

C) Jesus shows Himself as the Lord of the Church by His management within

1) He is pictured as being in the middle of the lampstands (**vv. 12-13**) – Meaning He is the center and heart of the Church (**v. 20**)

2) He is also pictured as having the 7 stars (**v. 16**) **IN HIS RIGHT HAND (v. 20)**

The right hand is the position of authority and power – Since most people are right handed

These stars are the angels of the churches – Since angels are messengers, most assume that these are the Pastors!

It is so good to know that the Lord has me in His hand of power and protection

Because He is Lord of the Church – He takes care of it and watches over it

This is what you will see in these 7 letters – Jesus' correction and Commendation for His Church

Because He is Lord over His Church

These 7 Churches represent 2 Things for all people from the beginning of the Church

a) They represent the periods of history from Pentecost to end of the Church Age

Ephesus is the Apostolic Age to about 100 – Smyrna is the formation of the Church Age from 100-313 which under went persecution – Pergamum from 313-590 which was a time of doctrinal compromise – Thyatira from 590-1517 which was a time of personal moral compromise following the doctrinal compromise – Sardis is the Reformation era from 1517 to 1648 which was a time to wake up to the truth – Philadelphia from 1648 to 1914 which was the Golden Age of the Church when it worked and loved well (WWI) – Laodicea from then to the current time

Right Now the church at large would be represented by the last church – Lukewarm Laodicea

b) They are representative of different types of Congregations at any time during the Church Age

Thus you can have any of these 7 churches present at any given time

Every good trait and every lacking deficit can be found at any time in churches

So this command to write lays out for us Jesus' counsel for any church at any time

Every church receives a revelation of Jesus that addresses their particular situation

What the need from the Lord (rebuke or encouragement) is how the Lord addresses them

Every letter is addressed to the angel of the church

1) Angel is the messenger or pastor or preaching elder

2) That he might communicate it to the rest of the church

Every church member is instructed to listen up! – He (singular) who has an ear (We have 2!)

1) The danger is that we have physical ears but not spiritual ears

2) Or hear these words of Jesus and don't respond to what He says – Matt. 7:24-27

3) Because the Holy Spirit applies these words to THE CHURCHES – Matt. 13:9, 43

Every church (every person within) has an admonition to overcome – To **HIM** (Singular)

This is "The One Conquering" or "The Victor"

In the context – It is the Ones in the Church who overcome the sin presented

The Continual action points to it being a changed life, and not just a one-time repentance

Jesus' words to these 7 churches are His rule over the Church **RIGHT NOW** – Not just in the future

Nicolaitan history

The God of Love also has things that He Hates – Actions of the people

The true church will also hate what Christ hates

Nicolaus (Conqueror of people) – Acts 6:5 – Perhaps the originator of the sect

It held that the freedom of the N.T. Christian placed them above the moral Law

Neither sensuality nor idolatry could harm those who had been made free by Christ

The Jerusalem Council dealt with this (Acts 15:20,29)

Expound the reward of paradise and the tree of life