT CONSIDERED ITSELF TO BE SELF SUFFICIENT. IT HAD ALL THE RESOURCES, TALENT, AND FACILITIES THAT IT NEEDED. IT WAS A CHURCH WITH NO NEEDS, BUT GOD CONSIDERED IT TO IMPOVERISHED. IT HAD EVERYTHING, BUT HAD NOTHING.

#### I. IT WAS A CHURCH THAT CONSIDERED ITSELF SELF SUFFICIENT

**REVELATION 3:17A** BECAUSE THOU SAYEST, I AM RICH, AND INCREASED WITH GOODS, AND HAVE NEED OF NOTHING.

- A. IT WAS A SATISFIED CHURCH
- B. IT WAS AN UNCOMMITTED CHURCH
- C. IT WAS A NON-EVANGELISTIC CHURCH
- D. IT WAS A CHURCH WITHOUT TRUE WORSHIP

#### II. IT WAS A CHURCH UNAWARE OF ITS OWN TRUE CHARACTER

**REVELATION 3:17B** ...AND KNOWEST NOT THAT THOU ART WRETCHED, AND MISERABLE, AND POOR, AND BLIND, AND NAKED.

- A. THE TRUE CONDITION OF THIS CHURCH
  - 1. IGNORANT OF THE CANCEROUS ATTITUDE DESTROYING IT
  - 2. SPIRITUALLY WRETCHED
  - 3. SPIRITUALLY MISERABLE
  - 4. SPIRITUALLY IMPOVERISHED
  - 5. SPIRITUALLY BLIND -- NO VISION
  - 6. NAKED BEFORE GOD AND THE WORLD
    - A. ITS ATTITUDES WERE LAID BARE BEFORE ALL
    - B. ITS FLAWS AND WEAKNESSES WERE EXPOSED TO ALL
- B. GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THIS CHURCH

**REVELATION 3:15-16** I KNOW THY WORKS, THAT THOU ART NEITHER COLD NOR HOT: I WOULD THAT THOU WERT COLD OR HOT. SO THEN BECAUSE THOU ART LUKEWARM, AND NEITHER COLD NOR HOT, I WILL SPUE THEE OUT OF MY MOUTH.

#### III. CHRIST WAS SAYING TO THIS CHURCH "LET ME IN"

**REVELATION 3:20** 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.

- A. NOTE THAT THIS VERSE IN CONTEXT WAS WRITTEN TO THE CHURCH
- B. WHAT CHRIST IS SAYING IS, "LET ME IN!"
  - 1. TO YOUR FELLOWSHIP
  - 2. TO YOUR PROBLEMS
  - 3. TO YOUR DECISIONS
  - 4. TO YOUR PLANS DREAMS AND AMBITIONS
  - 5. TO YOUR FUTURE
- C. CHRIST IS SEEKING ACCESS INTO EVERY PART OF YOUR LIFE