

1 **Wk 3 Ses 2:Ch 2-3 Letters to Seven Churches (60 mins)**

2 John 9:1, 17 - ¹I share with you. I share with you in your tribulation. I share the kingdom and I share patient
3 endurance with you...¹⁷ and He (the Lord) laid His right hand upon me saying, **Fear Not.** "I am the first and the last
4 and the living one. I died and behold, I'm alive forevermore and I have the keys of death and Hades."

5 **The Veil:** Jesus will **pull back the veil** and show us the victory that is ours in His blood in the Eucharist, in the Holy
6 Sacrifice of the Mass, in the prayers of the saints.

7 **Church Suffering:** Book of hope and encouragement not only to seven Churches on ancient Roman mail route but
8 the entire Church (NOTE: "#7" symbolizes completeness); will address *internal life* of these seven; main concern
9 apostasy.¹ **MESSAGE:** If you want to overcome, want the rewards, **you have to avoid apostasy pursue/preserve**
10 **intimate relationship between you and Christ.**

11 **STRUCTURE of Letters:** (1) ID speaker/revealer (Christ): (2) He says, "I know your situation" Let's talk.
12 (3) Evaluation of the Congregation (4) Word of Commendation: A word of encouragement to everyone, (5) Word
13 of Chastisement: Loving correction to behavior, (6) FORMULA: SHEMA: He who has ears to hear, listen to the
14 Spirit (SHEMA: Deut 6:4: "Hear (Experience), O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one". He says, "He who has
15 ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches". **MESSAGE:** Apply letters to your own progress
16 at different stages of personal spiritual growth. (7) REWARD: Life in Christ

17 **1 Cor 1- 7 - EPHEBUS** : (1) REVEALER: Jesus Christ (speaks within their everyday culture): "To the angel of the
18 church in Ephesus, write the words of Him who holds the seven stars in HIS right hand, who walks among the seven
19 golden lamps. (2) I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and (3) how you cannot bear evil men
20 but have tested those who call themselves apostles but or not and found them to be false.(4) I know you are
21 enduring patiently and bearing up for my namesake, and you have not grown weary. (5) "For I have this against
22 you that you have abandoned the love you had at first. (6) FORMULA: Remember, then from what you have fallen,
23 repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to remove your lampstand from its place, unless you
24 repent. Yet this you have in your favor, you hate the works of the Nicolaitans ², which I also hate. He who has an
25 ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches," (7) REWARD: "To him who conquers I will grant to eat of
26 the tree of life", which is in the paradise of God."

27 **1. EPHEBUS** Largest city in province important to politics and trade, many temples (Artemis-one of 7 wonders
28 of world); center of occult activity; Paul, Timothy, John , and Blessed Mother spent much time
29 there; member *hard core* (orthodox) believers why only letter not correcting their faith/theological truths; (St
30 Ignatius to Ephesians (martyred 107 AD-40 yrs after Rev written verified their strong faith but John is now telling
31 them YOU have lost their first love...Do the deeds you did at first. They were going back to old ways
32 **FORMULA: Intimate relationship with Christ: MESSAGE: Selfless love is more than an attitude. Love is an action.**
33 **MESSAGE:** "Repentant actions will nourish and cultivate a repentance attitude. Penance if not a penalty but the
34 restoration of a broken relationship."

35 **ANOLOGY:** Ephesus had a large seaport that often filled with sediment (like our local ports); had to dredged; -
36 citizens did not repent and continue dredging, now 6 miles from sea-lost their livelihood, their first passion/love
37 **MESSAGE:** Stay alert to what is important, cherish it, nourish, make it a priority

38 **1 Cor 2:6: "I hate the works of the Nicolaitans²."** (wjf: HATE: Note the emotion of Christ)
39 **FORMULA: (1) SPEAKER:** Pope Benedict's Letter to Canadian bishops (*ad liminal*). (2) I know your situation:
40 "Today, the impediments to the spread of Christ Kingdom are experienced most dramatically in **the split between**
41 **the gospel and culture with the exclusion of GOD from the public square. (3) Canada has a well-earned reputation**
42 **for a generous and practical commitment to justice and peace, and there is an enticing sense of vibrancy and**
43 **opportunity in your multicultural cities. (4) At the same time, however, certain values detached from their moral**
44 **roots and full significance founding Christ have evolved in the most disturbing of ways. (5) In the name of tolerance,**
45 **your country has had to endure the folly of the redefinition of spouse. In the name of freedom of choice, it is**
46 **confronted with the daily destruction of unborn children. When the creator's divine plan is ignored the truth of**
47 **human nature is lost."**

