. Parables = Letters

. OT Joseph a Prophecy of two comings of Jesus

. Three groups Jews, Gentiles, Church

Curses were made to be overcome some of the blessings of God come from overcoming like the cures of work the blessing from working same with childbirth.

The Christian Church is divided into Seven Parts - Which Church Part are You in?

Hebrews 12:22-25 But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Able. See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.

After seeing the progression of the Christian walk in the seven miracles of Jesus in the Gospel of John, there is another important consideration. The Church as we know is not a building. Buildings were not saved by Jesus on the cross, buildings were not redeemed by the blood of Jesus and no buildings are going to go to Heaven. The Church of Jesus consists of individual people it is individual people that are saved and redeemed and going to heaven and not buildings.

On the cross Jesus spoke to a man who was also being crucified this man was a criminal and did deserve his punishment. Jesus was innocent in fact Jesus is so innocent that He has never even had a bad thought about anyone there is no guile in Jesus. Man took the perfect innocent person (more innocent than any child or baby) and abused Him and crucified Him. Jesus allowed it to happen so that by His death we could be saved just like the thief on the cross, whom asked God/Jesus to help him and to allow him into Jesus’ kingdom we too if we ask Jesus can enter into His kingdom, His Heaven.

Buildings are not the Church people are! Which Church are you?

John the same disciple of Jesus who Jesus used to write the Gospel of John also wrote the book of Revelation it is the last book in the Bible and is one of the most exciting because it tells about the coming return of Jesus. Christianity would make little sense if God loved us and came in our form, was rejected abused despised and murdered on His visit and He did not return again to reign and rule in glory. We know that the first visit was for our good so that sin could be removed through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and through that sacrifice we can be reunited with the Holy God. God went through all of the pain suffering and shame to reunite us but then if He never came back that would be strange. Well Jesus loves us and is coming back to be with us and to reign and rule in His glory. The first coming of Jesus to suffer is the one that Jesus would have backed out of if He were going to. The fact that Jesus came the first time makes it even more certain that He will come again the second time, not to suffer but to be with us, to enjoy us, to drink the yet to be enjoyed cup of rejoicing and for us to partake in His Glory.

Like the seven miracles that we went through in the Gospel of John which John himself personally witnessed, Jesus personally spoke to the disciple John and had John write an evaluation of the Christian Church in the book of Revelation. Likewise to critique the entire Christian Church (people) Jesus divided it up into seven churches. Each Church existed in the day that Jesus spoke to John about it and each Church type is still practiced through today. Note the book of Revelation and in particular the part about the seven churches is unique because Jesus is asking John to write it for Him. The entire Bible is written by God through man but Revelation makes that point even more evident. So onto the description of the seven churches as critiqued by none other than the resurrected Jesus Himself.

Church 1 Revelation 2:1-7 Ephesus [desirable] desire to follow and please Jesus (the Bible smart, but to busy to Love Church)

Ephesus is the first Church to be addressed by Jesus in this series of letters that the disciple John is writing dictated by Jesus. Ephesus is a Church strong in the word of God. The Church was established by Paul the Apostle who spent three years at Ephesus. The Church was well known and well visited by the other apostles and disciples. The letter that Paul wrote and is in our Bible that carries the name of Ephesus was a circular letter intended for all of the churches to read and later the Ephesus title remained although the letter may have originally been known as a letter to the Church at Laodisiea.

