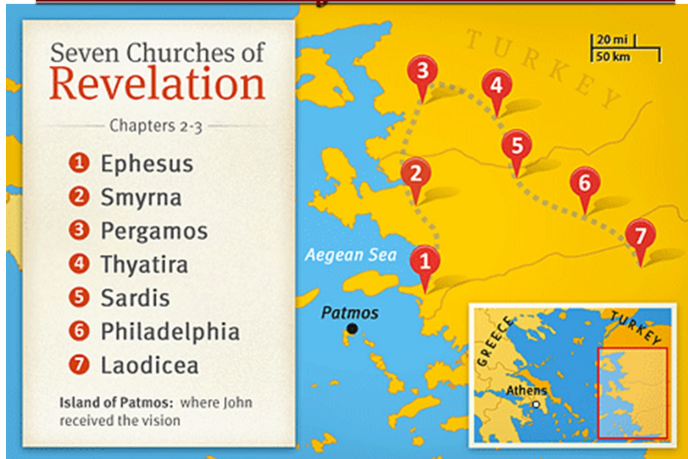


I. An Overview of the Seven Churches

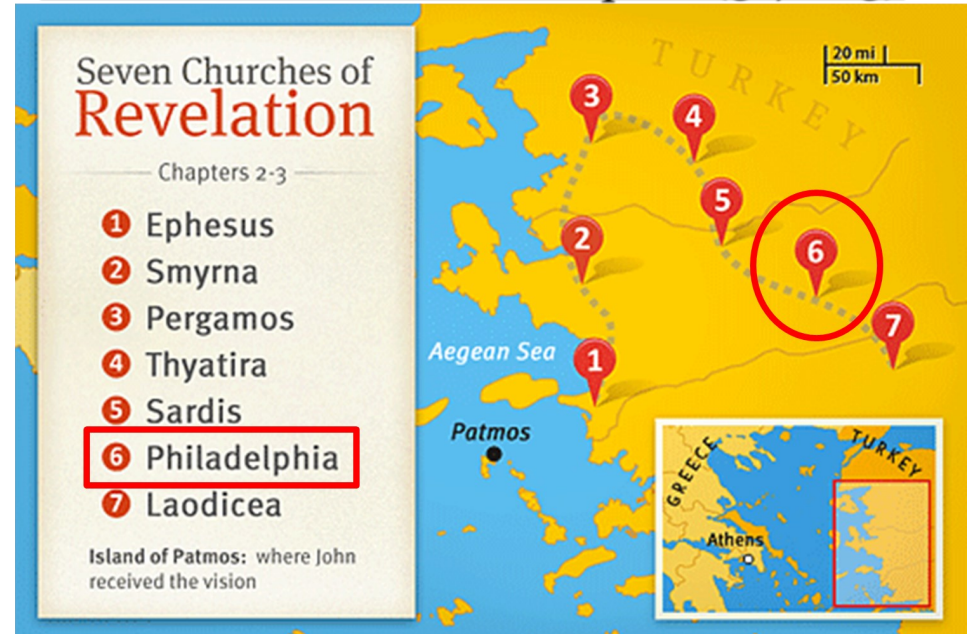


II. An Overview of the first five:

- Ephesus – Loveless Orthodoxy
- Smyrna – Faithful in suffering
- Pergamum – Compromising with false teachers
- Thyatira – Tolerant of sin
- Sardis – Asleep in the light

An introduction to the Church at Philadelphia

III. The Church at Philadelphia (3:7 - 13)



Verse 7

An address to a particular congregation

the Angel...Philadelphia (philo = love + delphi = city)

- The youngest of the seven cities
- Greek missionary city
- Greatest highways – gateways to the world
- Often called “little Athens”

An introduction of Jesus

holy (hagios = like God) **and true** (alethinous = not fake, real)

Holds the keys of David

Reference to Isaiah 22:20-23 – Keys give authority and power

he opens, no one can shut
he shuts, no one can open

Verse 8

A statement regarding the condition of the church

I know your deeds (ergon).

See (iudo = behold – aha!, look! – first behold of three)

I have placed...an open door

Open door – refers to evangelistic work (I Cor. 16:9; Col 4:3)

Could be in contrast to closed synagogue.

that no one can shut (Rev. 3:7 – He opens...)

I know (because) **you have little strength**

strength = dynamis = supernatural power

The phrase is a compliment – they have ONLY supernatural strength, meaning that they have learned to depend upon Christ.

Like Paul – strength in weakness (2 Cor. 12:7-10)

A verdict from Jesus regarding the condition of the church

yet

you have kept (tereo = guard) **MY word**

(Ps. 119:11 – I have hidden...; Prov. 7:2 – guard my teachings...)

have not denied (not refused to speak) **my name**

Verse 9

A command from Jesus to the church

(behold #2!) **I will make**

of the synagogue of Satan (working for Satan)

who claim to be Jews

they are not

but are liars

I will make them

come and

fall down at your feet and (proskyneo = pay homage)

acknowledge (ginosko = know) **that I loved you**

ultimate justice = for them to know who God really loves!

Verse 10

A command from Jesus to the church

Since...you have kept my command

to endure patiently (hypomone = remain under)

I will keep (tereo = guard) **you from the hour of trial**

to come upon the whole world

to test those who live on the earth

Is this a promise of rapture or protection during the tribulation?

Verse 11

A command from Jesus to the church

(behold #3) **I am coming soon** (tachy = quickly, without delay).

Hold on (krateo) **to what you have**

so that no one will take your crown (stephanos)

The crown is given to the one who CONTINUES to the END

Verse 12

A promise of reward

Him who overcomes (nikao)

I will make him a pillar (stylos) **in the temple** (naos)

of my God

Philadelphia was the scene of many earthquakes – often the only thing left standing were pillars of great buildings.

Never again will he leave it.

Never affected by the shifting grounds around them

I will write on him

1) **the name of my God**

2) **the name of the city of my God**

The New Jerusalem

which is coming out of heaven

from my God

3) **my new name.**

The custom of many cities is to carve names of people, places, and families that have been established as the “founders” or “heroes” on the pillars of the buildings.

Verse 13

A general exhortation to all Christians

He who has an ear

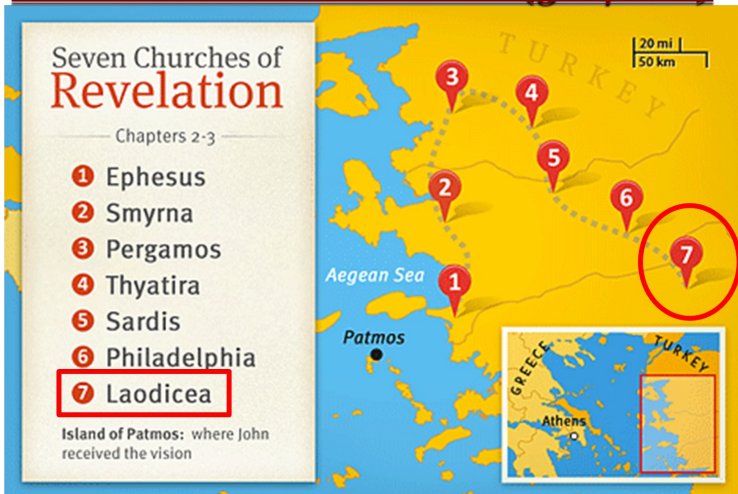
Let him hear what the Spirit

says to the churches

Overview:

- Like Smyrna – Philadelphia is encouraged
- Like Smyrna – it faces the attack of the Synagogue of Satan
- Unlike Smyrna – it does not face persecution unto death
- Philadelphia is challenged to hold on to what it has – don't quit – don't give in!
- Though small and weak in the world, it must not neglect the open door of opportunity placed before it!

IV. The Church at Laodicea (3:14 - 22)



Verse 14

An address to a particular congregation
the Angel...Laodicea (“rule of the people”) **write**

- Important and wealthy
- 3 prides – wealth, textiles, and eye-salve
- 3 problems – poor water supply, vulnerable, compromise

An introduction of Jesus

The words of the Amen (amen = so be it, it is done)

“amen” is directly transliterated from the Hebrew which means it is old – some say it is the best known word in history

The faithful (pistis) **and true** (alethenos) **witness** (martys)

The ruler (arche = beginning, master) **of God’s creation**

Verse 15

A statement regarding the condition of the church

I know your deeds,

neither cold (psychros) **nor hot** (zestros)

I wish you were either one or the other!

Cold = against, Hot = in favor, neither = indifferent

The one thing worse than being anti-Christ is to be **indifferent!**

Verse 16

A verdict from Jesus regarding the condition of the church

So, because you are lukewarm

neither hot nor cold

I am about to spit (emeo = to vomit) **you out of my mouth.**

Hot water heals. Cold water refreshes. Lukewarm is useless.

Verse 17

You say (Out of the heart the mouth speaks – Luke 6:45)

**“I am rich;
I have acquired wealth
(I) do not need a thing.”**

But you do not realize (oida = to know) **that you are**

wretched (tailaiporos = heavy with trials)

pitiful (eleeinos = in need of mercy)

poor (ptochos = fallen into begging)

blind (typhlos = pride and blind)

naked (gymnos = bare, unclad, vulnerable)

Verse 18

A command from Jesus to the church

I counsel you (Jesus’ prescription for their illnesses)
to buy from me

1) **gold refined in the fire**

so that you can become rich

2) **white clothes to wear**

so you can cover your nakedness

3) **salve to put on your eyes**

so you can see

Verse 19

Those whom I love (phileo = brother love)

I rebuke (elegcho = to convict in order to correct)

and discipline (paideuo = God brings trials to train)

So

be earnest (zeloo = imperative – hot with zeal)

Rom.12:11 – never lack in zeal, keep your spiritual fervor!

and repent (imperative = turn toward God)

Verse 20

Here I am!

I stand (continuous) **at the door and knock** (continuous).

This is addressed to Christians who have closed Christ out of their lives!

**If anyone (personal statement)
hears my voice
and opens the door**

**I will
come in
and eat (supper – time of intimate talk) with him
and he with me**

verse 21

A promise of reward

To him who overcomes (nikao)

**I will give the right
to sit with me on my throne**

just as I sat down with my Father on his throne

verse 22

A general exhortation to all Christians

**He who has an ear ,
let him hear what the Spirit
says to the churches.**

Quick Summary:

John Stott once wrote, "The Laodicean church was a half-hearted church. It describes vividly the respectable, sentimental, nominal, skin-deep religiosity which is so wide spread among us today. Our Christianity is flabby and anemic, we appear to have taken a lukewarm bath."

Prayer Concerns

