

NOTES – Revelation 2-3 Letters to the churches

	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicia
To the angel of...	Addressing the bishops/elders? Why? Focus on being a messenger of God: faithfulness in mission and service, ambassador, not self serving; notice here the removed focus from shepherd: “Angel” not used anywhere else in reference to the church						
I know thy works...	Accountability: He already knows, and we cannot fool him; not what we say or claim, rather what he says: instead of trying to justify ourselves before him, we need to keep silent, accept his verdict, and act accordingly						
Commended for...	A lofty resume and busy record, patience, scrutiny of false apostles, hate the deeds of Nicolaitans	Tribulations, poverty though rich	You held fast the Lord’s name and kept the faith, while dwelling where satan’s seat is	Your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first	Thou hast a few names which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.	I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: because thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.	
Reprimanded for...	You have left your first love	the blasphemy of them who say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.	You have among you those who hold the doctrine of Balaam; those who hold the doctrine of Nicolaitans	You allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. She did not repent	thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. I have not found thy works perfect before God		Thou art neither cold nor hot; thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
Counsel given	Remember from whence you have fallen, and repent; do the former works; else I will come and remove you as a church (your candlestick)	Fear not, there are more trials to come, some cast into prisons; be faithful unto death, I will give you a crown of life	Repent, else I will come quickly and fight them with the sword of my mouth	I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent; I will kill her children; and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan, I will put upon you none other burden.	Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels	Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world; Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.	I would thou wert cold or hot; Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Lessons learned	A form of godliness is unacceptable to the Lord, no matter how hard we may labor for him; Christ is not impressed with our outward portrayal or lip service, when our hearts are far from him. Obedience is better than sacrifice. Implications of “first love”	Faithfulness is going to be increasingly challenged in the face of increasing trials, but the Lord promises to be with us: abide faithful. Corrupting the church doctrine with judaism is blasphemous	Purge the church and repent of the Balaam doctrines of greed/lucres that has crept into the church	Repent from Immorality and double standards allowed and tolerated in the church	Return to the perfect works which Christ has taught and required of us, and bring life back in the church. Walk in the light of Christ, and know what it means. How can a church be lifeless?	Know where our strength comes from: he holds the key, and has set an opened door, because we have little strength; be meek and lowly? Overconfidence in self is risky, arrogant, and sets one on slippery slope	Christ resents and rebukes the double-minded, indecisive, arrogant, proud, blind, corrupt, without faith (James 1:6-8) If the church can’t receive truth from him “the faithful and true witness”, where else?
To him that overcometh ...	The promise						
He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches	Take this with the utmost concern and importance: The Lord has spoken, hear ye him						

Consider for discussion:

- 1- What is the Lord’s overall purpose in sending these letters to the seven churches?
- 2- How should we look at these letters in reference to modern times: relatable or not? Applicable or not?
- 3- In what way do we compare to, or differ from the seven churches? How does it position us before the Lord 2 millenniums later?
- 4- Each letter ends with the phrase, “To him that overcometh ...”. What is the significance and how should it shape the way we relate and apply?
- 4- What other specific impact do these letters have on us as a community of believers?