Church history has it that the disciple John who Jesus was speaking too to write the letter was heavily involved at Ephesus and later John became the overseer of the Church. With John at the Church, Christian history has it that Mary the mother of Jesus was also at the Church, while on the cross Jesus spoke to Mary and to John and Jesus told John to look after Mary. The heavyweights of the early Church were at and associated with the Church that Jesus is now critiquing. Jesus commends the Church that they have done good and do not allow evil to be in their presence and they test the people who say they are apostles to see if they do have a relationship with Jesus. The Church has also labored long and been patient and continue to desire and look for the return of Jesus. After telling the Church what they have done that is good Jesus now instructs them in the areas they need to change and improve. Jesus points out that the Church has lost sight of the love relationship they are supposed to have with Him and with one another. Jesus reveals that He knows the heart of the Church and that works without love are empty. Jesus instructs the Church to “Repent” to change their ways and to get back to the most important part of the Christian walk, which is having a loving relationship with God. This is such a serious matter that Jesus says He will remove His candle from among them, in other words without love the Church would not be able to function as light to the world and without love the Church would not have the presence of Jesus. Sadly as history tells us that Jesus did have to remove His candle from the Church at Ephesus. The Church that started out so strong for Jesus does not exist today. Today there is not one single Church in the area of Ephesus as Ephesus is now a dominant Muslim area. This is a strong warning for us as the Church at Ephesus that had so many people directly involved with the physical life of Jesus maybe even Mary herself and it is a Church that lost sight of a loving relationship with God.

As we study the letter from Jesus to the Church at Ephesus what application is there for us today. The Church at Ephesus was a strong doctorial based Church they knew what they believed and they knew why they believed it but it is not enough to know the word of God we have to also practice it and live it. The Bible says that God is love we have to do more than know it we have to live it ourselves. The Bible especially the New Testament is a collection of letters and writings, so many with so much information that at times it is hard to know which letter to read to address the problems in our lives. Ephesus is the first Church that Jesus addressed, in the New Testament Corinthians is the first Church addressed by name. If we read the letter of Jesus to Ephesus and then read the two letters to the Church at Corinth we will get a good idea of how to change or repent from the wrong that Jesus spoke to Ephesus about. For instance Jesus instructed them in the need to return to their first love, Corinthians chapter 13 is the definition of love, after reading that book we will have no doubt about what God’s standard of love is. Likewise Corinthians deals with a man who is committing terrible sin and tells how to remove him from the Church but then second Corinthians reminds the Church that if the sinner has repented to let him back in and to treat him as a brother in other words to love him. We can loosely consider Jesus’ Ephesians and First & Second Corinthians to be companion books. Since in our times we can drive and seek out a Church to our liking we will usually pick out a Church like us and our Church because it is people may have the dominant trait of correct doctrine over the love of people and over the love for God. This is something to be repented from and to still continue in all the good that the Church is doing.

Church 2 Revelation 2:8-11 Smyrna [Myrrh, bitter herb for anointing particularly for burial] (the Martyred / heavily persecuted Church)

This wonderful letter of Jesus to the second Church the Church at Smyrna, is written to a persecuted Church. The members of the Church were being harassed and even killed for their faith in Jesus. The word Martyr simply means witness. Jesus said go and martyr (witness) of Him to all the world. It has been said that people gave their lives and became a martyr. Actually they didn’t become a martyr they were one before they gave their life, that is just their final witness/martyr here on earth. Those people who do give their life and die receive a better resurrection than even those of us Christians who are not put to death. They are a Special group of people to Jesus; they receive a special crown in heaven that only the martyred witnesses receive.

The tribulation saints are a future group of people that give their life to Jesus and are killed by a coming false Jesus called the Anti-Christ. Anti means “instead of “so he is the “instead of” Christ. It is like asking for water and getting poison “instead of” water. The poison might look and smell like water but it is not water and we will not be refreshed if we drink it, we will die if we drink it. This man that is coming in the future is the instead of Jesus he will pretend to be Jesus he will pretend to offer refreshing water but it will instead be poison and those who drink it or go along with the plans of the Anti-Christ will die, the everlasting death. The future martyred Saints will be the people who know the true Jesus and will refuse to accept this poison false Jesus. The false Jesus will be so angry that he will murder every witness he can get hold of. The Bible says that those special saints that are not deceived and follow the true Jesus even to their death at the hands of the false Jesus, they will be very special to the real Jesus and in Heaven the Martyred Saints will always be with Jesus.

