

JESUS CHRIST EXAMINES FOUR CHURCHES

Introduction

Jesus examined seven churches in chapters 2-3. He used a different fact about Himself from chapter one for each church. Each fact was related to the condition of the church. Seven in Scripture is a number of fullness, so what Jesus said to these seven churches applies to the full number of churches during the church age. Churches can learn what the Lord expects of them from His examination of these seven churches. His main purpose was to check their witness to the world around them. They were lampstands from which the light of the Gospel was to shine in their cities and deliver the people from the darkness of sin. If the churches were living in sin, their light would soon go out. He commended them for right-doing and condemned them for wrong-doing and would discipline them, if they did not repent; He promised rewards to the overcomers, the true believers in the churches (1 Jn 5:4-5). The church at Ephesus represents churches that are sound in doctrine and diligent in labors, but have left their first love for Christ. The church at Smyrna symbolizes churches that remain true to Christ in spite of severe persecution. The church at Pergamum is like churches that do not deny their faith in Christ, but they tolerate members that practice the sins of idol worship. The church at Thyatira epitomizes the churches that are good in most areas, but they let a false teacher remain in the church along with her followers. Of these four churches only the church at Smyrna met His full approval. Christ's examination of all seven churches will give a sure standard by which any church can measure itself.

Aim of the Lesson: Learn what Christ expects from His churches and what He promises to the overcomers.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Rev 3:22).

Outline of the Lesson and Questions to Answer

Use one of these words for the blanks to describe each church below: **Foolish; Faltering; False; Fierce**

I. The Church at Ephesus: F_____ Love (2:1-7)

1. Why is **Inspector** a good title for Christ? (2:1)
2. What was wrong with the love for the Lord in the church at Ephesus? (2:4)
3. What did Christ tell this church to do? (2:5)
4. What would happen if this church refused to obey? (2:5)
5. Why is a lampstand (candlestick in KJV) a good symbol for a church?
6. What did Christ promise the overcomers? (2:7)

II. The Church at Smyrna: F_____ Tribulation (2:8-11)

7. Why is **Victor** a good title for Christ? (2:8)
8. What kind of tribulation did the church at Smyrna suffer? (2:9-10)
9. What did Christ promise these believers? (2:10-11)

III. The Church at Pergamum: F_____ Tolerance (2:12-17)

10. Why is **Warrior** a good title for Christ? (2:12, 16)
11. How did the church at Pergamum show its tolerance? (2:14-15)
12. What did Christ promise to the overcomers? (2:17)

IV. The Church at Thyatira: F_____ Teacher (2:18-29)

13. Why is **Judge** a good title for Christ? (2:18)
14. What name did Jesus give this teacher in the church at Thyatira? (2:20-23)
15. What did Christ promise to the overcomers? (2:26-28)

LISTEN TO THE LORD AND LET HIM TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE.