

MESSAGE 5: LESSONS FROM JOHN'S RADIANT VISION

(last half of Message 5 — for week of December 17, 2023)

I. The lesson from the apostle John—seeing what he saw, Christ and the churches.

- a. John saw the churches in cities as golden, heavenly lampstands.
- b. John saw the Son of Man—Christ—walking among the lampstands.
- c. John wrote in union with Christ and the Spirit to minister to the needs of the churches.

II. The lesson from the messengers of the churches—being identified with a church.

- The messenger was characterized by at least three things—
 - a. Messengers were identified with the church.
 - b. Messengers could hear Christ's speaking.
 - c. Messengers could convey that speaking to the saints in the church.

III. The lesson of those who overcome—

- a. The number seven in the Bible indicates God's completed works in time, as seen in the seven days of creation. The experiences and lessons of these seven churches represent a fullness of the Christian's experience both positively and negatively.
- b. We all must learn to both overcome and to help others overcome.

i. The abandoning of the first love as in Ephesus

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.' Revelation 2:4–5

ii. The danger of losing faithfulness in suffering as in Smyrna

¹⁰ 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.' Revelation 2:10

iii. The errant teaching of Balaam, the Nicolaitans, and Jezebel as in Pergamum and Thyatira

¹⁵ 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶ Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.' Revelation 2:15–16

²⁰ *'But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.'* Revelation 2:20

²⁴ *'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. ²⁵ Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.'* Revelation 2:24–25

iv. Spiritual deadness and incomplete Christian works as in Sardis

¹ *'...I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.'* Revelation 3:1–2

v. The danger of not holding fast what we have as we have a little power, keep the Lord's word, and do not deny His name as in Philadelphia

⁸ *'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.'* Revelation 3:8

¹¹ *'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.'* Revelation 3:11

vi. Lukewarmness as in Laodicea

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.'* Revelation 3:18

c. All these challenges can be overcome in the churches where the Lord's speaking is so clear. Today, the Lord is calling those who overcome and will reward them accordingly at His coming. We hope that many will receive these rewards for their own enjoyment of the riches of Christ and so that His rewards will be greater at His return. We strive today that His return will be glorious, full, and rich to all those who wait for Him and love His appearing!