

# Revelation Study ~ Chapter 2 and 3 Prologue

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## The Seven churches of Asia Minor

The seven churches identified in Chapter 1 verse 11 are the expressions of all churches during the entirety of the church age. From the day the church was born in Acts chapter two until the time of her rescue from this earth, all churches across the world fit into one or more of these categories.

There are varied understandings concerning the church that floats around in the world today.

First is the idea that the church is universal. That is to say, the church as God sees it is the entire population of believers in Christ from the day of Pentecost unto eternity. In reality that is true, the entire body of Christ is made up of every nation, language, tribe, etc.

Second is the idea that the church is a local gathering of those believers in a common setting. That is to say, the church is the “local church” who meet in buildings, homes, parks, or any setting that is common to them.

Both are true.

What is expressed in the letters to the seven churches is a view of the entirety of the body of Christ and also the view of the local church in each of the cities mentioned. So, when you seek to understand the makeup of the church, take both ideas to heart.

### **In each of these letters, there are some common themes:**

1. Each letter has a **greeting** from Jesus that identifies Him in a specific way.
2. In each letter, Jesus makes it clear that He “**knows**” their situation.
3. All but one letter (Laodicea) has a **commendation**.
4. All but two letters (Smyrna and Philadelphia) have a **condemnation**.
5. In the letters with a condemnation a **correction** is presented.
6. Each letter has a **call** to those who have an ear to hear.
7. All seven have a **promise** for the “one who conquers.”

To consider each of these churches, every believer needs to understand that these letters speak to the modern church today. The challenges, commendations and corrections that Jesus offers is still the call for the church, nothing has changed.

For each of the letters to the seven churches, there are key words that are found in each.

**Key Words:**

1. Church - (Greek: Ekklesias) meaning "called out"
2. Angel - (Greek: Angelos) meaning "messenger"
3. Know - (Greek: Oida) meaning "to know or to regard"
4. Repent - (Greek: Metanoia) meaning "to make a change in thinking"
5. Conquer - (Greek: Nike) meaning "to overcome or vanquish"
6. Hear - (Greek: Akouo) meaning "to listen or heed for obedience"

If other key words present themselves, they will be handled in the study guide for that church.

So, as you enter the next two chapters and face each church along the way, do so with an open heart and willingness to examine even yourself as you hear Jesus speaking to the churches.