

The Book of Revelation

A Spiritual Examination

I. Introduction

A. Rev. 2:1-7 (NLT) ¹"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Ephesus. This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, the one who walks among the seven gold lampstands: ²"I know all the things you do. I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance. I know you don't tolerate evil people. You have examined the claims of those who say they are apostles but are not. You have discovered they are liars. ³You have patiently suffered for me without quitting. ⁴"But I have this complaint against you. You don't love me or each other as you did at first! ⁵Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don't repent, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches. ⁶But this is in your favor: You hate the evil deeds of the Nicolaitans, just as I do. ⁷"Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God."

1. "Hold" ("Kraton") - - holding the whole thing in His Hand.

II. A Spiritual Examination

A. The Servanthood factor.

1. Rev. 2:2a (NLT) "I know all the things you do. I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance."

B. The Love factor.

1. Rev. 2:4 (NLT) "But I have this complaint against you. You don't love me or each other as you did at first!"
2. Acts 20:36-38 (NLT) ³⁶When he had finished speaking, he knelt and prayed with them. ³⁷They all cried as they embraced and kissed him good-bye. ³⁸They were sad most of all because he had said that they would never see him again. Then they escorted him down to the ship.
3. Rev. 2:5a (NLT) ⁵"Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first."

C. The Faithfulness factor.

1. Rev. 2:8-11 (NLT) ⁸"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Smyrna. This is the message from the one who is the First and the Last, who was dead but is now alive: ⁹"I know about your suffering and your poverty—but you are rich! I know the blasphemy of those opposing you. They say they are Jews, but they are not, because their synagogue belongs to Satan. ¹⁰Don't be afraid of what you are about to suffer. The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you. You will suffer for ten days. But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. Whoever is victorious will not be harmed by the second death."
2. Rev. 2:10 (NLT) "Don't be afraid of what you are about to suffer. The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you. You will suffer for ten days. But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life."

D. The Sin factor.

1. Rev. 2:12-17 (NLT) ¹²“Write this letter to the angel of the church in Pergamum. This is the message from the one with the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³“I know that you live in the city where Satan has his throne, yet you have remained loyal to me. You refused to deny me even when Antipas, my faithful witness, was martyred among you there in Satan’s city. ¹⁴“But I have a few complaints against you. You tolerate some among you whose teaching is like that of Balaam, who showed Balak how to trip up the people of Israel. He taught them to sin by eating food offered to idols and by committing sexual sin. ¹⁵In a similar way, you have some Nicolaitans among you who follow the same teaching. ¹⁶Repent of your sin, or I will come to you suddenly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth. ¹⁷“Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give some of the manna that has been hidden away in heaven. And I will give to each one a white stone, and on the stone will be engraved a new name that no one understands except the one who receives it.”
2. Acts 15:28-29 (NLT) ²⁸“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay no greater burden on you than these few requirements: ²⁹You must abstain from eating food offered to idols, from consuming blood or the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality. If you do this, you will do well. Farewell.”
3. Rev. 2:16 (NLT) “Repent of your sin, or I will come to you suddenly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”
4. Rev. 2:17c (NLT) “And I will give to each one a white stone, and on the stone will be engraved a new name that no one understands except the one who receives it.”

III. Conclusion

Upcoming Messages: 7/26-27/2008 “Exposing the Great Prostitute”; 8/2-3 “Enemies of Our Spiritual Life”; 8/9-10 “God of the Open Door”; 8/16-17 “Making Your Heart a “Throne Room””; 8/23-24 “Worthy of Worship”; 8/30-31 “The Great Tribulation”; 9/20-21 “Key Images From the Seven Trumpets”; 9/27-28 “Demonic Strategies”; 10/18-19 “The First Five Minutes of Eternity”; 10/25-26 “The Doctrine of the Judgment of God”; 11/1-2 “Enduring to the End”; 11/8-9 “Extreme Spiritual Reality”; 11/15-16 “The Kind of Person You Will Be in Heaven”; 11/29-30 “The Hope We Have”