Unfortunately martyrdom was very much a part of the early Church. In fact martyrdom has continued throughout the entire Church history and may even be getting worse in our very day. Today many Christians throughout the world are being denied the basic necessities of life and are being abused even killed for their faith in Jesus. Tragically martyrdom will stay with the Church until the time that Jesus sets up His righteous, kingdom full of love and justice here on earth. Evil will always hate goodness and evil will try to destroy goodness but it can’t because evil is actually fighting against God and God has already won. Christianity is costly the price has been high every since Jesus was rejected beaten and crucified on a wooden cross. The Church is costly but you can be sure that the future glory with God is worth more than any cost Satan might try to make us pay.

In His letter Jesus explains to the Church that He knows what it is like be killed, but that He is alive and they too will be alive with Him. Jesus also knows the condition of the Church He knows that they are persecuted and do not have many resources. Jesus tells that although they do not have much here on earth they are rich in heaven. He also informs them not to listen to the people who claim to have all the answers and put them down because they are persecuted. Jesus says that the ones admonishing the suffering Church are from Satan and are not from God. Jesus continues and says for them to “fear not” that although there will be trouble, the trouble is from Satan and not from God, as the evil counselors have said. They are instructed to be faithful to God even unto death and that they will receive the prized crown of life given only all the martyrs. Jesus closes the letter to the Church of Smyrna telling them that the second death the spiritual death will not be able to harm them.

What a wonderful Church and letter, people who love God more than their own possessions, circumstances and even more than their own lives. Many of these people do not have the doctrinal knowledge of the Church of Ephesus yet they have the love. Love that overcomes and conquers all things even death. Jesus does not have repentance for this Church like He did for the first Church and as He does for the other churches. This Church is special and there is no condemnation to those who love Jesus more than they love their own life.

Possessing love is a wonderful thing yet knowledge of the Bible assists our love and gives us faith so that we are not so easily shaken during the trials and tribulations that we do not understand. The companion book for this second Church is the epistle to the second named Church, the Church of Galatians, coming right after Corinthians in the Bible. When studding the book of Galatians the Martyred Church can learn for starters that Paul received his doctrine and teachings from Jesus. This means that we all have Jesus as a comforter and a teacher. We do not need to rely on man to teach us the Bible God will do it. If a Christian is imprisoned God will be right there with him to teach him who God is and to comfort him. In the book of Galatians Paul also rebukes Peter. Again we as Christians do not have to let sinful men rule over us. All mankind is sinful and no one is right all of the time so we need to look to God and not man in our lives. Also in the letter to Galatians Paul encourages the Galatians to continue in their Christian walk in a spiritual walk not based on their physical understanding but to literally walk in the Spirit of God. People being harassed and persecuted might want to revert to worldly ways of anger and revenge but these ways will not profit us in our relationship with God. We have to start our Christian walk in the Spirit of God, continue it in His Spirit and end remaining in His Spirit.

Church 3 Revelation 2:12-17 Pergamum [tower, “burgh”] Tower of Babylon sins have piled to heaven, worldly tower system/government.(The intermingled Church/Church & worldly ways trends/Govt.)

The third Church represents the period in Christian history where the persecutions of Christians turned instead to acceptance and where the Christians embraced the world that was now embracing or at least tolerating them. Jesus in His letter says that He knows where there works are from and where they dwell that it is with Satan. He goes on to say that they stumble and put obstacles in front of other Christians and that they embrace the practice of “Nicolaitanes” which is the practice of lording over people, not letting people be free to worship God in a personal relationship. Instead prayers are written to be prayed and mans thoughts are taught in place of Bible study. Jesus says that He hates this practice. Jesus died so that we will be free; the truth has set us free. Jesus does not want us to control or be controlled by other people.

Often this Church/people is the person that claims to be a Christian but doesn’t follow any or many of the Christian ways. This Christian doesn’t pray regularly at least not with the assistance of the Holy Spirit usually they do not even acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit. They seldom read the Bible and think much of the Bible makes no sense or worse, is of little value to their life or worse yet that parts are untrue. They have that opinion about the Bible because they have been wrongly told that by someone else, who was just plain wrong and they have not taken the time to read the Bible for themselves. The people, who do seriously study the Bible if they didn’t believe in God, usually do believe in God after a short time of studying the Bible, archeology and word history. The Bible is so factual, so practical, so prophetic, and so complete that those who do take the time to read the Bible can only rejoice in the one true living God while removing their shoes because they know that when reading the Bible they are standing on Holy ground and in the very presence of God Almighty.

