

Revelation Chapter 2

Review: Apocalyptic literature, the Emperors Nero and Domitian

1. Ephesus: the provincial capitol. The other cities are clustered around it.
 - a. Acts 19:23 Diana (Artemis) of the Ephesians
 - i. Goddess of the hunt, in this period associated with fertility
 - ii. Letter is addressed to the angel: heavenly being? Bishop? Re. Paul addressed things to people when he could not be present
 - iii. We note the format: a. Who it is from, b. Recollection, c. Criticism, d. Who hears the message with exhortation at the end
 1. They hold up under persecution but have lost first love
 2. Nicolaitans: compromise with paganism
 - iv v7 the Tree of Life in the Garden – ref. restored from the fall of Adam and Eve

“The Victor” a loaded word: gladiators or Olympics

Takeaway: how easy it is to start to take our faith for granted.
Never forget why you were happy to be Catholic
2. The Church in Smyrna - an important commercial center re. East/West trade
 - a. Opening: First and last: a common John theme
 - b. Recollection: I know you are suffering
 - i. Say they Are Jews but are not: the Church is the real Israel. This is the one letter with no criticism
 - ii. Exhortation: be faithful – and gain eternal life (2nd death ie hell)
3. The Church in Pergamum a center for pagan cults and thought
 - i. Library of “Parchment”
 - b. Opening: i. :The sharp sword
 - c. ii. Recollection I know that you are suffering
Throne of satan
 - iii Criticism: Holding to the teachings of Balaam Number 22;18 The temptation to water down the message.. again: Nicolaitans
 - iv: exhortation: hidden manner (Eucharist) white amulet. Olympic prize. New name: rebirth in Christ ref. Baptism
takeaway: its not supposed to be easy

4. Church in Thyatira: A city known for its dyes and dying (Lydia in Acts)
Smaller Christian community until 1922 when all were exiled (now in London)
 - a. Opening eyes are like firey flame: purification
 - b. Recollection: I know that you have endured much
 - c. Criticism tolerating bogus leaders (Jezebel) ref 1-2 Kings
 - i. Powerful, ruthless immoral devotee of Baal
 - ii. Idolatry = adultery from God
 - d. Exhortation hold fast and you will rule:
 - e. Take away: beware of bogus leaders – or of being one
5. The Church in Sardis: an affluent fortress city
 - a. Opening: the one who knows the seven stars
 - b. Recollection: you are alive but dead
 - c. Criticism: your works are lacking
 - d. Exhortation: name in the book of life
 - i. V. 4 white garments: baptismal gown
 - e. Takeaway: no one's citidel of faith is impregnable
6. The Church in Philadelphia: built by Attalus II Philadephus as a gateway for Greek culture to enter the area. Destroyed by earthquake in AD 17 and rebuilt by Tiberius as Neo-Caesaria
 - a. Opening: holder of the key of David
 - b. Recollection: you have limited strength but have stood well with it
 - c. Criticism: the workers of satan, eg false religion
 - d. Exhortation: the victor shall be made a pillar in the Temple
 - e. Takeaway: God sees and will render accounts for those who suffer for His name
7. Laodicea: the land of the lukewarm: a city on the road to several other major sites. Founded as Diaspolis (city of the god eg Zeus. Refounded by Antiochus II and renamed for his life Laodice. City between two ridges and rivers. Nearby hot spring produced hot water which as lukewarm by the time it reached the city. Known for its medical school and salves. Very prosperous and well decorated
 - a. Opening: The Amen, the faithful and true Recollection & criticism: you are lukewarm – you think its all ok but it is not: these are the self deceived note v 17 Spiritual wealth is better than earthly
 - b. Exhortation: buy the gold refined by fire: I have what you need
 - c. Takeaway: half hearted is no heart at all