

THE FLIGHT OF THE RADIANT WOMAN
STUDIES IN CHURCH HISTORY

IV. The Ecclesia in the New Testament.

Study Sheet #11 - The Ecclesia in the Revelation of John - Introduction.

G. The Ecclesia in Revelation.

*** The word "ecclesia" is used 19 times in Revelation (more than any other book) and most of those in the first three chapters. It is used 3 times in the first chapter (vs. 4, 11, & 20).*

1. Comfort for persecuted churches, chapter 1.

a. Why seven churches? (vs. 4a)

b. John opens his letter with a standard greeting, "grace to you and peace...".
What about this greeting would comfort the churches? (vs. 4b)

c. From where does grace and peace come? (vs. 4c-5a)

i. What aspect of God's character does John's reference to the Father key on?

ii. Why would this be so essential for the churches he is writing to?

iii. What is John referring to by the reference to the "seven spirits before the throne"?

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iv. Why do you think Jesus is listed last as a source of grace and peace?

d. What three phrases are used to describe Jesus? (vs. 5a)

i. What is the significance to the churches of the first phrase?

ii. What is the significance to the churches of the second phrase?

iii. What is the significance to the churches of the third phrase?

e. John ends this section of his introduction with a common biblical literary device that most churches include in their liturgy every Sunday. Do you know what it is? (vs. 5b-6)

i. What does the first line celebrate?

ii. What is so significant about being made a kingdom?

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2. The seven churches, chapters 2-3.

a. The faithful churches.

i. Smyrna-- the persecuted church, (read Rev. 2:8-11).

1) About Smyrna.

2) In what way was the church at Smyrna poverty stricken? (Read vs. 9)

3) In what way was it rich?

4) The persecution of the church, vs. 9b-10a.

5) The promise of recompense, vs. 10b.

ii. Philadelphia-- the missionary church, (read Rev. 3:7-12).

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1) About Philadelphia.

- A doorway to the Orient.

- A city that lived in fear of disaster.

- A city that lived outside its own walls.

- A city in need of a new name.

2) The church at Philadelphia.

3) The open door.

4) The faithfulness of the church.

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5) Holding onto their crown.

b. The transitional churches.

Some churches were on their way to trouble. They had some attributes that Jesus commended, others He rebuked.

i. The church at Ephesus.

1) Ancient history.

2) The temple of Diana.

3) History of the church at Ephesus.

4) What Jesus liked about Ephesus, Rev. 2:2-3, 6.

a) Their deeds or works.

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b) Their toil.

c) Patient endurance

d) Intolerance of evil and of false prophets, Acts 20:28-30.

e) Their faithfulness.

5) What Jesus did not like about Ephesus, Rev. 2:4.

6) Correcting the situation, vs. 5.

a) The warning.

b) The solution.

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- Remember.

- Repent.

- Do.

ii. The church at Pergamum, Rev. 2:12-17.

1) The city of Pergamum.

2) The church at Pergamum

3) Truth in the midst of falsehood, vs. 12, Heb. 4:12.

4) What Jesus liked about Pergamum, vs. 13.

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a) The throne of Satan.

b) Faithfulness under pressure.

c) In the world, but not "of" the world.

5) What Jesus did not like about Pergamum, Rev. 2:14-15.

- Unlike Ephesus, where Jesus had only one rebuke, there are several things about Pergamum that bring rebuke...

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a) Allowing false teachers.

b) Eating food sacrificed to idols.

i) During pagan rituals.

ii) In the marketplace.

iii) Seasonal festivals.

c) Sexual Immorality.

d) Antinomianism, vs. 15.

e) Co-existence with the culture.

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f) Tolerance of the heresies in their midst.

6) The solution and the warning-- repent!

iii. The church at Thyatira, Rev. 2:18-29.

1) The city of Thyatira.

2) The church at Thyatira.

3) The God who sees us, vs. 18.

4) What Jesus liked about the church at Thyatira.

a) Their works, Eph. 2:10.

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b) Their love, 1 John 4:7-8.

c) Their faith, Eph. 2:8-9.1

d) Service, Matt. 20:25-28.

e) Patient endurance, Luke 8:15.

f) Growth in Christ, 1Thess. 4:1.

5) What Jesus did not like about the church at Thyatira.

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a) Tolerating Jezebel, vs. 20-21.

i) Jezebel, Ahab & Elijah, 1Kings 16:30-31, 33.

ii) Jezebel and the church at Thyatira, vs. 20.

iii) The problem of the seduction of the world, 1John 2:15-17.

iv) Jezebel is unrepentant sin, vs. 21, Matt. 18:15-17, 22, 33, 35,
1John 1:9, Luke 17:3, 13:3, 1John 3:4, 6, 8, 9.

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b) A radical action, vs. 22-23.

c) The deep things of Satan

d) Solution and promise, vs. 24b-25.

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c. The apostate churches.

There were two churches Jesus had nothing good to say about-- Sardis and Laodicea. What can we learn from this?

- 1) That churches can go apostate very quickly.
- 2) **The primary reason churches turn apostate is not because of the immorality of the culture around them. But a loss of the Spirit of God as a result of their own immorality and deadness.**

i. The church at Sardis, Rev. 3:1-6.

1) The city of Sardis.

a) Political history.

b) Religious history.

2) The church at Sardis.

3) What Jesus liked about the church at Sardis.

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4) What Jesus did not like about the church at Sardis.

a) Works that betray them, vs. 1b, James 2:17, Luke 13:6-9, Matt. 21:9.

b) Spiritual deadness.

c) Jesus' warning to "wake up".

d) Strengthen what remains.

e) Remember the foundations of your faith.

f) Frightening warnings.

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ii. The church at Laodicea, Rev. 3:14-22.

1) The city of Laodicea.

a) Known for wealth.

b) Known for arrogant self-sufficiency.

c) Known for bad water.

2) The church at Laodicea.

3) Christ's self-designation, vs. 14.

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4) What Jesus liked about the church at Laodicea.

5) What Jesus did not like about the church at Laodicea, vs. 15-17.

a) The most severe rebuke, vs. 15-16.

i) Works that betray them, vs. 15a.

"I know your works"

ii) Luke warm in their convictions, vs. 15b-16a.

"you are neither hot nor cold"

iii) Sickening to the Kingdom, vs. 16b.

"I will vomit you out of my mouth"

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b) The perils of self-sufficiency, vs. 17.

"I need nothing"

"you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked"

6) The counsel of Christ, vs. 18.

a) Buy refined gold from Christ, Luke 12:33-34.

b) Be clothed with Christ's white garments, Gal. 3:27.

c) Anoint your eyes with salve so you can see (spiritually).

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7) The value of discipline, vs. 19, Prov. 3:11-12.

8) The solution: open the door, vs. 20.