Pergamum Christians do not have many Holy experiences they think Christianity is yet to happen after they die they think that they will meet Jesus not knowing that Jesus resides inside of them already if they are born Again. Because these Christians are not looking to God they are not experiencing God. They go about their lives and jobs looking to themselves, their friends, their bosses, and government for the answers in their lives, missing out on the daily moment by moment relationship God has for us. When we limit our options in life to what we can achieve with our own hands we are living a life of one handful God says let go of what we can hold in our hands and to receive form Him an ocean of possibility. When we live our life in the Holy Spirit every moment every person becomes a Divine encounter by God and there is no limit to who we might meet and what opportunities we have. Sadly the worldly Christian is the one who is secretly ashamed of Jesus and the messy cross. This person wants acceptance by the worldly people around him and in doing so is ashamed of Jesus to some degree or another. This person does not know of the Glory of Heaven and of all the Heavenly angels that await to meet him, so they look at the fallen world and distance themselves from Jesus and ridicule the Christians that are living a life pleasing to God. Jesus said that if we do not say we know Him to people than Jesus will say that He does not know us to the Father and all the Angeles of Heaven.

 Fortunately there is a way out of this Church and into a more meaningful Church. The way is painful but the results are well worth it. The way is for God to allow every worldly thing that we put our hope and trust into to absolutely fall apart and let us down. Is our security in our money, job, health, friends, and government, all of these will let us down. God in the Bible calls these false cisterns or false water wells that we think they hold water but when we go there to drink they had many cracks that we couldn’t see and all the water ran out. The well is empty leaving us empty and thirsty. Fortunately when we thirst enough when all of our false wells have let us down we can reach out to Jesus who is right there just a breath away, wanting to have a meaningful relationship with each one of us. Once a Christian drinks of the everlasting water he will not desire any more of this world and will change churches and live a heavenly focused [converted] wonderful life.

God will return to reign and rule Prayer thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven that is the prayer that we pray right now as we eagerly look for the return and government of Jesus.

The Church is the higher call. Satan is trespasser and is stealing he is ruling and influencing all of the words governments, that is why the Bible tells us to pray for all governments and rulers in charge. Remember per Daniel, at Jesus return He destroys and scatters the world Govt. system.

The companion book of the Bible for this 4th Church is the book of Ephesians written by Paul the Apostle. In Ephesians the Church will learn that we are made one with Jesus and to not conform to this world but to God. The book also teaches that we the believers are one body and to” keep the unity of the Spirit in a bond of peace.” The book goes on to explain our relationship with God and relationships with our spouse, children and employers. After these topics the book discusses spiritual warfare. A very important topic for everyone who chooses to live a Godly life as described in the Bible.

Church 4 Revelation 2:18-29 Thyatira [white castle] (Catholic Church/people)

 The 4th grew out of the third Church. Where the third Church was involved in worldly government this forth Church then took the power and influence they had in government and used it to create a governing Church sort of a government for Church. This Church is in modern day most represented by the Catholic Church. It should not seem surprising that God knows about the Catholic Church, because He knows everything. This is one place in the Bible where we can really see the relevance and accuracy of the Bible and recognize that God knows all things past present and future. Remember a correction from Jesus is to draw us closer to Him in the correct manner of worship. Jesus begins the letter to the Church of Thyatira by addressing Himself as the Son of God. The Catholic Church is to focused on Jesus as the son of Mary and the letter is placing the emphasis that Jesus is God and is the son of God, and that it is Jesus whom the relationship is to be with. Jesus continues that He knows the works and the love that the Church does have and that their works and love are increasing. This is very true about the Catholic Church they are doing marvelous works of charity and love throughout the world. The Catholic Church is almost single handed in their devotion to orphans and the unborn. Jesus then continues with repentance, that He cannot stand the teaching and works of Jezebel. Jezebel was a wicked woman of the Old Testament maybe the wicked. She is referenced in connection with this Church because they are keeping a doctrine that “Mary” has a part in the work of God. The true Mary of the Bible called herself a humble handmaiden and her spirit rejoiced that God is her savior. The teaching that is attributed to Mary has nothing to do with Mary. The teaching is the teaching of Jezebel and not of Mary. The true Mary is a very courageous and wonderful woman. Of all the people in the world that could have stopped the crucifixion of Jesus it was Mary. All Mary had to do was go to either the Jewish authorities or the Roman authorities and tell them that she knew the father of Jesus and that He was not the Son of God. This would have put an end to Jesus claiming to be God if He had two earthly parents. Yet she did not do this because she could not do it, Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus has no earthly father. If Jesus were not God, Mary would not have allowed the crucifixion to continue. Because Jesus is the Son of God, the real Mary stood boldly by while Jesus suffered on the cross. Jesus continues in His letter saying if we follow the false teachings of Jezebel, there is no salvation in that false teaching. Those who follow it will go into the great tribulation [miss the coming rapture] and be killed with death. This is a strong warning because of the strong danger in the false teaching of Jezebel. Then Jesus concludes with the promise that those who remain faithful in the Church will rein and rule with Jesus.

