

THINGS WHICH MUST SHORTLY COME TO PASS

A STUDY OF REVELATION—PART 3

We now begin the second part of the Divine outline of Revelation. John was told to: “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are” (Revelation 1:19) We are now looking at the “things which are” which contains Revelation chapters 2 & 3.

I. REVELATION—THE CANDLESTICKS

- A. The candlesticks are identified as churches (*1:20*)
- B. Revelation was sent to those seven churches: (*1:11*)
 - 1. Ephesus
 - 2. Smyrna
 - 3. Pergamos
 - 4. Thyatira
 - 5. Sardis
 - 6. Philadelphia
 - 7. Laodicea

II. REVELATION—THREE VIEWS OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES

- A. They were real
 - 1. They were circular
 - 2. If you had visited each church beginning with Ephesus, you would have traveled in a circle coming upon each church as listed and consummating with Laodicea.
- B. They are relevant
 - 1. The messages to the churches were relevant then
 - 2. The messages to the churches are relevant today
- B. They are representative
 - 1. They give us a preview of church history.
 - 2. These churches give us a chronological account of church history.

III. REVELATION—THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS (2:1-7)

- A. The only church in the New Testament addressed by two apostles
 - 1. The Apostle Paul—Ephesians
 - 2. The Apostle John—Revelation
- B. The city of Ephesus was well known for its temple of Diana
 - 1. The city was known as one of the cultural centers of the world
 - i. People came to Ephesus from all over the world
 - ii. Every belief and every occupation was found in Ephesus
 - 2. It had a library larger than those in Rome, Athens, and Alexandria
- C. On his third missionary journey, the Apostle Paul came to Ephesus. (*Acts 19*)
 - 1. Paul ministered in Ephesus for three years. (*Acts 20:31*)
 - 2. A great movement of God took place. (*Acts 19:18*)

FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND

A 52-Week Study of the Book of Revelation

Week 3

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Sunday, May 26, 2013

- D. Paul sent one of his letters to Ephesus.
- E. Jesus identifies Himself to the church as He does to each church.
 - 1. Jesus holds the pastors in His hands. (1:20-2:1)
 - 2. Jesus walks in the midst of His church observing. (1:13-2:1)
- F. The commendation of the Church of Ephesus (2:2, 3)
 - 1. The church had much labor (2:2—*Busy doing the work of the Lord even to the point of exhaustion*)
 - 2. The church had patience (2:2—*Endurance under trial*)
 - 3. The church refused to compromise. (2:2)
 - i. They would not uphold evil
 - ii. They put professors to the test and found some had no possession. (2:2)
 - iii. Both the church of Ephesus and Christ were in agreement about the Nicolaitans. (2:6)
 - a. Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans. (2:6)
 - b. Jesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans. (2:6)
 - c. A preacher of years ago stated that he did not know who the Nicolaitans were until he saw the offering plate passed. (nickel-lay-it-in's)
 - d. The Nicolaitans created a division between the clergy and laity and set themselves up as a hierarchy.
 - 4. The Church of Ephesus did all they did for the cause of Christ. (2:3)
 - i. Although they were suffering they would not give up. (2:3—*“Not fainted”*)
 - ii. They remembered the Name of Jesus (2:3)
- G. The condemnation of The Church of Ephesus. (2:5)
 - 1. Jesus was disappointed with the church of Ephesus (2:5)
 - 2. Please note:
 - i. The Church of Ephesus had not lost its first love
 - ii. The Church of Ephesus had left its first love
 - iii. Their love had grown cold and indifferent
 - iv. The courtship was over
 - v. Their works were mechanical (“We have always done it this way”—tradition)
- H. The counsel (2:5, 7)
 - 1. Remember (2:5)
 - i. It is vitally important to remember where we came from
 - ii. The people of Ephesus had been idol worshippers. (*Acts 19*)
 - 2. Repent (2:5)
 - i. Repentance begins with a change of heart which leads to a change of mind
 - ii. Repentance leads to a change of behavior
 - 3. Return (2:5)
 - i. They were to go back and do the first works. (2:5)
 - ii. The “first works” were to be energized with a fervent love for Jesus.(2:5)
 - 4. Retribution (2:5b)
 - i. Jesus sounded the warning. (Repent and do the first works)
 - ii. Jesus would not allow His church to function without unction
 - iii. He was walking among the church of Ephesus and observing.(2:1)
 - iv. Without repentance the church would become nonexistent. (2:5b)

5. Reward. (2:7)
 - i. The Spirit is speaking. (2:7)
 - ii. A blessed reward is promised to those who conquer and overcome. (2:7)
 - iii. The Tree of Life was first seen in Eden. (*Genesis 2:7*)
 - iv. The Tree of Life will appear again in the New Jerusalem. (22:2)
 - v. The Tree of Life is a symbol of eternal life!
6. Retrospect (2:7)
 - i. The Letter to Ephesus teaches us some vital lessons in life.
 - ii. Right beliefs and outward service cannot make up for a cold heart.
 - iii. It is tragic to have a saved soul and at the same time have a lost life.

IV. REVELATION—THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA (2:8-11)

- A. The name “Smyrna” would come to represent the actuality of that church
 1. The word “myrrh” comes from Smyrna.
 2. Myrrh was used in embalming a dead body and speaks to death.
 3. Smyrna was a period of great suffering.
 4. The phrase “*the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church*” applies to Smyrna.
 5. Smyrna was located about 35 miles north of Ephesus
- B. Jesus introduces Himself to the Church of Smyrna (2:8)
 1. Jesus writes to the Pastor of Smyrna. (2:8)
 2. Jesus introduces Himself as the first and the last. (1:11, 17-2:8)
 - i. As the “first”, Jesus is up front leading the way. All other life is derived life
 - ii. As the “last”, Jesus is our protector following us
 3. Jesus introduces Himself as The One “*which was dead*”—became dead. (1:18-2:8)
 4. Jesus introduces Himself as The One “*which is alive*”—eternally alive
- C. Jesus describes the Church of Smyrna (2:9, 10)
 1. Jesus again shares Words of comfort. (2:9—“*I know*”)
 - i. These words communicate volumes to the believer.
 - ii. Jesus knew about every phase of their sorrow.
 2. Jesus knew their works (2:9—*Jesus also knows ours, or the lack thereof!*)
 3. Jesus knew about their tribulation (2:9)
 - i. The word “tribulation” actually means “pressure or persecution
 - ii. The Christians rejected the pagan idol worship existing in Smyrna
 - iii. They refused to say, “Caesar is Lord”, and thus suffered
 4. Jesus knew about their “poverty” (2:9)
 - i. When they refused to acknowledge Caesar as lord they no longer could find employment.
 - ii. The word used for “poverty” means abject poverty
 - iii. They possessed absolutely nothing
 5. Their true value was acknowledged by Jesus. “But thou art rich”. (2:9)
 - i. There are no words of condemnation to this church
 - ii. In Heaven, their stock was high!
 6. The persecutors were known by Jesus (2:9)

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- i. The Jews crucified Jesus and now hate His followers.
 - ii. The source of their hatred is Satan.
7. A warning from the Saviour about the future (2:10)
 - i. More suffering was on the way
 - ii. Some would be cast into prison. The Devil would see to that!
8. A promise from the Saviour about the future. (2:10, 11)
 - i. To those who are martyrs---Jesus will give the Crown of Life (2:10)
 - ii. Those who die once will never die again (2:11)
 - a. Hell is called the second death (21:8)
 - b. Those who are faithful and overcome prove their salvation thus Hell has no claim upon their lives (2:10, 11)