

SEVEN STARS AND SEVEN CHURCHES, PART 2
TEXT: REVELATION CHAPTERS 1-3

I. THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH: THE VISION OF THE SON OF MAN.

II. THE MEANING OF THE CHURCH. John’s message was to be sent to local, visible churches, pictured as golden lampstands with Christ Himself walking in the midst of them (Jn. 20:21; Mt. 28:20).

III. SEVEN LETTERS TO SEVEN CHURCHES. The letters are written:

- to the angel of the church.
- to specific local churches.
- to individuals within the church.
- to the visible church as a whole.

A. Two “Successful” Churches, Smyrna (2:8-11) and Philadelphia (3:7-13).

- Truthfulness.
- Poverty.
- Adversity.

B. Three Disordered Churches.

- Ephesus, the doctrinal church in decline (2:1-7).
- Pergamus, the mainstream evangelical church (2:12-17).
- Thyatira, the mystical “establishment” church (2:18-29).

C. Two Dying Churches.

- Sardis, the dead denominational church (3:1-6).
- Laodicea, the “emerging” or “progressive” church (3:14-22).

Reminders to the Asian Churches of Christ’s Headship		
Church	Ch. 1 Appearance	Repeated in Ch. 2-3
Ephesus	1:13, 16: “and in the midst of the <u>seven lampstands</u> One like the Son of Man.” 16 “He had in His right hand <u>seven stars</u> ”	2:1: “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the <u>seven stars</u> in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the <u>seven golden lampstands</u> :’”
Smyrna	1:17-18 “But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the <u>First and the Last</u> .” 18 “I am He who <u>lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore</u> .”	2:8: “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the <u>First and the Last</u> , who <u>was dead, and came to life</u> :’”
Pergamos	1:16: “out of His mouth went a <u>sharp two-edged sword</u> ”	2:12: “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the <u>sharp two-edged sword</u> :’”
Thyatira	1:14-15 “His <u>feet were like fine brass</u> , as if refined in a furnace” 14 “His <u>eyes like a flame of fire</u> ”	2:18: “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, ‘These things says the Son of God, who has <u>eyes like a flame of fire</u> , and His feet like <u>fine brass</u> :’”
Sardis	1:4, 16: “Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the <u>seven Spirits</u> who are before His throne... 16 He had in His right hand <u>seven stars</u> ”	3:1: “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the <u>seven Spirits</u> of God and the <u>seven stars</u> : “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.”
Philadelphia	1:18: “I have the <u>keys</u> of Hell and of Death”	3:7: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the <u>key</u> of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens” (Cf. Is. 22:22)
Laodicea	1:4-5 “Grace to you and peace from [the Father, the Spirit], 5 and from Jesus Christ, the <u>faithful witness</u> (1:5)	3:14: “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the <u>Faithful and True Witness</u> , the Beginning of the creation of God’”