The Bible companion book to this Church is the next book, the book of Philippians. Philippians is a wonderful book of encouragement. The book explains that Jesus is 100% God and 100% man. The book tells us to “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling” not to let others prescribe our salvation but to let God work it out in us. Remember Salvation is different from Redemption. Salvation means healing, removing huts and fears. We have a part in our healing as we seek and trust God. Redemption is the work of Jesus on the cross; we do not have a part in the redemption except to receive it as a free gift from God. The book tells of our high calling in Jesus and goes on to encourage us to rejoice and be content in the Lord Jesus.

Church 5 Revelation 3:1-6 Sardis [precious red, gemstone] (Protestant Church/people not recognizing the work the necessity the person of the Holy Spirit or Spirit of Holiness) not washed clean by Holy Spirit

Spiritually dead Church, Church that, modern Church feel we are special and to be admired. God said come let us reason though your sins are red as scarlet He will make them white as snow.

Modern liberal Church lets in any manner of doctrine and sin yet does not let God Himself into his own Church. They have decided they know how to interpret God’s word in any way but what God actually said.

The forth Church was best represented by the Catholic Church, the fifth Church is now best represented by the Protestant Church. In 1572 a Catholic Monk named Martin Luther began a formal dissention with the Catholic Church the end result was the “Reformation” or splitting off of part of the Catholic Church into the Protestant Church. Called Protestant from the meaning protesters. The Christians were dissatisfied with the doctrines and decrees of the Catholic Church and left to worship God in a less restricted environment.

As Jesus began the letter to Thyatira to remind them that He is the Son of God, Jesus begins this fifth letter to the Church of Sardis to remind this Church that He has the seven [complete] Spirit of God. Jesus is informing this Church that their biggest problem is in neglecting the Holy Spirit. Jesus then tells the Church that He knows their works that they have a reputation for being alive but instead they are dead. Again strong words for strong circumstances. Jesus wants us to follow Him in a right relationship and not in a way that is made up or pretend. Jesus says that He has not found there works to be “Perfect.” The word perfect means complete like this car would be perfect if it had an engine, the car is incomplete. Jesus is telling this Church that they are incomplete in other words without God.

The protestant Church has left the Catholic Church and they have also left the Holy Spirit. Repeatedly the Bible tells us that works done without the guidance and glory of the Holy Spirit are works that are meaningless. It is better not to do something than to do it without the Holy Spirit. Strangely enough the only person excluded from the Protestant Church is the Holy Spirit. Much of the Church now recognizes homosexual marriages, abortion is no longer considered murder, any proud arrogant, person is welcome at a protestant Church, adultery and fornication is seldom considered sin. Divorce and abandonment of spouses and children are now common place. Yet the Church that is supposed to be salt and light is not even lifting a finger to turn the pages of the Bible and see what God has to say about it all. It is obvious to anyone that looks that the works of the Church are dead. The reason the works are dead is because the Holy Spirit is not being listened to. Jesus tells this Church to repent and that they need to watch for His return [rapture]. Jesus says that the people who overcome will be clothed with white raiment. The over comers of the previous Church are to be given a white stone, the stone of acceptance. In the book of Isaiah God told the prophet to tell the people “come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” The word Sardis means a red stone.

