



THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

FOUNDER: CHRIST
Matt. 16:18

WHERE: JERUSALEM
Isa. 2:3 Acts 2:5, 47

WHEN: AD 33
Acts 2

HEAD: CHRIST
Eph. 1:22

ORGANIZATION

Phil. 1:1

ELDERS: Tit. 1:5 1 Pet. 5:1-3 Acts 20:28 1 Tim. 3:1-7
DEACONS: Acts 6:1-6 1 Tim. 3:8-13
MEMBERS: Acts 2:41-47 Col. 1:13 1 Cor. 1:2

NAME

Eph. 3:15

CHURCH OF GOD: 1 Cor. 1:2 Acts 20:28
THE BODY OF CHRIST: Col. 1:18 Eph. 1:23
CHURCHES OF CHRIST: Matt. 16:18 Rom. 16:16
BRIDE OF CHRIST: Rom. 7:4 Rev. 21:9

NAME

Eph. 3:15

DISCIPLES: John 15:8 Acts 11:26
SAINTS: Rom. 1:7 1 Cor. 1:2 Phil 1:1
BRETHREN: Luke 8:21 Gal 6:1
CHILDREN: Gal. 3:26 1 John 2:1
CHRISTIANS: Acts 11:26 Acts 26:28 1 Pet. 4:16

CREED

JESUS CHRIST: Matt. 16:16-18 Matt. 10:32-33 Acts 8:37

RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

WORD OF GOD

ALL POWER: Matt. 28:18-20 Rom. 1:16 Heb. 4:12
CHURCH GOVERNMENT: 2 Tim. 3:16-17 2 Pet. 1:3
SEED OF KINGDOM: Matt. 13:3 Luke 8:11
SWORD OF THE SPIRIT: Eph. 6:17

WORSHIP

SING: Col. 3:16 PRAY: 1 Thess. 5:17 PREACHING: Act 20:7
COMMUNION: Acts 20:7 CONTRIBUTION: 1 Cor. 16:1-2

MISSION

SAVE SOULS: Eph. 3:10 John 6:45 1 Tim. 4:16

WARNING

Gal. 1:6-9 Matt. 15:9 Matt. 15:13 2 Cor. 11:3
Rev. 22:18-19 2 John 9

I have seen many charts like this over the years, but this one is slightly different, for it includes warnings. Warnings are a good thing and the passages listed here are worth your time and effort to read them. My only problem with that list of problems is that it is incomplete. It should be more extensive in order to include sins of the individual and of the church collectively and not doctrine only.

Individual problems can often be easily addressed by remembering the basics of following Jesus- in other words- read the sermon on the mount,

and Peter's Pentecostal sermon (Acts 2) and not knowingly practice sin. Addressing the collective sins of the church is far more difficult, as congregations tend to ignore this problem or refuse to admit that there is sin within the church.

With this in mind, I would add the warnings of Revelation, chapters two and three to the list. Consider what is said in the book of Revelation...

Revelation 1 ([World English Bible](#))

9 I John, your brother and partner with you in oppression, Kingdom, and perseverance in Christ Jesus, was on the isle that is called Patmos because of God's Word and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, like a trumpet

11 saying, **"What you see, write in a book and send to the seven assemblies: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."**

12 I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. Having turned, I saw seven golden lampstands.

13 And among the lampstands was one like a son of man, clothed with a robe reaching down to his feet, and with a golden sash around his chest.

14 His head and his hair were white as white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire.

15 His feet were like burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace. His voice was like the voice of many waters.

16 He had seven stars in his right hand. Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining at its brightest.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on me, saying, **“Don’t be afraid. I am the first and the last,**

18 and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. I have the keys of Death and of Hades.

19 Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will happen hereafter;

20 the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands. The seven stars are the angels of the seven assemblies. The seven lampstands are seven assemblies.

This is not the Revelation of John, it belongs to Jesus, who utilizes the apostle John in the revelation of his will. The message is to individual churches, but I think we should consider them as types of churches as well. For those of us who have several decades of experience with numerous churches it is obvious that these types still can occur today.

Revelation 2 ([WEB](#))

1 **“To the angel of the assembly in Ephesus write:** “He who holds the seven stars in his right hand, he who walks among the seven golden lampstands says these things:

2 “I know your works, and your toil and perseverance, and that you can’t tolerate evil men, and have tested those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and found them false.

3 You have perseverance and have endured for my name’s sake, and have not grown weary.

4 **But I have this against you, that you left your first love.**

5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I am coming to you swiftly, and will move your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

6 But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.**

To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of my God.

Remember the day you became a Christian; if someone who knew you on that day saw you today – would they say that you have changed? Can the same thing be said of an entire church? Yes, for Jesus said it in 2:4. Unfortunately, I have known churches who have this problem and the solution is given by Jesus in 2:5.... **REPENT!**

8 **“To the angel of the assembly in Smyrna write:** “The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life says these things:

9 “I know your works, oppression, and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

10 **Don’t be afraid of the things which you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested; and you will have oppression for ten days. Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life.**

11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.
He who overcomes won’t be harmed by the second death.

