

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Welcome to our study of the book of Revelation using *Victory Assured!* as our guide.
- B. Purchasing the book is not necessary but will help deepen your understanding of the lessons.
- C. *Victory Assured!* is a thematic (or subject study) of the book of Revelation. *Victory Assured!* does not focus on the various details of the Revelation but rather stressed the main subjects and themes to help the reader gain the overall teachings of the book.
- D. Last week our study was from chapters 1 and 19:
Overcoming with the Worthy Lamb (4:1-5:14).
- E. Tonight, we look at overcoming apathy from letters to Ephesus and Laodicea:
Overcoming Apathy (Rev. 2:1-7; 3:14-22).

VICTORY WITH THE CHURCH

I. THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

- A. "The angel" of each church is probably a designation that refers to the personality, character, or overall spirituality of the church. Remember, this book is full of symbols and figures and one must be careful as to what he or she literalizes. However, it is entirely possible that each congregation has a "guardian" angel, in the same way as Christians are served by the angels (Heb. 1:14).
- B. The brethren were to hear what the Spirit said to the *churches*. Even though some problems in one place were not seen in another, each church was to pay attention to what was told the others. The same is true today as we use the NT epistles. None were directly addressed to us, but we must read them just the same to gain spiritual insight.
- C. The church in:
 1. Ephesus was doctrinally sound but had lost their first love.
 2. Smyrna was small and poor, but nevertheless, spiritually rich.
 3. Pergamum was in a very sinful city (2:13) and the church compromised the truth.
 4. Thyatira was easily influenced by temptation which is personified in the person of Jezebel (2:20).
 5. Sardis was a picture of walking death. They had a name that they were alive, but were dead.
 6. Philadelphia had no major spiritual problems. Were they willing to walk through His open doors?
 7. Laodicea was not lukewarmness, but materialism and self-sufficient attitude(3:17).

II. THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS (Rev. 2:1-7).

A. Scripture text:

2:1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:

2 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; **3** and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. **4** But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. **5** Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place--unless you repent. **6** Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. **7** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

B. The church in Ephesus had:

1. A great beginning; a good middle, and a bad end.

C. The Lord's remedy was to:

1. Remember
2. Restore.

III. THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH IN Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22).

A. Scripture text:

14 “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

15 ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. **16** So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. **17** Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, **18** I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. **19** Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. **20** Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. **21** He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. **22** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”

B. Three spiritual temperatures:

1. Hot (referring to the warm medicinal waters available in Laodicea).
2. Cold (water that is pure and thirst quenching).
3. Lukewarm (water that serves no purpose!). To be lukewarm, however, is to be apathetic!

C. Causes of the problem:

1. Materialism.
2. Self-sufficient attitude.

D. The Lord’s remedy:

1. Put away the materialistic attitudes of always wanting more (learn to be content).
2. Reprioritize that which we deem important in life, placing spiritual values and things first.

CONCLUSION.

- A. You see, the book of Revelation is not that difficult when you break it down into its component parts and simple messages. Rather, the book of Revelation becomes a tremendous encouragement to all who follow Christ.
- B. The book deals with the same troubles and problems that each of us deal with every day, and it gives us the tools we need to overcome--victory assured!