



Revelation 2-3 Study Guide

**Tower View Baptist Church
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A Word about the 7 Churches of Revelation 2-3

These two chapters address the seven churches. They are each unique in their circumstances, makeup and situation. John, however, addresses them in a common manner. Further, these are some specific characteristics about the seven churches we can highlight:

- 1) All 7 Churches follow a distinct and similar *pattern*:
 - a) Characteristic of Christ drawn from Revelation 1 (and other texts).
 - b) A word of *commendation* and *praise* if appropriate.
 - c) *Criticism* for their sins.
 - d) A word of *correction* and *warning*.
 - e) A challenge and promise drawn from Revelation 19-22 (and other texts).
- 2) These were 7 *historical churches* located in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) at the end of the 1st century.
- 3) These churches were in and around the major city of the Province of Asia at that time, the city of *Ephesus*.
- 4) These churches were located on a major postal/travel route and are addressed in a counter clockwise order in term of their location.
- 5) Each of their messages have a word of wisdom and application for all churches throughout history until Jesus comes again. These seven churches do not represent seven ages or dispensations of the church (usually seen as the church in the west).
- 6) The following chart helps us see the parallels and patterns in the 7 letters:

The Church	Christ	Commendation	Criticism	Correction	Challenge
Ephesus (2:1-7)	Holds the 7 stars in His right hand, walks among the 7 golden lampstands (1:20)	Works, toil, endurance, cannot bear with those who are evil, judges false teachers in word and actions	You left your first love	Remember, repent and return to your first works or be extinguished	You will eat from the tree of life in paradise (22:2)
Smyrna (2:8-11)	The First and The Last, who died and came to life (1:17-18)	I know your tribulation, poverty and the slander you endure			Do not fear, be faithful, you will receive the Crown of Life and not experience the 2 nd death (20:6, 14; 21:8)
Pergamos (2:12-17)	He has the sharp two-edged sword (1:16)	Faithfulness, honor the Name of Jesus, have not denied their faith in Christ.	You hold the teachings of Balaam (Spiritual compromise) leading to idolatry and sexual immorality. You also hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans	Repent or face my Sword	Receive my hidden manna, a white stone and a new name (19:12)
Thyratira (2:18-29)	He has eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished bronze (1:14, 15)	Works, love, faith service and patient endurance	Tolerate Jezebel, a false prophetess who led them into idolatry and sexual immorality	Repent and hold fast what you have until I come	You will receive authority over the nations and the morning star (20:1-6; 22:16).
Sardis (3:1-6)	He has the 7 spirits of God and the 7 stars (1:4, 20).	Works, not soiled your garments	Spiritually dead	Wake up, strengthen what remains, remember, repent	Clothed in white garments, No one blotted out of the Book of Life. I will confess your name (19:8, 14; 20:12, 15).
Philadelphia (3:7-13)	Holy and true one who has the Key of David, and he opens and shuts (1:8)	Works, kept Jesus' Word and have not denied His name		Just keep holding fast what you have	Kept from the hour of temptation, made a pillar in God's temple, and receives the name of God, New Jerusalem and Jesus' new name (19:12; 21:2; 22:4)
Laodicea (3:14-22)	The Amen, the faithful land true witness, the beginning of God's creation (1:5)		Lukewarm, wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked	Buy refined gold from Jesus and white garments, eye salve. Be zealous and repent.	Communion with Christ, sit on His throne (20:4-6)

CHAPTERS 2-3

CHRIST'S MESSAGES TO EPHEBUS, SMYRNA, PERGAMUM, THYATIRA, SARDIS, PHILADELPHIA, & LAODICEA

Rev. 2–3 contain seven messages from Christ to seven churches of Asia Minor (now, Western Turkey). The difficulties of these churches also include lessons for us today (“He who has an ear, let him hear . . .”).

Read each message to each church separately.

A. Questions on Rev. 2:1–7 (the church in Ephesus)

1. Who writes the message?
2. Where does the description of Jesus come from? What does it reveal about Jesus?
3. How does Christ show his glory?
4. What commendable things are true of the church at Ephesus?
5. What is their failure?
6. What is the remedy?

7. What promises and threats does Jesus give?

8. How is our church like or unlike Ephesus?

9. What temptations and assurances apply most forcefully to your life?

B. Questions on Rev. 2:8–11 (the church in Smyrna)

1. How does Jesus describe himself? What does it reveal about him? How is this relevant to other believers and to us?

2. How does Christ show his glory?

3. What commendable things are said about the church at Smyrna? Are there any failures?

4. What promises does Jesus give?

5. How is our church like or unlike Smyrna?

6. How do you see these promises as applying to you?

C. Questions on Rev. 2:12–17 (the church in Pergamum)

1. How does Christ show his glory?
2. What commendations does Christ give?
3. What are the difficulties and threats at Pergamum? [For information about Balaam, see Num. 22-24. For the temptation set up by Moab, over which Balak was king, see Num. 25:1-5.]
4. What do you think is the principal difficulty or root difficulty?
5. What does Christ call for?
6. What promises and threats does he give?
7. In what ways is our church like or unlike Pergamum?
8. How does this passage challenge you or comfort you?

D. Questions on Rev. 2:18–29 (the church in Thyatira)

1. How is Christ described, and why (see v. 23)?

2. How does Christ show his glory?

3. What commendations does Christ give?

4. What criticisms does he make?

5. Who is “Jezebel” and what is she doing? [For information about the Old Testament Jezebel, see 1 Kings 16:31; 18:4, 13; 19:1-2; 21:1-16; and 2 Kings 9:7-10, 22,30-37.]

6. What seems to be the central problem?

7. Why do you think people are tempted in this way?

8. What promises and threats does Christ give?

9. How is our church like or unlike Thyatira?

10. How does this passage challenge you or comfort you?

E. General:

1. Can you find a general pattern in the organization of the seven messages? What are common features? What commonalities are there in order?
2. What does this imply for the whole church (“universal church”)?
3. What are the promises to the “one who conquers”?

F. Questions on Rev. 3:1–6 (the church in Sardis)

1. How does Christ show his glory?
2. What does Christ commend?
3. What does he criticize?
4. What is the central underlying problem?
5. What does Christ call for?
6. What does Christ threaten? promise?

7. How is our church like or unlike Sardis?

8. How does this passage challenge you or comfort you?

G. Questions on Rev. 3:7–13 (the church in Philadelphia)

9. How does the description of Christ relate to the rest of the message (see v. 8)?

10. What does Christ show his glory?

11. What does Christ commend?

12. What does he criticize?

13. What does he promise and/or threaten?

14. How is our church like or unlike Philadelphia?

15. How does this passage challenge you or comfort you?

H. Questions on Rev. 3:14–22 (the church in Laodicea)

16. How does the description of Christ relate to the rest of the content?

17. How does Christ show his glory?

18. What does Christ commend? (maybe nothing?)

19. What does he criticize?

20. What is the central problem?

21. What does Christ threaten and promise?

22. How is our church like or unlike Laodicea?

23. How does this passage challenge you or comfort you?

I. General

24. When you compare all seven churches, how do they differ? How are they similar?

25. How does Christ show his glory in each message?

26. What have you learned by looking at the similarities and differences?

27. What lessons do you think are most relevant to your church and to other churches in your area of the world?

28. What, if any, of these churches best describe TVBC today? What are the reasons you picked this church?