



# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Ephesus

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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What emotions come up when you consider doing a study of Revelation? Why do you experience these emotions?

### Discover

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Read **Revelation 1** carefully. What is the purpose of the Book of Revelation? Why do you think John decided to begin his letter this way?

Do any of the churches in **verses 9-11** sound familiar to you? What previous knowledge do you have about these areas of the world in biblical (or modern) times?

Take a closer look at **Revelation 1:12-18**. How does this description of Jesus compare to what you normally think of Him? How does this passage encourage you?

Read **Revelation 2:1-7** in order to answer the following questions:

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

### Fully Own

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Which characteristics of the church in Ephesus would you like to grow in, personally?

What is your current passion level for Jesus and his church? How can you tell?

Recall **Revelation 2:5**. How did you passionately pursue Jesus when you first came into relationship with him? Which of these practices do you need to bring back into the rhythm of your life?

### Challenge

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During your personal Bible study time this week, explore the Book of Ephesians. As you read, ask God to show you how to “Repent and do the things you did at first.”



# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Smyrna

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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What did God show you as you studied Ephesians this week? How did your study time deepen your understanding of Revelation 2:1-7? How did it challenge you to change your thoughts or behaviors?

### Discover

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Read Revelation 2:8-11 in order to answer the following questions:

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What similarities can you discern between this text and Jesus' message to the church in Smyrna?

Re-read Revelation 2:10. Does it shock you that Jesus tells the Church in Smyrna to endure suffering and death, rather than resist it? Why or why not?

### Fully Own

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Does it cost you anything to live out your faith in your place of work? In your neighborhood?

Read 1 Peter 3:8-17. How do you typically respond to slander or insult? How is God calling you to a higher standard?

Are there any areas in your life where you have lost hope in resurrection? How does the letter to the Church in Smyrna give you hope?

Consider the refrain of the seven letters to the seven churches: *Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches*. What has God been saying to you so far in this study?

### Challenge

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Commit 1 Peter 3:15-16 to memory between now and next week.





# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Pergamum

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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What opportunities for obedience did God reveal to you this week? How did your scripture memorization help you to be faithful?

### Discover

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Skip ahead to Revelation 4:1. How has Jesus invited you into an eternal perspective in the last few weeks?

Read Revelation 2:12-17.

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

Take a closer look at Revelation 2:14-16. Why do you think Jesus takes false teaching so seriously? What other passages about false teaching can you find in the Bible? How does this knowledge apply to believers in the church today?

### Fully Own

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How can you relate to the Church in Pergamum? Are there areas in your life where you are tempted to compromise your values in order to gain social or political favor?

Read Romans 6:1-2 in light of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's words about *cheap grace*:

*Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.*

How do you see cheap grace at work in the Church in Pergamum? In your own life, family, and community?

Where in your life have you been relying on cheap grace—continuing a sinful behavior that you know God has asked you to give up? What is keeping you from responding in obedience with repentance?

## Challenge

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Choose to repent of one harmful behavior or attitude this week. Pray the prayer provided below as a daily reminder of God's forgiveness and mercy in your life:

*Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.*





# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Thyatira

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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How is your understanding of grace and repentance growing?

### Discover

What is the value of reading each letter to the different churches in Revelation? What do you think a letter to Central would say?

You know the drill. Read **Revelation 2:18-29** to answer the following questions:

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

What do you notice about the words and imagery used in this passage? Why do you think Jesus used such strong language when he addressed the Church in Thyatira?

Thyatira was a [working man's town](#) under the influence of seductive false teaching. According to Jesus' words in **Revelation 2:20-24**, what is in store for those who give into the temptation to compromise values for economic gain?

### Fully Own

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Have you ever been tempted to compromise your values to get ahead at work? What happened?

Take a closer look at **Revelation 2:24-27**. Why do you think Jesus reserved authority for those who can withstand the temptation to compromise their values?

How can we be winsome without succumbing to temptations to cut corners, blend in, and get ahead?

What word is God speaking to you, specifically, through His message to the Church in Thyatira?

