

## **We Are the Laodicean Church!**

### **And God is Greatly Displeased with the State of this Last Church**

There are seven churches specifically singled out by Jesus Christ as he told John to write letters to each of these churches in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation. Jesus told John to address these seven churches in sequence starting at the Church of Ephesus through the final Church of Laodicea. These were indeed churches that existed during the time Revelation was written between 90AD and 100AD, after Jerusalem was destroyed (many attribute 96AD).

What makes these letters extremely odd, is that each individual message that Jesus declared for the last six churches didn't fully apply to those churches at that time so when each of those churches read the letters addressed for them, they only related to and understood parts of the message and not all of it. Why is that?

Paul established the Church at Ephesus around 15-20 years after the death of Christ and after John left the Island of Patmos, he became its pastor. Polycrates, at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, confirmed in his writings that the Apostle John was a priest in Ephesus, and also was entombed there. John wrote the letters as Jesus Christ instructed while on the Island of Patmos, and when he was released and returned to the mainland, he would have mailed them from Ephesus to the remaining six cities.

What is also interesting is that if you were to have handed those six letters to the Roman mailman (so to speak) at Ephesus to be delivered to the remaining six cities, the shortest postal route that would have been taken to deliver those six letters would be in the exact same sequence that Jesus Christ provided them to John to write further emphasizing that the specific sequence of churches is important. The shortest postal route matching sequence may be interesting but the next discovery regarding the Rev 2 & 3 church sequence is earth-shattering!

Remember we previously said that the last six cities couldn't fully understand the entirety of their messages? At the time they received the letters (around 90AD-100AD) they could only understand the parts that applied to them at that time in history and the rest of the message was literally "Out of Time". We will see that the full message to each of the seven cities in sequence could only be understood by people in the future that could look back at church history. Today, we have the unique ability to look back at the entire church history and sit back in awe and wonderment at how God unfolded time itself creating a history that he had John write about so precisely in the first century and also molded and fashioned seven cities back them to represent the expansion of the church in sequence for the next 1,900 years!

**I'll briefly outline the seven churches, but the real emphasis is "OUR" church and why God is so displeased with this church and what we God is specifically telling US to do; therefore, please feel free to skip down to the Church of Laodicea which applies to us today.**

**Here is a quick timeline reference to visually see the last 1,900 years:**

[www.ThePureWord.com/library/SevenChurchesTimeline.pdf](http://www.ThePureWord.com/library/SevenChurchesTimeline.pdf)

## 1. Church of Ephesus (70AD – 170AD):

Means desired/desirable. We know that judgment begins in the Church and hence Christ addresses the church of Ephesus first.

Destination: The Apostolic Church or the first Church 30-100AD. Called “The Steadfast Church”, for pastors, or believers. (but no passion for Jesus). The pastors or leaders responsible for the Church.

Description of Jesus: holds the seven messengers (pastors, leaders) in his hand walking around the seven candlesticks (churches)

Commendation: The test everything against the Word of God and hate those that are liars and have not become weary. They hate the deeds of the Nihilations

Condemnation: They have left their first love. They have become so caught up in the process of doing “church” for the sake of expanding the “church” that they have ignored Christ in their lives.

Exhortation: Remember, Repent, and Return to where you were and return to your first Love. Their first love was the love for Jesus Christ and make Him your priority.

Promise: Ephesus (population of around 300,000) was centered around the temple to the goodness of Diana. In her garden (only available to the Pagan priests) they could eat from the garden. God Gives the overcomers access to HIS garden in heaven which has the Tree of Life.

## 2. Church of Smyrna (170AD – 312AD):

Polycarp was the bishop of Smyrna who was burned to death. He was 86 yrs old when he refused to deny Christ and was killed. The Jews themselves gathered firewood on the sabbath in order to assist the burning of Polycarp (they were of the synagogue of Satan). During the time of this period Caesar Worship was in practice and once a year you had to declare that Caesar was Lord and they you could then worship anyone you desired for the rest of the year. Christians of course would not declare that Caesar was Lord.

Destination: Church under Roman persecution 170-312AD. “The persecuted church”, pastor, or believer. Smyrna means “myrrh”, a burial spice and an apt name for those undergoing tremendous persecution and killed for their faith. In order for myrrh to be beneficial it must be crushed to release its fragrance.

Description of Jesus: Jesus was dead and then came to life. This was to comfort them as many would have to give up their lives and then they would be resurrected and with Christ in heaven.

Commendation: They are commended for their works, their tribulation, their poverty (*ptocheia*, have nothing at all), suffering, tribulation (*thilipis* means tremendous pressure), and blasphemy spoken against them. He tells them that they are in fact rich! Christ tells them to not fear anything they are about to suffer for His sake. God always knows what is going to happen to us in the future.

Condemnation: - no condemnation -

Exhortation: Do not fear the things about to come upon you (suffering and martyrdom). Be faithful till death and they will receive a crown of life.

Promise: They will not be hurt by the second death. The second death is at the Great White Throne at the end of the Great Tribulation when you are separated from God for all eternity in the Lake of Fire.

### 3. Church of Pergamos (312AD – 606AD):

Pergamos was a center of idolatry and demon-controlled religion and was a place the Lord called “where Satan’s throne is”. There are two meanings of “Pergamos” which are elevated and married. The city worshiped the god Asklepios (a serpent, the savior) which was their god of healing. Worship of their gods was mandatory under penalty of death.

Destination: Age of Constantine when he Married the church and the state 313-600AD. “The Morally Compromising Church”, pastor, or believer. The Church was faithful, even to martyrdom but it was tolerant of False Teachers.

Description of Jesus: He has a sharp two-edged sword (*rhomphaia*) which is an instrument of anguish and judgment. Christ tells them that they know where they live (*katoikein*, residence).

Commendation: They are told to “hold fast” to their His name (character, person, and nature of Jesus) and they did not deny their Faith in Christ. Antipas (means “like the Father”) was Jesus’ faithful martyr.

Condemnation: They allowed those who held the doctrine of Balaam (Num 24-25) which resulted in intermarriage, fornication, and idolatry (marriage of church and state started by Constantine). This pattern was the starting of seeds of the later Roman Catholic Church. They also allowed the doctrines of the Nicolaitans (where the “pastors”, “laity”, “clergy” stood between the people and the Lord) which also required the people to come to the priests for absolution or forgiveness instead of praying directly to God.

Exhortation: Repent (change your thoughts away from the world and back to God). If you don’t repent, then Christ will fight against you. If you repent, then Christ will fight against your enemies.

Promise: You will be able to **(1)** eat of the hidden manna; **(2)** receive a white stone which is provided at the end of a trial when a person is found innocent; **(3)** and provided a new name by God.

### 4. Church of Thyatira (606AD – 1648AD):

This church is the longest and most severe of the seven letters in dealing with Sin. The church was given time to repent but she did not repent (1,260 years reign of the Roman Catholic Church). Thyatira means “continual, unwearied or perpetual sacrifice”. The Roman Catholics in communion believe that the sacraments are literally changed into the body and blood of Christ and that Christ is perpetually suffering and being sacrificed – contrary to the scriptures where Christ died ONCE for our sins. Thyatira was between Pergamum and Sardis whose road that was crowded with commerce and honeycombed with pagan religions.

Destination: Church under the dark ages, under Roman Catholicism 600-1517AD. “The Doctrinally Compromising Church”, pastor, or believer. The problem with this church was “internal”!

Description of Jesus: Eyes like a flame of fire (piercing your thoughts) and feet like brass (executer of judgment and trampling His enemies under His feet)

Commendation: They are praised for their works and as time progressed their works progressed also; however, it was only superficial. Their love produced service (*diakonia*, a voluntary service towards others). None of the churches had this kind of Love displayed.

Condemnation: This church was also condemned more than any other church. They allowed (*apheis*, their problem was internal) as they had false teachings. The Thyatirans permitted the deeds of the Nicolaitans (whereas the Ephesus hated them). They also permitted the worship of “Jezebel” (brought in multiple gods to worship – ie, make the people worship idols).

Exhortation: Those that don't hold onto the deep things of Satan and sexual immorality of Jezebel and "hold fast" onto your faith (Christ in you).

Promise: To those that overcome **(1)** will have a part in the Messianic Kingdom and authority over the nations during the 1,000 years reign; and **(2)** Christ will give them the morning star (they will possess Jesus).

#### 5. **Church of Sardis** (1648AD – 1750AD):

Sardis means "those escaping" (ie, escaping from "justification by works" and returning back to the Biblical doctrine of "justification by grace through faith". The city was above the plain in the valley of the River Hermus believing it was impregnable. The city was taken by Cyrus by watching a soldier retrieving his helmet which fell off from top of the wall and discovered the way in. They then took the city "as a thief in the night". Antiochus the Great took the city again around 350 years later in around the same manner. Belshazzar made a feast for his lords also thinking he was impregnable and was complacent and lost his kingdom as well. This city was always destroyed because each time "they didn't keep watch".

Destination: Church of the Reformation 1517-1648AD. The "Complacent Church" or "Lifeless Church", pastor, or believer.

Description of Jesus: Jesus holds the seven Spirits of God and the Seven stars (the seven-fold spirit is complete).

Commendation: A few that have not defiled their garments and have continued in their faith in a spirit led life and overcome despite the deadness of the church.

Condemnation: Christ says they have a name that is alive (Christ is alive) but they are really dead (spiritually dead). The church was living after the flesh and not according to the Spirit. The church has to remember that it's the Lord and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Here are three things we must do: **(1)** Gal 5:16 - Walk in the Spirit; **(2)** Gal 5:18 - Be led by the spirit; **(3)** Gal 5:25 - Live in the Spirit.

Exhortation: Jesus tells them to **(1)** strengthen the things that remain before you die (go back to being led by the Spirit) and **(2)** remember how you received and hear the Word. Having begun with the spirit are you now being made perfect by the flesh? (Gal 3:2-3) (of course not). Hold fast the truth you have and repent of your lifelessness and receive the Spirit and walk in the Spirit. Christ tells them that He will come, and they will be caught unaware, and off guard. You need to be watching, worshiping, walking, and waiting for his return whether it be that you die or the rapture.

Promise: Overcomers (1 John 4-5 - your faith that Christ is the Son of God and walking in Him) will be clothed in white garments (Rev 19:8 - bride's fine linen is the righteous acts in faith) and by no means be blotted out of the book of Life. Jesus will also declare your name before God that you belong to Him.

#### 6. **Church of Philadelphia** (1750AD – 1945AD):

Philadelphia means "brotherly love". We are called to love one another (Rom 12:9-10). The city of Philadelphia was nearly destroyed several times by earthquakes. They worshiped many gods and the principal god was Dionysus who was the "god of wine". We are to be in this world but not be partakers of the world.

Destination: The Church of the Great Missionary Movement. "The Obedient Loving Church", pastor, or believer.

Description of Jesus: Jesus is Holy and True (he keeps His promises!) and holds the key to David. He opens, and no-one shuts. During this time period there was no-where on earth that missionaries could not go.

Commendation: Christ knows (perfect tense, knows everything) their works and has set before them an open door for ministry and no-one can shut it. Christ does this because they have a little strength (little self-effort and focus on confidence in the Lord to direct and fulfill God's will). They also keep God's Word (literally, solid doctrine, Biblical Truth, not relativism) and have not denied Him (not denied His character, nature, and person of the Lord Jesus as the Head of the Church).

Condemnation: - no condemnation -

Exhortation: They are to hold fast to what they have which is God's Word, His name and the opportunity to witness to others.

Promise: Because of their faithfulness, God will cause their enemies to do them homage. They will also be kept from the Great Tribulation which will come upon the whole world to try them. God will make them a pillar in the temple and will write on him three names:

- Name of My God
- Name of the city of My God
- Name of the New Jerusalem

#### 7. **Church of Laodiceans** (1945AD – Rapture):

Laodicea means “people ruling” or “justice of the people” which lets us know that it's the people who rule the church and Christ himself has no part of it. This matches Christ's parable of the mustard seed which grew into a tree (mutant) and covered the whole earth and that even the birds of the air (demons) lodged (make their home in) it's branches (denominations). It's a sad state of the church when demons run and control it by being so comfortable in the church that they actually “LIVE” in what is supposed to be Christ's church. Laodicea was a Roman city which was one of the only cities that had hot and cold running water in the city because two aqueducts were built – one from Colossea which brought down cold water and another from hot springs from Hieropolis which brought in hot water. HOT water is therapeutic, and COLD water is refreshing; however, WARM water (neither hot nor cold) is stagnant and therefore diseased and of course you would never drink it and likewise spew it from your mouth. This description is something that the people in Laodicea clearly understood.

