



The Age of The Apocalypse

“Hear What the Spirit Says unto the Churches” # 2

Revelation 2:18-3:13

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The Bible says there will be seven stages of the church-age from the Day of Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church, and those periods of time are identified by the seven churches to whom John wrote the letters as dictated by the Lord, Jesus Christ.

- The churches are listed in Revelation 1:11 as: ***“Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”***
- These were literal, physical churches, located in what was known then as Asia Minor, and today, modern Turkey.
- But there were characteristics in these seven churches that our Lord could see, that would describe the seven stages of the church-age, as well as the spiritual maturity of every local church, and the spiritual maturity of every Christian.
- Just as the Lord Jesus walked through those seven churches 2000 years ago with His word of warning, so is He walking through the Church today with the same

warning to us, for before Jesus will judge the world of its rejection of Him as the Savior sent from God, He must first judge the people of God for their disobedience to Him as their Lord.

- In 1 Peter 4: 17, the Apostle wrote: ***“For the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begins in us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?”***
- **The Church at Ephesus – The FALLEN church – Revelation 2:1-7.**
 - The Lord commended them for their duty, determination, and doctrinal purity, but He condemned them because they had left their first love for Him.
 - In verse 5, the Lord counseled them to remember when they first fell in love with Him, repent of those things that had taken His place in their heart, and return to their first love for Him, or He would remove their candlestick.
- **The Church at Smyrna – The FEARFUL church – Revelation 2:8-11.**
 - The Lord recognized their works and their tribulation; they had lost all of their possessions, and some had lost their lives. But the Lord counseled them to turn their fear into faith because a crown of faith awaited them at the Judgment Seat of Christ if they endured to the end.
- **The Church at Pergamos – The FALTERING church — Revelation 2:12-17.**
 - Jesus counseled them to stop compromising with the world and to turn back to Him, or He would fight against them with the sword of His mouth.
 - First, there would be the hidden manna. “Manna” is a type of Jesus Christ, for He is the Bread of Life. Therefore, the one who would keep himself pure would be nourished on Christ, the Bread of Life, hidden to the multitudes for ages, but revealed to those who would put their trust and faith in Him as their Savior.
 - Secondly, a white stone, which refers to the purity of Jesus Christ who was the Stone cut without hands, and we will share in that purity.
 - Thirdly, a new name which no man can know except the one who receives it.
- **The Church at Thyatira – The FALSE church – Revelation 2:18-29.**
 - This church was known as the dynamic church in its day because it had the right people in the church and the right ministries.

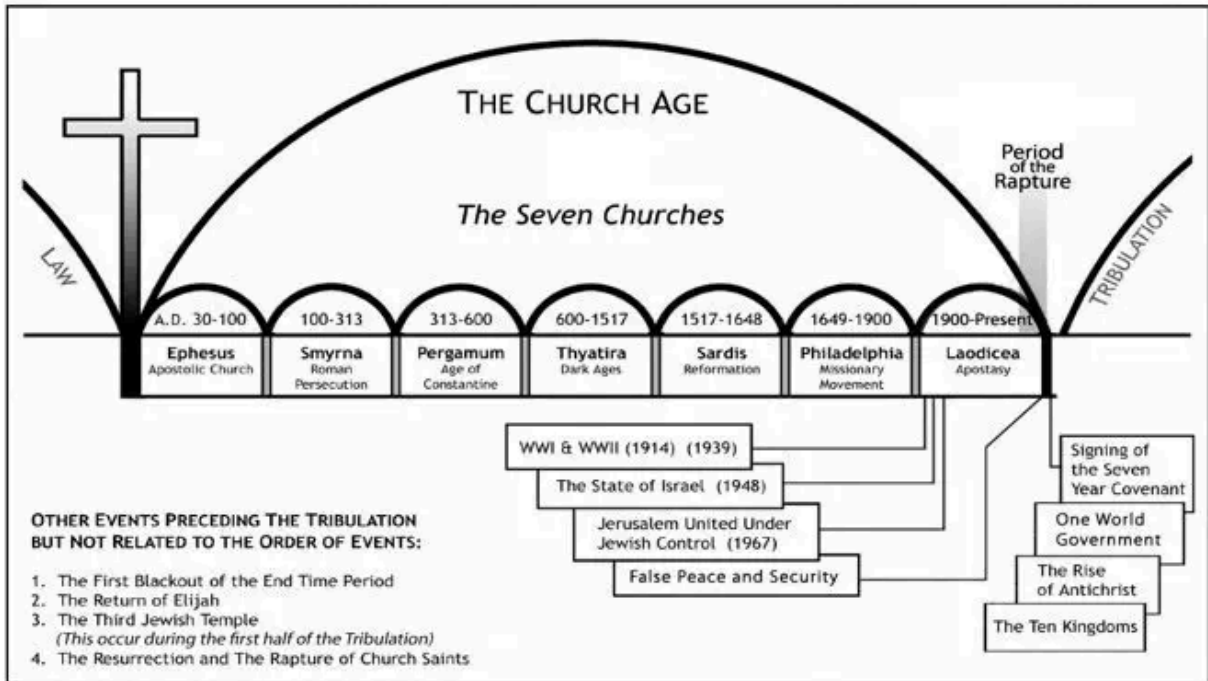
- But Jesus said they had compromised His truth, and as a result, they were being corrupted from within.
- Jesus listed the consequences for such activity in verses 22 and 23 as “the bed of sickness” and that they would be “spewed out” into the time of Tribulation, but to those who held fast to the true faith, the Lord would give them “power and authority” over the nations of the earth during the millennial reign of Christ.

- **The Church at Sardis – The FRUITLESS church — Revelation 3:1-6.**

- This church was known to be “alive and active” because of its past accomplishments, but Jesus said the church was dead because ritual and ceremony had taken the place of their intimacy and oneness with the Lord.
- The Lord’s counsel was to “remember and repent,” or else He would come as a “thief in the night” and remove their most cherished things.
- He gave three promises to those who remained faithful:
 - They will walk with Him in white.
 - Their names will not be blotted out of the book of life.
 - Jesus would acknowledge them before God the Father.

- **The Church at Philadelphia – The FAITHFUL church – Revelation 3:7-13.**

- The Lord commended this church for three things:
 - They had used the open-door God had given to them as an opportunity for evangelism and missions.
 - They had “kept” God’s Word – they were faithful to it.
 - They had not denied the name of Jesus.
 - The Lord said their reward would be in two great hopes:
- Their rejection by the world would be vindicated as those who persecuted them would be judged by Jesus, and they would be given power sufficient for the hour of trial or temptation.



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