The companion book for Sardis is the book of Colossians. The book explains that the revealed mystery of the ages is that Jesus is in us and that this is glorious. The book says Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. And admonishing us to set our affections on the things of above.

Church 6 Revelation 3:7-13 Philadelphia [Philao - Brotherly love] (the Church/people of Brotherly Love)

Brotherly embrace both the Jews and the Romans (Catholics)

The Jews via Book of Acts and the first Church counsel in Jerusalem give no offence to the children of Abraham. The dietary law was removed and all foods are now edible yet of greater importance and more significant than the dietary laws of the OT is the Biblical mandate not to give any offence to the Jews.

Read book of Romans How not to judge and book of Hebrews how to be a priest

The sixth Church is the Church of brotherly love. Jesus gave us one commandment or law the new (insight) into the law to love God and to love man. Jesus further said that the distinctive mark of a Christian would be our love for God and for one another. This is the same law of the Old Testament Jesus called it new or fresh in that Jesus is our example and that we now have new insight how to love God and one another as Jesus loves so much that He gave His life.

This Church group are the people that are filled with God’s love they love the Father they love Jesus and they love the Holy Spirit. These people love Christians; denominations, titles or Church roles mean nothing to them they just meet you where you are and give you a big love boost right into the lap of Jesus seated at the right of the Father’s throne. Meeting one of these Christians is like taking a big refreshing drink from the river of life. Often these people are loving in the midst of life’s biggest challenges; their bodies wracked with cancer, having lost parents or children, homes, jobs, etc. These people are the modern women at the well and the Mary Magdalenes and like them they have met Jesus and have wept and rejoiced at His feet. Many have had a lifelong walk with the Lord knowing Him personally for decades, like Moses they are seated securely in the cleft of the rock looking back and seeing the Glory of God in their lives, how Jesus has brought them through troubles and perils of life. They have seen fellow Christians go home to glory with a smile on their face and the countenance of an angel. They know the one in whom they have entrusted their spirit and soul and know that God will complete the work that He began in them and that His thoughts toward them and towards others are good.

Often the new Christian starts out in this Church. The newness of Jesus and the Spirit filled life put us in a peaceful blissful state of well being. We call this the honeymoon state of Christianity when we meet Jesus and all is well. Then the storms and trials come into our lives and we wander through the various churches and growth phases, but not to worry, God often gives us a taste or also called a first fruit of what the future will be like, we get confused and think is it supposed to be this way the trials and troubles? Then we falter when God starts doing a new or different work in another area of our life and emotions. Just hang in there God is expanding us and growing us up in Him if we don’t get persecuted how we have intimate fellowship with God and man. So we are bound to sway from Church to Church as life’s challenges come our way and we have our moments of doubt or our circumstances get the best of us. The growing maturing Christian is growing softer and more compassionate into the image of Jesus and away from the image of this cold hard cruel world. There is no rebuke from Jesus for this Church. Jesus instructed the doctrine wise Ephesians to return to their first love, the honeymoon feelings they had in the beginning about Jesus, in other words Jesus encouraged them to get back to the Church of Philadelphia. These people are loving and being loved in a Godly way and Jesus is well pleased with them. This group is not a specific Church age as each of the other churches are. This Church is not addressed from the identification letter that the other churches are. This Church is a special remnant to God and they have existed everywhere there are Christians and at every time. This special group of people has the promise from God that they will not enter into the coming tribulation that the world is going to go through. Jesus is going to catch up or rapture His people before the coming tribulation [the rest of the book of Revelation]. All born again Christians will be raptured before the tribulation. The coming tribulation is coming from God onto a disobedient people. Right now the tribulation we suffer is from our own bad actions or seeds and that which Satan does to us. If we mismanage our money and go bankrupt it is certainly tribulation but it is from us not from God. God uses our messes to draw us closer to Him so the messes are not that bad after all. The difference between the current tribulation and the future one is that the future one is from God and God is not going to pour out tribulation upon the righteous, as He resides in the born again believer, on the cross Jesus said “it is finished” Jesus will undergo no more tribulation so there is a need for the rapture to remove the Jesus filled Christians prior to the tribulation from God.

