



“Grasping the Book of Revelation”

2. “The things which are”

Recapitulation: The things you have seen!

Key message: *Breaking the spirit of familiarity:*

1. Stop being familiar with the **name** of God
2. Stop being familiar with the **move** of God
3. Stop being familiar with the **ways** of God
4. Stop being familiar with the **work** of God
5. Stop being familiar with the **image** of God
6. Stop being familiar with the **plan** of God
7. Stop being familiar with the **word** of God

Our study today will be reflecting on “**the things which are**”:

- The seven letters written to the **seven churches in Asia Minor**, or present Turkey, to whom the whole book is addressed (Rev. 2:1- Rev. 3:22).
- These **messages to the churches** apply to the whole church age and until the rapture of the church just before the future tribulation and coming of the Antichrist, who will be here for the last seven years of this age.
- God is bringing different **points of commendation and points of condemnation**

Situation

Even though the Lord brought different points of commendation and condemnation, **we can still retrieve some similarity in the structure of the letters.**

1. For instance, **each opens with a salutation to an individual church;**
2. Each presents the Lord Jesus in a role that is peculiarly fitting for that particular church;

3. Each describes His knowledge of the church's works, introduced by the words "I know" {your works}
4. Words of commendation are addressed to all churches except Laodicea;
5. To each a special exhortation is given to hear what the Spirit is saying and in
6. Each a special promise is included for **the overcomer**.

Exploration:

Each church has its own distinctive character.

1. **Ephesus**, the loveless church - **losing their first love**;
2. **Smyrna**, the persecuted church - **fear of suffering**;
3. **Pergamos**, the over-tolerant church - **doctrinal defection**
4. **Thyatira**, the compromising church - **moral departure**
5. **Sardis**, the sleeping church - **spiritual deadness**
6. **Philadelphia**, the church with opportunity - **not holding fast**
7. and **Laodicea**, the complacent (self- approving) church - **lukewarmness**

Observation:

- The seven churches may also be symbolic **references to the individual believer**, who is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- Perhaps the **conditions of the seven churches** could also apply to the "Christian" or "not so Christian" walk of each individual church member—for we are many parts that form one body (1 Corinthians 12:12). It is the individual member within these churches ("He who has an ear") to whom
- Jesus is speaking. It is the individual church member who must "overcome."

Recommendation: Jesus says, "To him who overcomes":

1. "I will give the right to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7).
2. You "will not be hurt at all by the second death" (2:11).

3. “I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to Him who receives it” (2:17).
4. “I will give authority over the nations— ‘He will rule them with an iron sceptre; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’ —just as I have received authority from my Father. I will also give him the morning star” (2: 26-28).
5. I “will, like them [the worthy believers of Sardis] be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels” (3:5-6).
6. “I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name” (3:12).
7. “I [Jesus] will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne” (3:21).

Remember and Repent:

What does God say about the remedy for their situation? In one sentence it is this:

Remember and repent, or I will **return and remove your light** (2:5). **This is good advice for any child of God who has drifted from the top priorities:**

1. **Reflect:** Think back and remember the original vision and goals.
2. **Repent:** Decide to change. List what you must discard and prioritize.
3. **Restore:** Begin to restore one top priority at a time, each week.
4. **Recognize:** Remember that God holds us accountable. **He rewards fruit, not activity.**