1 - **Lessons Learned From Letters To Seven Churches**

**Revelation Chapters 2 & 3**

2 - **The Author**

*“****The revelation of Jesus Christ****… He sent and communicated it…* ***to John****”* (1:1)

Jesus Christ… (1:5)

1. **Prophet** - “*The* ***faithful witness***” - (John 8:14)
2. **Priest** - “*The* ***firstborn of the dead***” - (Col. 1:18)
3. **King** - “***Ruler of the kings*** *of the earth*” - (Ephesians 1:20-23)

3 - **The Author**

**Jesus Christ**…

* **Worthy of all reverence and fear**. (1:12-17)
* ***“In the middle of the lampstands”*** or ***“the churches”***. (1:13, 20)

4 - **The Audience**

* ***“His bond-servants”*** (1:1) who are **enduring great persecution** (note 2:10, 13, 22; 3:10; 12:13).
* *“To the seven churches that are in Asia… to* ***Ephesus… Smyrna… Pergamum… Thyatira… Sardis… Philadelphia… Laodicea***.” (1:4, 11)
* “***Seven***”? Troas, Hieropolis, Colossae?

5 – Map

6 - **The need for truthful assessment**!

Jesus is saying to all churches, ***“I know…”***

**Examples of incorrect human assessments:**

1. **Smyrna -** viewed as being in ***“poverty”*** butactually ***“rich”*.(2:9)**
2. **Laodicea** - viewed as being ***“rich… wealthy, and have need of nothing”*** but actually, ***“wretched… miserable… poor… blind… naked”***. (3:17)
3. **Sardis** - viewed as being ***“alive”*** but actually ***“dead”***.

7 - **The need for truthful assessment**!

**Does Jesus know about us?**Is He still *“in the middle of the lampstands”*? (1:13; John 2:24)

**Jesus’ judgments are just and truthful**!
(Revelation 19:2; Psalms 19:9; John 5:30; 2 Tim. 4:8)

**We need to learn to see as God sees!**(1 Samuel 16:7)

**How do we assess ourselves? Others?**(Matthew 7:3-5; Luke 13:1-5; John 7:24; 2 Cor. 13:5)

8 – **Commonalities**

1. **The need for doctrinal purity**!

Receiving both commendation and condemnation.

* **Ephesus** – put to the test false apostles, hate *“the deeds of the Nicolaitans”*.
* **Pergamum** – some held the *“teaching of Balaam”* and the *“teaching of the Nicolaitans”*
* **Thyatira** – the teaching of Jezebel – some did and some didn’t.

9 –

1. **The need for doctrinal purity**!

Are we ***“contending for the faith”***?(Jude 3)

Do we ***“test the spirits”***? (1 John 4:1)

Do we *“****receive****”* those who go beyond the ***“doctrine of Christ”***? (2 John 9-11)

Do we reject any **deviations from the sound doctrine**? (Galatians 1:6-9; Romans 16:17;
2 Timothy 1:13)

10 –

1. **The need for moral purity**!

The churches in both Pergamum and Thyatira had succumbed to **the lack of moral restraints** exhibited in the world they lived in. (2:14; 2:20)

The call to ***not “soil our garments***”. (3:4)

Even those who are “*walking and pleasing God*” need reminded to “***possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor***”. (1 Thessalonians 4:1-7)

11 –

1. **The need for repentance**!

**The call to repent** (2:5; 2:16; 2:21-22; 3:3; 3:19)

The need to **appreciate the patience of God** to change! (2 Peter 3:9, 14-15)

**How do churches repent**?

**Consequences of failing to repent**! (“*or else*”, “*unless*”, “*if not… I will*…”.

What does **repentance demand**? (2 Cor. 7:10-11)

12 –

1. **The need for perseverance & vigilance**!

Indicated by the common exhortation **“he who overcomes”.** (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21)

Speaks **to the great spiritual battle** each church and each member must engage in. (Revelation 13:7; 12:7-11; 17:14; 21:7-8)

How do we?

13 –

1. **The need to pay attention**!

Indicated by the common exhortation **“he who has ears to hear, let him hear”.** (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)

Speaks **to not only our focus and attention but the need for a tender and receptive heart.**

Are we continuing to listen and be stirred up and take it to heart?

14 – **All Of The Churches of Christ Need…**

1. **True spiritual examination.**
2. **Doctrinal purity**
3. **Moral purity**
4. **Perseverance and vigilance**
5. **Spiritual focus and attention.**
6. **Penitent hearts**