 This Church is closely related to the Smyrna Church in that these are the people who love God enough to give their life and Satan is usually mad enough at these Christians to try to take their life. So one day you can be in this Church and the next moment Smyrna.

The Church of Philadelphia is the brotherly love Church. The companion books for this Church are the books of Romans and Hebrews. Christians in this Church will need to know the book of Romans to understand that Christians are called into a relationship with God based on faith, that nothing can separate us from the love of God and then how to have fellowship with the fellow brethren by not offending them in our actions and deeds. The book of Hebrews will help us to enter into the very presence of God. Jesus is our High Priest that has entered into the Holiest place where God’s presence is, by being identified with Jesus we to are entered into the presence of God.

Church 7 Revelation 3:14-22 Laodicea [Laos - People, diceaos - rule; People rule] (the comfortable worldly Church where people rule their own lives)

Read Thessalonians get ready for rapture

The seventh and last Church is the Church that is dominant in our age and time. This is the last Church age there are no more Church ages after this. When Jesus returns and raptures the Church there will no longer be a Church here on earth. There will be Jewish believers and there will be those Martyred saints that give their life for their faith in Jesus but there will be no Church. There was no Church during the entire Old Testament. The Church began the day of the resurrection of Jesus when Jesus baptized the disciples in the upper room and told them to receive the Holy Spirit. The Church that began then and is continuing on right now will end at the rapture when Jesus meets us (Church) in the air and takes us to heaven to be with Him saving us from the terrible time of the tribulation. Laodicea is the comfortable last Church. Here God is speaking to most of us.

The various churches all dominated throughout each Church age in the order that Jesus has addressed them. The first era was the Apostolic Church when the Apostles and disciples of Jesus were writing and teaching Gods word at Ephesus and other places. With so much knowledge at Ephesus they had no patience for people who didn’t catch on to doctrine and theology. After the apostles of Jesus grew old and went on to be with Jesus in heaven the next Church age was characterized by bitter persecution and martyrs, the Church of Smyrna. Today there are more martyrs worldwide than at any time but this period happened when the Church was young and didn’t have a worldwide following and when the bibles were copied by hand, Satan was actually trying to demoralize the Christians and Satan literally tried to kill every Christian and wipe out every Bible. The next era was the Pergamos era. Interestingly how Christians go from persecuted by the world to loving the world, but that is just what happened. After the brutal nonstop persecution the Christians became worldly. At the Roman coliseums were Christians were once put to death, now the Christians sat in the seats and clapped as gladiators fought each other to the death on the very places where Christians died by the millions. After the worldly Christians the next Church era was the structured Church known as Thyatira the Catholic Church where for centuries everyone was supposed to belong to the Catholic Church or they were not considered a Christian. This much authority brought on much abuse of power and much resentment as the Catholic Church ruled with such force that people were not allowed personal bibles to read, people couldn’t pray in their native tongues and even had to go to people called priests to talk to God. The puritans that left England and came and started America were fleeing this Church to come to America and establish a Puritan “pure” Christian life. This restrictive Church age gave way to the next period called the Protestant reformation where Protestants [protesters] protested the Catholic domination. Rightfully saying that the Bible tells people how to live and not any organization. This Protestant era took so many liberties that they soon had a muddled comfortable Christianity, people compared themselves to others instead of comparing themselves to Jesus and always finding someone perceived to be of worse character than themselves, people decided wrongly that they had a good Christian walk so now the Christian walk became anything that we determine we want it to be. This brings us to the last Church age. This period is a continuation of the protestant age and is a Church so without Jesus that we have become our own Church we are a Church where the “people rule” instead of God. Being that this is the last Church age it is during this era that Jesus will return.

