

ACTS TO REVELATION

Drive Thru History | The World of the First Christians

This Week's Scripture

Read Revelation 2-22

PULLING BACK THE CURTAIN

The Book of Revelation is all about revealing the risen and reigning Jesus. In this book, John shares what he sees when Jesus pulls back the curtain and gives us a glimpse of the reality that is framing our current realities. John shares one of those realities in Revelation 1:12-13. "And having turned I saw seven golden lamp stands; and in the middle of the lamp stands one like a Son of Man" The seven golden lamp stands represent the seven churches in Asia Minor that we will read about this week. Darrell Johnson, commenting on the location of Jesus, the Son of Man, writes, "In the middle." Not "above" looking down (though in one sense that is true). Not outside looking in. But in the middle. The risen, reigning, glorified Jesus stands in the middle of his churches!" Where is Jesus today? He's not far away. He is close by, standing with us and He has something to tell us.

There were certainly more churches in Asia Minor. So why pick these seven? In Scripture the number seven is the number of completeness. Picking these seven real, historical congregations is a way for John to signal that the messages from Jesus to these individual churches were for them but they are also for every church.

(Continued...)



Seven Churches of Revelation



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

For what practices are these seven churches commended and what issues does Jesus raise for each congregation?

• **FIRST LOVE** | Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)

• **KEEPING FAITH UNDER PRESSURE** | Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)

Week 17

It turns out that the issues mentioned in these letters embody many of the major issues churches have faced in every age and setting. What can we learn about the church today from what Jesus said to His first disciples? What might we discover about ourselves from Jesus' affirmations and exhortations?

Small Group Prayer Requests

Record them here..



Just click [HERE](#) to watch episode 17, The Seven Churches of Revelation

Week 18 Prep (Final)

Read Colossians, Philemon, Jude

• **BATTLE FOR THE MIND** | Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17)

• **JEALOUS GOD** | Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29)

• **ON THE BRINK** | Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)

• **AN OPEN DOOR** | Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13)

• **LET ME IN!** | Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22)

As you reflect on the messages to these seven churches, what do you think Jesus would affirm in your life and how might he challenge you to grow?

Many of Jesus' exhortations to these churches are because they had incorporated practices and values into their lives that were incompatible with a life lived as a follower of Jesus. How do we guard against making this same error?

Some of Jesus' affirmations of these churches were for actions that cost these first Christians something. To what degree have you experienced a personal cost to following Jesus? What have been some of those costs?

Share prayer requests and pray for one another.

Notes from the Video and Discussion

What other insights, questions, challenges, encouragements are you taking with you tonight? Record your thoughts and any action steps you intend to take in the space below.