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WEEK TWO

REVELATION 2-3

JESUS PROMISES

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THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

2 THE LETTER TO EPHESUS

“Write to the angel of the church in Ephesus: Thus says the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands: ²I know your works, your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot tolerate evil people. You have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and you have found them to be liars. ³I know that you have persevered and endured hardships for the sake of my name, and you have not grown weary. ⁴But I have this against you: You have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶Yet you do have this: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

THE LETTER TO SMYRNA

⁸“Write to the angel of the church in Smyrna: Thus says the First and the Last, the one who was dead and came to life: ⁹I know your affliction and poverty, but you are rich. I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰Don’t be afraid of what you are about to suffer. Look, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison to test you, and you will experience affliction for ten days. Be faithful to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will never be harmed by the second death.

THE LETTER TO PERGAMUM

¹²“Write to the angel of the church in Pergamum: Thus says the one who has the sharp, double-edged sword: ¹³I know where you live—where Satan’s throne is. Yet you are holding on to my name and did not deny your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness who was put to death among you, where Satan lives. ¹⁴But I have a few things against you. You have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to place a stumbling block in front of the Israelites: to eat meat sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵In the same way, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶So repent! Otherwise, I will come to you quickly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

¹⁷“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name is inscribed that no one knows except the one who receives it.

THE LETTER TO THYATIRA

¹⁸“Write to the angel of the church in Thyatira: Thus says the Son of God, the one whose eyes are like a fiery flame and whose feet are like fine bronze: ¹⁹I know your works—your love, faithfulness, service, and endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first. ²⁰But I have this against you: You tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and teaches and deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat meat sacrificed to idols. ²¹I gave her time to repent, but she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality. ²²Look, I will throw her into a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into great affliction. Unless they repent of her works, ²³I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who examines minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you according to your works. ²⁴I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who haven’t known “the so-called secrets of Satan”—as they say—I am not putting any other burden on you. ²⁵Only hold on to what you have until I come. ²⁶The one who conquers and who keeps my works to the end: I will give him authority over the nations—

²⁷ **and he will rule them with an iron scepter;
he will shatter them like pottery—**

²⁸ just as I have received this from my Father. I will also give him the morning star.

²⁹ “Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

3 THE LETTER TO SARDIS

“Write to the angel of the church in Sardis: Thus says the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works; you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead. ²Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before my God. ³Remember, then, what you have received and heard; keep it, and repent. If you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you have no idea at what hour I will come upon you. ⁴But you have a few people in Sardis who have not defiled their clothes, and they will walk with me in white, because they are worthy.

⁵“In the same way, the one who conquers will be dressed in white clothes, and I will never erase his name from the book of life but will acknowledge his name before my Father and before his angels.

⁶“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

THE LETTER TO PHILADELPHIA

⁷ “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: Thus says the Holy One, the true one, the one who has the key of David, who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens: ⁸ I know your works. Look, I have placed before you an open door that no one can close because you have but little power; yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. ⁹ Note this: I will make those from the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept my command to endure, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth. ¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one takes your crown.

¹²“The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never go out again. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name.

¹³“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

THE LETTER TO LAODICEA

¹⁴“Write to the angel of the church in Laodicea: Thus says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the originator of God’s creation: ¹⁵I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷For you say, ‘I’m rich; I have become wealthy and need nothing,’ and you don’t realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸I advise you to buy from me gold refined in the fire so that you may be rich, white clothes so that you may be dressed and your shameful nakedness not be exposed, and ointment to spread on your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be zealous and repent. ²⁰See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

²¹ “To the one who conquers I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.

²²“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.”

[illegible]

• God’s people are attacked

THE TOOLS OF THE ENEMY AGAINST THE CHURCH
Scholar Iain Duguid has taught that Satan has three weapons against God’s people: seduction, deception, and persecution. We see those tools being used against the seven churches in Revelation. SEDUCED BY THE WORLD Ephesus: “‘...you have abandoned the love you had at first.’” (2:4) Sardis: “‘...there are a few...who have not defiled their clothes...’” (3:4) Laodicea: “‘...because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth.’” (3:16) DECEIVED AWAY FROM THE WORD Pergamum: “‘...you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam...’” (2:14) Thyatira: “‘...you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and teaches and deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality...’” (2:20) PERSECUTED FOR FAITHFULNESS Smyrna: “‘I know your affliction and poverty, but you are rich...’” (2:9) Philadelphia: “‘Because you have kept my command to endure, I will also keep you from the hour of testing...’” (3:10)

• God’s eternal comfort is promised to the one who conquers

The Promise	The Meaning
Eats from the tree of life in the paradise of God (2:7)	Eternal life in God’s presence where everything that was lost in the Garden of Eden is restored
Never harmed by the second death (2:11)	Saved from eternal destruction
Receives hidden manna and a white stone (2:17)	Eternal provision, likely a reference to the eternal banquet as white stones were often tickets to celebratory banquets (1)
Given authority over the nations (2:26)	Participation in the eternal reign of Christ as His victory is ours
Dressed in white clothes and name never erased (3:5)	Clothed in Christ’s righteousness and eternally known by God
God’s name written on him (3:12)	Unshakable citizenship in God’s presence
Sits on His throne (3:21)	Participation in Christ’s eternal reign

(1) Thomas R. Schreiner. "Revelation," in *Hebrews-Revelation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018)

• His people conquer because He conquered

Life Group Discussion Guide

WEEK TWO

RHYTHM REMINDER



Repentance

LEAN IN

What is a meaningful promise someone has made to you or you have made to someone else? What makes that promise meaningful? _____

LOOK DOWN

In Revelation 2:4, Jesus says, "...you have abandoned the love you had at first." What's the difference between going through the motions of faith and genuinely loving Jesus? How does Jesus call them to respond? _____

LOOK OUT

Jesus warns the church in Laodicea that they are "lukewarm" and says, "I am going to vomit you out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:16). What does a lukewarm faith look like in the world today? How do we end up with a lukewarm faith? _____

LOOK IN

Jesus stands at the door and knocks in Revelation 3:20, inviting anyone who hears His voice to open the door and share a meal with Him. What does it look like practically to respond to that invitation in your daily life? _____

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.