If you are doing the Lord’s work, you will be persecuted. The size of the church does not really matter, it is the will to submit to Jesus that is paramount. Jesus’ admonition – **BE FAITHFUL!**

12 **“To the angel of the assembly in Pergamum write:** “He who has the sharp two-edged sword says these things:

13 “I know your works and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. You hold firmly to my name, and didn’t deny my faith in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

15 So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans likewise.

16 Repent therefore, or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he who receives it.

Sexual immorality and idols; two things that should not be in the church which the Lord built. I was actually a preacher for a church who had to dis-fellowship someone who was sexually harassing both young girls and boys. As far as idols go- ask yourself this: Does America place an emphasis on money first or not? The answer is obvious. Jesus' answer- Once again- **REPENT!**

18 "To the angel of the assembly in Thyatira write: "The Son of God, who has his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished brass, says these things:

19 "I know your works, your love, faith, service, patient endurance, and that your last works are more than the first.

20 **But I have this against you, that you tolerate your woman, Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. She teaches and seduces my servants to commit sexual immorality, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.**

21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality.

22 Behold, I will throw her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great oppression, unless they repent of her works.

23 I will kill her children with Death, and all the assemblies will know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

24 **But to you I say, to the rest who are in Thyatira, as many as don't have this teaching, who don't know what some call 'the deep things of Satan,' to you I say, I am not putting any other burden on you.**

25 Nevertheless, hold that which you have firmly until I come.

26 He who overcomes, and he who keeps my works to the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.

27 He will rule them with a rod of iron, shattering them like clay pots; as I also have received of my Father:

28 and I will give him the morning star.

29 **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.**

This one is a bit more difficult. However, we do have false teachers who lead Christians astray. Remember the Crossroads movement of a few decades ago? And how about those preachers who lead whole congregations into incorporating instrumental music into their worship? Have you ever heard of a preacher who waters down the Gospel or whose message contains an inordinate amount of psychological advice instead of Book, Chapter and Verse? Sadly, these things exist in certain places. This must change!

Revelation 3 ([WEB](#))

1 “And to the angel of the assembly in Sardis write: “He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars says these things: “I know your works, that you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.

2 Wake up, and keep the things that remain, which you were about to throw away, for I have found no works of yours perfected before my God.

3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If therefore you won't watch, I will come as a thief, and you won't know what hour I will come upon you.

4 Nevertheless you have a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments. They will walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

5 He who overcomes will be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no way blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

Complacency and the pride of “we have arrived” have infected many churches. Think about it: have the number of people who regularly attend church fallen over the last decade? Have we confined the Gospel to the confines of the church building? Have you ever attended a church where someone left because they thought the church was “dead”? Jesus’ answer—Wake up, **REPENT!**

7 “To the angel of the assembly in Philadelphia write: “He who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one can shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says these things:

8 “I know your works (behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one can shut), that you have a little power, and kept my word, and didn’t deny my name.

9 Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but lie. Behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

10 Because you kept my command to endure, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, which is to come on the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

11 I am coming quickly! Hold firmly that which you have, so that no one takes your crown.

12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will go out from there no more. I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God, and my own new name.

13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies.

Today, it is somewhat unusual to meet a congregation where almost everyone is well versed in the Scriptures. Many of the younger generation do not read or study or attend services. In some places this is considered to be OK. Often, some churches will tolerate anyone who says that they “love the Lord” and yet they do not repent of sin or adhere to sound doctrine.

14 **“To the angel of the assembly in Laodicea write:** “The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Head of God’s creation, says these things:

15 **“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot.**

16 **So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth.**

17 Because you say, 'I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing;' and don't know that you are the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked;

18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich; and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see.

9 As many as I love, I reprove and chasten. Be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with me.

21 He who overcomes, I will give to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father on his throne.

22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies."

Who would want to be a member of this church? Perhaps someone for whom money or power means greatness or a church that just wants to "get along" with anyone who claims to be a christian and yet doesn't follow all that the Bible teaches one to do in order to be saved. Has doing nothing become the norm where you worship? Do you just go through the motions of work and worship?

Although today's post might seem to be negative, I assure you it is not meant to be. As human beings we all have shortcomings, we all do things that are wrong, we sin (hopefully, we do it unwittingly and not willfully). If we consider things that could go wrong with us both as individuals and collectively as a church, then we just might be better Christians and be better churches.

Yes, continue to try to be the church that Jesus built; to follow God faithfully in doctrine and worship and attitude. But be warned, Satan will do everything he can to destroy Christians and the assemblies that make up the body of Christ!

There is one phrase that is repeated again and again; I wonder if it comes to your mind as often as it does to mine?

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies."