

# The Year of the Revelation

## ~ The Mystery of the Seven Lampstands - The Churches ~

Mystery - That which was unknown until it is now being revealed. There is a mystery in these seven churches.

### Important Facts:

- (1) Seven is the number of completeness and can be interpreted “all.” So these seven churches represent all the churches throughout history.
- (2) These seven churches were chosen for a divine purpose. There were other better known churches, but the characteristics of these seven represent the stages of church history called “the ages of the church.”
- (3) Notice that each letter closes with a message from the Holy Spirit to the churches [plural], not to a particular church.

### Conclusions:

- (1) The seven churches represent a foreshadowing of the different ages the church would progress through from its inception until the rapture. (See the chart.)
- (2) In every age there are churches which exhibit similar characteristics of one or more of the churches. For example:
  - (a) There have been churches in every age that did good things but left its first love - Ephesus.
  - (b) There have been churches that have been persecuted and experienced martyrdom in every age - Smyrna.
- (3) There are individual members of the church, the body of Christ, in every age who may be described by the characteristics of one of these churches. For example:
  - (a) There are lukewarm members in every church - Laodicea.
  - (b) There are usually missionary-minded people in every church - Philadelphia.
  - (c) There are people who have become so married to the world that they are of little help to the Kingdom - Pergamum.

### General Outline of the Letters:

- (1) Jesus begins by describing Himself with some pertinent quality as it relates to the church.
- (2) He (Jesus) usually gives a word of commendation or encouragement.
- (3) He follows up with words of correction or displeasure for that church.
- (4) Jesus commands the church to repent (if necessary.)
- (5) Jesus gives them a promise if they will overcome.

**The Church at Ephesus:**

- (1) A church with seven distinct commendations.
- (2) But a church who has left its first love.
- (3) Jesus' Instructions:
  - (a) Remember - Jesus and your relationship with Him.
  - (b) Repent - Change your heart and the direction of your life.
  - (c) Return - To where you once were.
- (4) Jesus' Promise - "to eat of the Tree of Life."