Jesus opens this letter like the previous letters addressing the biggest problem facing the Church. In this case Jesus proclaims that He is the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. Jesus is confronting the biggest error of the last day Church. Jesus is reminding us that He is faithful and true and that He is the creator of creation and that creation is from God. It is appropriate that God is speaking to the end time Church about creation, perhaps the biggest lie being perpetuated right now is the lie of evolution. Evolution is a joke; life does not evolve out of non-life no matter how long you waited. God being life can create and give life. Life is more than chemicals and material, life is spirit and soul, life is awareness. This error would never be believed by the previous churches because they lived in close proximity to life and death. We are now so removed from death that we do not understand life. We give scientist credit for the wonderful inventions that they have worked on and this is a wonderful high teach time, but technology does not explain life and scientist apart from God are not able to explain life. In every case of evolution the evolutionist has grossly simplified the complex mechanisms of life. The simplest cell is more complicated than anything science has ever assembled. A baby being formed in the womb of a woman consists of 23 chromosomes from the man and 23 chromosomes from the woman, living for nine months in the water of the womb to at birth suddenly breath air, this is complicated this is life, this is creation this is Jesus’ creation. Without believing that God is our creator and giver of life it is impossible to have a relationship with God.

This is the last Church era and we are well into it right now. This era is characterized by worldly comfort Church people. People are now so comfortable with worldly accommodations that we no longer need what Jesus has to offer. We now live better than any King of the Bible era ever lived. We have orchestra on demand in our CD players, opera on demand in TV and VHS; counsel of worldly wise men in www computing, our chariots are always harnessed and travel 75 mph, cell phone messengers in our pocket on demand, our cash vault is carried in a card in our pockets, wherever we go, we feast at chefs anywhere we point our chariot; we snuggle cozy into warm beds with dry roofs, living better than any king has ever lived. A king from the Bible era would be envious with rage at our opulent lifestyle.

We do not need a vow of poverty that is not the point Jesus is making in this letter. His point is that we have neglected Jesus and have left Him the creator of life on the outside as we live our comfortable life to ourselves fulfilling our own whims. Jesus finds Himself knocking at the door of our heart and asking us to please let Him in. Jesus is not addressing this to the unsaved but to the Church and not as a group but to each individual in hopes that someone, anyone will stop drinking from the river of worldliness and join Him in Spiritual matters. Because this Church is so disgusting to Jesus He says that He will spit us out of His mouth unless we change. The spitting out of the mouth is an involuntary action it is like drinking spoiled milk that your body will not allow you to swallow so by reaction it is spit out. Jesus also tells us to buy from Him gold refined in the fire, this is the fire of trials. None of us want trials but Jesus says to us to have the trials and then learn from them. Learn that there are tired and hurting people in this world learn that life is unfair and unjust. Learn the Jesus is God and that apart from Him no soul will have rest or peace.

The companion books to the last Church are the last Church epistles written by the Apostle Paul, the two epistles to the Church of Thessalonians. In reading the two books of Thessalonians we will learn that it is a time of heavy persecution. The Church of Thessalonica was heavily persecuted, so much in fact that they thought that they had missed the rapture and gone into the tribulation period. Paul wrote the book to inform them that before the tribulation period there will be a big falling away of Christians from the faith of Jesus called the “Apostolic” and second that the Church will not be here during the time of the coming anti-Christ. Paul explained that before the anti-Christ comes the Church will have been raptured. Jesus told Peter and the rest of the disciples that He was going to build His Church and that the gates of hell will not prevail against it. The anti-Christ is given authority over the people of the earth to overcome them, but the Church will have been removed from earth and we will be in heaven while the anti-Christ wages war with the Martyred saints of the book of Revelation. Paul says for us to comfort one another with this thought that Jesus is coming to take us to heaven with Him. The Church of Laodicea is a sick Church, but the books of Thessalonians are strong medicine. When we start to realize that Jesus is returning and will return to gather us at any moment without any advanced notice, this medicine should cure our illness of an ungodly lifestyle. We should live every moment like it is our last moment on earth and our first moment in heaven. When Jesus comes we are encouraged by the Apostle John to be living in a manner that we do not shrink back in embarrassment at the coming of Jesus.