Destination: The “Lukewarm Church”, pastor, or believer (Jesus is outside His Church). This is a materialistic church that does not distinguish between material and spiritual prosperity.

Description of Jesus: The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of creation. Christ is indicating that He is the creator and sustainer of all things, and nothing can exist apart from Him. Apparently, those in this Church have forgotten this as they have become more of a social group instead of looking towards and following Christ.

Commendation: **Christ has nothing good to say about this Church (the Church of today)**

Condemnation: They are lukewarm (neither hot nor cold; neither therapeutic nor refreshing) and Christ will vomit them out of His mouth. They say they are rich, yet they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked (without the garments of salvation). Because they have material possessions (as we do today) they say they have no need of spirituality as they are complacent and self-satisfied with what they have.

Exhortation: what they had materially, they lacked spiritually! God encourages them to buy from Him and He will provide them with refined Gold, white garments (of righteousness and salvation), and eye save (to see). Jesus tells us to be Zealous!! **As many as God loves He chastises!** Jesus is

standing at our door of our hearts and knocks and if we hear his voice and open, he will come into our hearts and stay with us.

Promise: For those that accept Him (He hears our voice – we pray), Christ promises that he will come and dine with us (have a personal relationship with Him) and grant us the authority to sit with Him in Heaven!

### God's message to us specifically:

There is no doubt we are well into the Laodicean Church. All polls by those professing to be “born again” Christians show that the vast majority do not actually follow Christ nor the leading of the Holy Spirit as their direction for their lives. Statistically there is no difference between Christians in the number of divorces, abortions, and a myriad of other sins forbidden by the scriptures. Christ warned us not to be deceived. Christ's message for our church is that a primary source the corruption is the fact that we are indeed living in a rich society – where everything is available to us at the tip of our fingertips, and we have no need for anything – even following God.

Christ is telling us directly that he is knocking and if we listen and hear his voice, He will be faithful to come into our hearts and direct us. We must then follow his leading through the Holy Spirit and purchase His white garments of righteousness. **Read His Word and follow Him Daily with every decision you make.**

### The Pure Word is a Resource All Christians Must Have!

*The Pure Word* is a word-by-word translation from the Textus Receptus Koine Greek (the exact same text that the 1611 KJV scribes used) to English and it also incorporated the original Greek Parsings which the King James scholars completely ignored because they didn't understand them. Don't get me wrong - The King James Version is an amazing translation, but the scribes didn't go far enough because they simply couldn't because of lack of knowledge. At the time of the 1600's no one understood the majority of the Koine Greek root words used in the New Testament nor did they understand nor use the Greek parsings. It took another 260 YEARS before the Greek words were separated into their root components which was published by Strong in 1890. Without identifying the root words, the meanings they assigned to words in different verses constantly varied and had little to do with the true meaning of the text.

Not only that, but the scribes had no clear idea of what the Greek parsings were that were assigned to over 115,000 of the words (of the 140,745 total words). The purpose of the parsings is to provide text that could not be misinterpreted which then resulted in a crystal-clear message. Since they didn't use the parsings, the context and meaning of the English words they assigned constantly varied between verses and that gave rise to hundreds of denominations and disagreements which fragmented Christianity we see today. Their own letter to King James clearly states their frustration and their limitations in not knowing the words and their inconsistency in the final English text and they chalk it up to their “creative freedom or liberty”. It wasn't until 260 years after the King James Version was compiled that the parsings of each of the 115,000 words were clarified and released in 1894 by Dr. Scrivener using upwards of 100 scholars spending decades of work on the task.

*The Pure Word* has taken each of the 5,624 Koine Greek root words and took the single primary meaning at the time of Christ of each word and directly substituted it into each use of the same root word. In addition, the precise parsings of each of the 115,000 words that were mostly ignored by the

KJV scribes and nearly all scholars since, was applied to each word. This process removed all known discrepancies and provided a clarity of meaning that was never before possible.

I would strongly suggest that every Christian obtain a copy of ***The Pure Word*** and use it alongside your favorite Bible version to see the original meanings and open your eyes like never before. I humbly wouldn't even say it was a translation as verses were not "translated", but a Pure extraction from the Greek into English using the original meaning of each root word as closely as possible as it existed at the time of Jesus Christ and the Apostles along with the original parsings applied to each word.

May our Lord Bless you and lead you into a deeper understanding and relationship with Him,

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