## Challenge

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Take a good look at the way you approach your work. Ask God to reveal to you any places where you may have been seduced into valuing economic advancement over your relationship with Christ. Journal whatever comes to mind as you seek God's counsel this week.



# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Sardis

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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What has been your biggest “AHA” moment in the study so far? How has your understanding of the Book of Revelation changed or deepened as a result of this study?

### Discover

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How would you define the word *hypocrisy*? What verses in the Bible can you find about this issue?

Read Revelation 3: 1-6.

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

Compare the words of Jesus in Matthew 23:25-26 to Jesus words in Revelation 3. What similarities can you identify?

What is so dangerous about the spiritual state of the Church in Sardis?

### Fully Own


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Re-read Revelation 3:2-3. Share about a time when Jesus challenged you to wake up spiritually. What does it look like in real life to respond to this message with obedience?

Passionately Pursuing Jesus is a mark of owning the mission at Central. What kind of fruit is produced by someone who pursues Jesus from the inside out?

Are you ever tempted to keep up appearances, even though you are struggling on the inside? Why is this temptation so strong?

Take a closer look at Revelation 3:4-6. Where have you been asleep at the wheel, or getting by on the appearance of being alive? What is keeping you from trading in this approach for the promises of Jesus?



## Challenge

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Re-read Revelation 3:1-6 each morning when you wake up. Meditate on this passage during your morning routine. Ask God to wake you up so that you can experience the fullness of life He offers.





# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Philadelphia

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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What part of Jesus' message to the Church in Sardis most resonated with you? How has God awakened you this week?

### Discover

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Start your study time this week reading about Paul and Barnabas' ministry in Asia Minor in **Acts 14**. What conflicts did they experience? What opportunities did God give them? *Keep this account in mind as you consider Jesus' words to the Church in Philadelphia.*

Read Revelation 3:7-13.

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

What similarities did you see between Paul and Barnabas's experience in **Acts 14** and the experience of the Church in Philadelphia in **Revelation 3:7-13**.

Compare **Acts 14:27** and **Revelation 3:8**. What do these passages demonstrate about Jesus' heart for evangelism?

### Fully Own

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Read **Ephesians 5:15-16**. Have you made the most of the opportunities God has given you to share your faith? How have you used your gifts and talents wisely for His glory?


Reflect on Jesus words in **Revelation 3:8**. Why would having *little strength* be a positive and not a negative? How does this passage encourage or challenge you?

Is there an area in your life where God is asking you to endure patiently? How is that going

### Challenge

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When was the last time you shared your faith with someone? Led someone to a relationship with Christ? Pray every day this week that God would open a door for evangelism, and then walk through it!





# Seven Letters to Seven Churches

## The Church in Laodicea

**LIFE**   
**GROUPS**

### Leader Check-in

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What opportunity did you have to share your faith this week? How did it go?

### Discover

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What similarities can you discern between the cultural climate when Revelation was written and our current cultural climate?

Read Revelation 3:14-22 in order to answer the following questions:

*To whom is the letter addressed?*

*What is Jesus revealing about himself?*

*What is distinct about this particular church?*

*What is the message of Jesus to this church?*

*How is the church to respond?*

Take a closer look at Revelation 3:18-20. How have you typically thought of this verse? When read in context, do you gain a different understanding? Explain.

Reread Revelation 3:17. How did the church of Laodicea's opinion of itself compare to God's opinion? What are the dangers of thinking too highly of yourself?

### Fully Own

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What emotions do you sense in Jesus' message to the Church in Laodicea? How does this passage deepen your understanding of God's heart for His people?

Read Romans 12:3. Share a story about a time when you thought highly of yourself more than you should have. What were the consequences? How did God bring you to repentance?

Would the people who spend time with you describe you as therapeutic or refreshing? Think specifically of your family members, neighbors, friends, and coworkers.

Reread Revelation 3:19-22. What is Jesus' message to you today? How will you be obedient?

## Challenge

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Spend some time each day this week finding passages in the Bible that talk about hearing God's voice. Journal what he shows you, then pray that you will always have ears to hear his voice.