

## The book of Revelation

### Chapters 2 & 3: Part 1

“The seven epistles belong to the very \_\_\_\_\_ of the book. The book is one.” (71)

#### *Letters to the Seven Churches of Western Asia Minor*

- All the letters have the same opening address, “To the angel of the church in...”
- All the letters begin with some description of Christ that was referenced in chapter 1
- The “body” of all the letters begins with the phrase, “I know...”
- The conclusion of all the letters includes the phrase, “He who has an ear, let him hear...”
- All the letters include a promise for “the one who conquers.”
- The letters are broken into 2 groups (the first 3 and the last 4)

#### *Letters to the Seven Churches and the Church in Every Age*

“The epistles describe conditions that occur not in one particular age of Church history, but \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.” (72)

“All the churches must listen to all the letters, for each message to a particular congregation is what the Spirit says to the churches in general. These seven churches in Asia Minor represent the totality of Christ’s churches, scattered across the world and over \_\_\_\_\_, and their problems are symptomatic of those confronting churches in all times and places.” (Johnson, 69)

#### *Letter 1: The Church in Ephesus (2:1-7)*

-Christ’s description (vs. 1) “The seven stars indicate the ministers of the churches, Christ’s true ambassadors, and the church at Ephesus had been troubled by ‘false apostles,’ who had tried to counteract the work of the true ministers. So the church is given the assurance that the Son of Man, exalted in glory, rules the ministers and \_\_\_\_\_ what happens in the churches.” (73)

-Commendation (vs. 2-3, 6) Much of what this church is commended for involves their \_\_\_\_\_-they were able and willing to test would be teachers against the Scriptures and discovered many to be false.

“Paul had urged the elders of this church to exercise discernment (Acts 20:30)...Paul’s protectiveness had borne good fruit.” (Johnson, 71)

-Rebuke (vs. 4-5) This church is rebuked for abandoning the \_\_\_\_\_ it had at first (this is not a reference to a lack of love for Christ)

“The first love lost in Ephesus was love for other people...An embattled church, surrounded by enemies, can turn inward in self-protection and suspicion...Having heeded the apostles’ emphasis on truth, this church had slipped off balance by neglecting love.” (Johnson, 72)

-Promise (vs. 7) “The great temple of Artemis at Ephesus was built on the site of an ancient tree-shrine, and the image of the date palm symbolized the goddess and her city, Ephesus. But Jesus excels Artemis, for He promises to those who overcome, through truth expressed in love, access to a tree that yields \_\_\_\_\_ delight and eternal life.” (Johnson, 73)

*Letter 2: The Church in Smyrna (2:8-11)*

-Christ’s description (vs 8) A church suffering persecution even to the point of death needed to be reminded of Christ’s suffering unto death and His glorious resurrection.

-Commendation (vs. 9-10) Christ knows of the churches suffering (persecution, poverty, slander) which are a result of its testimony and \_\_\_\_\_

-Many in the church at Smyrna were threatened with or eventually put to \_\_\_\_\_ (as would be their famous pastor Polycarp) for their faith

-Many in the church at Smyrna would have lost much of their business after conversion. “These people were often through out of employment as a result of the very fact of their conversion.” (76)

-The church in Smyrna was specifically attacked by the Jews of the city. “They not only vilified the Messiah but eagerly \_\_\_\_\_ the Christians before the Roman tribunals... These so-called Jews might consider themselves to be ‘the synagogue of God’; in reality they are constituted ‘the synagogue of Satan,’ the chief accuser of the brethren.” (77)

-Rebuke (NA)-one of two churches listed where there is no rebuke from Christ

-Promise (vs. 11) “Even though believers may be put to death, namely, the first death, they are not going to be hurt by the \_\_\_\_\_ death, that is, they will not be cast, body and soul, into the lack of fire at Christ’s second coming.” (77)

*Letter 3: The Church in Pergamum (2:12-17)*

-Christ’s description (vs. 12) “Christ is said to have the sharp two-edged sword because He is going to \_\_\_\_\_ against the Nicolaitans, unless they repent (v. 16).” (78)

-Commendation (vs. 13) Even though Pergamum is “where Satan’s throne” was, the believers kept the \_\_\_\_\_

-Rebuke (vs. 14-16) “The church at Pergamum was not fully awake to the dangers of this compromising attitude, this halfway covenanting with the world. It should have \_\_\_\_\_ these erring members.” (79)

“While standing against Satan’s frontal assault, however, the church had let a dangerous enemy slip through the back door: the Nicolaitans.” (Johnson, 76)

-Promise (vs. 17) The “hidden manna” that is promised is a reference to Christ Himself and the “white stone with a new name written on it” is most likely a reference to their new \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ.