

Revelation – The Big Picture

Week three – a letter to family members

7 churches – 7 the number that represents perfection

- To the angel of the church in... (Unseen world)
- An announcement that describes Jesus
- An assessment of the health of the church – ‘I Know’
- A message – given to the church
- An appeal – keep going! Repent!
- A promise – that is set in eternity

Each church represents one aspect of the challenges facing the church until Jesus returns.



I. Ephesus: Active but distant from the Gospel – First Love

II. *Smyrna: Faithful in suffering*



III. Pergamum: Faithful but too willing to compromise



IV. Thyatira: Sexual purity



V. Sardis: Active but not connected to God’s will and purpose

VI. *Philadelphia: Faithfully proclaiming the Gospel*



VII. Laodicea: Complacent and proud

1. Jesus wants us to recognise what makes up a healthy church

- One that knows Jesus is present
- One that is alert to and doing what God wants
- One that stays connected to the Spirit, The Gospel, the Word of God and the Grace of God

2. It is Jesus who opens the door of mission for his churches

- An open door for mission whatever the circumstances
- Persecution or comfort Jesus goes before us as the faithful witness
- He calls us to be a faithful witness following up His faithful witness

3. The church must resist the temptation of pride and complacency

- Self-reliance is asking for rebuke – lampstand removed!

Jesus	Promise
Him who holds the seven stars	Eat from the Tree of life
The First and the Last	Given the crown of life
Has the sharp, double edged sword	Given some of the hidden manna
Eyes like blazing fire, feet of burnished bronze	Authority over nations
The one who holds the sevenfold spirit of God	Dressed in white
The one who is Holy and True	A pillar in the temple
The Amen, the faithful and true witness	Right to sit with Jesus

7 Marks of a healthy church:

1. Connected to the Gospel, First love
2. Faithful in the face of persecution and suffering
3. Take Holy Living seriously
4. Take sexual purity seriously
5. Take God's word seriously, listening and doing
6. Faithful in gospel proclamation
7. Take care not to become proud nor complacent

Digging Deeper

Read Revelation 2 – 3

1. If you were to describe an ideal church what words would you use?
2. What would the church be doing?

John Stott in Revelation – The triumph of Christ identifies that each letter to the churches follows a similar pattern: Announcement, Assertion, Message, Promise

Divide the seven letters between you and fill in the following chart:

	Announcement	Assertion	Message	Promise
Ephesus				
Smyrna				
Pergamum				
Thyatira				
Sardis				
Philadelphia				
Laodicea				

1. What are the sins for which Jesus most strongly demands repentance?
2. What are the elements that Jesus finds most praiseworthy?
3. How does Jesus describe himself in the first line of each letter?

What stands out to you about this list?

- A. What is Jesus saying to you about your personal repentance?
What steps do you need to take to fulfil your repentance?
- B. What impact does your life have on the whole of PBC
- C. What impact does one church have on the witness of the whole church?