48 **2. SYMRNA** 1) 30 miles north of Ephesus, proud, beautiful Asian city closely aligned with Rome,
49 2) passionate/fell prey to Emperor worship, 3) actively hostile Jewish population made difficult
50 for Christians (poor) (there are Jews and are not; synagogue of Satan.); **St. POLYCARP** (Student of John, early
51 martyr, Bishop of Smyrna) **FORMULA: (1) Speaker:** Jesus, (2) **SITUATION:** Rich city, poor Christians (3)
52 **EVALUATION:** Synagogue of Satan, (4) **ACCOMADATION:** Do not fear, (5) **CHASTISEMENT:** Some will suffer/be

53 tested for 10 days (6) **FORMULA:** Be faithful and receive *crown of Life*, (7) **REWARD:** He who conquers shall not be
54 hurt by the **second death**. *He who conquers will not go to hell:* Rev 20:14-15. It says, "Then Death and Hades were
55 thrown into the lake of fire. This is the **second death**, the lake of fire. If name was not written in the Book of Life he
56 was thrown into the *lake of fire*." **ANOLOGY:** Book of Revelation has relationship with Daniel and Ezekiel; In Daniel
57 1, three young Hebrew men were tested by fire for 10 days (can mean only a short period of time)

3. PERGAMON⁵⁸₅₉

Many Temples - Zeus (Snake god-city symbol) and Asclepius (Medicine god); produces good
parchment paper. (1) Speaker: Jesus Christ, (2) *I know where you dwell* (Satan's throne: Center
of occult/emperor worship, Pergamon hill resembled giant **throne**), (3) **EVALUATE:** *You hold fast my name; resist
paganism* (4) **COMMENDATION:** *and you did not deny my faith (Antipas)*, (5) **CHASTISEMENT:** You teach Balaam⁴-
eat foot sacrificed to idols, practice immorality; hold to teaching of Nicolaitans, (6) **FORMULA:** *Repent then if not I
will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.* (7) **REWARD:** *He who has an ear to
hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches and to him who conquers I will give some of them hidden
manna (Christ incarnation/Eucharist- Liturgy) (and I'll give him a white stone (invite to cast vote) with a new
NAME (new identity in Christ; admits believers into heavenly presence of the Lord and the LAMB) written on the
stone which no one knows except him who receives it. **COMMON THREAD:** Heresy (Nicolaitans⁴) seek to seduce
GOD'S people into idolatry and fornication. **MESSAGE:** Seek to *overcome* those who seek to *overcome us*.*

4. THYATIRA⁶⁹₇₀

Military outpost, many trade guilds (workers unions each with own god to worship) **PROBLEM:**
If a Christian, cannot do this meaning could not work their trade. (3) **EVALUATE:** Faith, love
service, (5) **CHASTISEMENT:** *I have this against you, that you are taught that you tolerate the woman Jezebel who
calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice immorality and to eat food
sacrificed to idols.* They tolerated her. **MESSAGE:** *We (Catholics) are intolerant and a church that tolerates evil
and false doctrine is a church under judgment.* (6) **FORMULA:** "Behold, I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to
repent of her immorality Behold, I will throw her on a sick bed and those who committed adultery with her, I will
throw into great tribulation unless they repent of her doings and I will strike her children dead. (followers)", (7)
REWARD: Receive authority over the nations; the great **Morningstar** (Revelation 22:16): JESUS

5. SARDIS⁷⁸₇₉

Capital of Kingdom of Lydia; great wealth/fame (Acropolis, jewel min, mint), a natural citadel on
Mt Tmolu (almost impregnable), (2) No virtues, (3) **EVALUATE:** Greedy, living dead, (4)
COMMENDATION: no different from surrounding pagan culture; no persecution or theological controversy (6)
FORMULA: Wake up! Remember what you have received and heard; about to be **OVERCOME**. (7) **REWARD:** will be
enrolled in Book of Life (*white unsoiled garments* Rev 19:8-*righteous deeds of saints, those doing Works of God;*
we put on Christ on a daily basis. **MESSAGE:** Walk in the way of those deeds.

6. PHILADELPHIA⁸⁴₈₅

(2) never denied Jesus, (7) **REWARD:** will become *Pillars of the Church*; lasted longest of
Christian cities taken over by Islam. "Because you have kept my word of patience
endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming in the whole world to try those who dwell upon the
earth." (1 Cor 3:10)

7. LAODICEA⁸⁸₈₉

Wealthiest city in Phrygia during Roman times. Famous for: 1) banking industry, 2) medical
industry, 3) textile industry (clothing, rare type of wool), very beautiful, very proud and resilient,
cafeteria believers (believed what they liked and if not liked did not believe it) **WEAKNESS:** Inadequate water
supply to city. (2) No virtue listed, "I know your works. You are neither cold nor hot, I will spew you or spit you out
of my mouth. For you say, I am rich (eye salve, I have prospered (gold) and I need nothing (clothing), not knowing
that you are wretched pitiable poor blind and naked". (3) Greedy cultural Christians (7) **REWARD:** Dine with Jesus
(Rev 3:20) "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him
and eat with him and he with me."; **WATER PROBLEM:** located in narrow valley in shadow of mountains where
water from two cities ran down mountain as lukewarm, putrid and nauseating: (*I will) you out of my
mouth...MESSAGE:* Is better to be an apostate (on-fire) than cold in your faith-influence society, contribute to the
kingdom, don't just pick what you want to believe. **PRESCRIPTION:** Buy from me gold (*wealth*) that is purified by
suffering, 1Peter 1:6-9-suffering, purification of true faith, do the works of GOD, then dress in *white garments*
(clothing) (7) **REWARD:** "Those who my love I reprove and choosing so be zealous and repent, Behold I stand at the
door and knock if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him and he with me.
(speaks of marriage supper of the Lamb and the Eucharist)
MESSAGE: Jesus is calling us to return to HIM in SPIRIT on Lord's day in the EUCHARIST at the TABLE of the LORD;
calling us to repentance (Devotional reading, CCC 1427-1429)

106 ¹ **Apostasy** in Christianity is the rejection of Christianity by someone who formerly was a Christian. The
107 term **apostasy** comes from the Greek word apostasia ("ἀποστασία") meaning "defection", "departure",
108 "revolt" or "rebellion".

109
110 ² **Nicolaitans**: Early tradition links these heretics with Nicolaus, one of the seven deacons ordained in
111 ACTS 6:5. Whatever their background and origin, the Nicolaitans are said to have a dangerously casual
112 attitude toward idolatry and sexual immorality. Their corruptive influence was already at work among
113 believers in Pergamum (Rev 2:5) *Ignatius Catholic Bible Study*

114
115 ³ *ad limina* - In the Catholic Church, a **quinquennial visit *ad limina***, more fully *ad limina apostolorum* or
116 simply an *ad limina* visit, means the obligation of residential diocesan bishops and certain prelates with
117 territorial jurisdiction (such as territorial abbots), of visiting the *thresholds of the* [tombs of
118 the] *Apostles*, Saints Peter and Paul, and of meeting the pope to report on the state of
119 their dioceses or prelatures. It is a formal trip usually made together by all bishops from a single region
120 (viz., an episcopal conference) to discuss with the Pope issues specific to their regions. It is separate
121 from other trips a bishop might make to the Vatican, such as to attend a synod. The *ad limina* visit
122 happens every five years, or quinquennially.



Pergamum Hill

123
124 ⁴ Balaam (teacher of Balak) couldn't put a curse on Israel, wanted prophet Balak to bring Israel down by
125 introducing Israelites to immorality/cult prostitution, the cult of **Baal Peor**, which involved, sexual relations with
126 prostitutes. Uses to defeat Israel before going into Promise Land; a couple was engaged in immoral sex and
127 destroyed sword. Purpose of this imagery about Balaam (Numbers 22,31)

128



129

STRUCTURE of Letters
(1) ID speaker/revealer (Christ):
(2) He says, "I know your situation" Let's talk.
(3) Evaluation of the Congregation
(4) Word of Commendation: Encouragement to everyone,
(5) Word of Chastisement: Loving correction to behavior,
(6) FORMULA: SHEMA: He who has ears to hear, listen to the Spirit (SHEMA: Deut 6:4: "Hear (Experience), O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one". He says "He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches".
(7) REWARD: Outcome of positive change in behavior
MESSAGE: Apply letters to your own progress at different stages of personal spiritual growth.