

The First Vision – Christ and the Seven Churches

(Rev 1:9-3:22)

The Setting of the Revelation

1:9-11

The Appearance of Christ

1:12-16

The church is the light of the world (**Mat 5:14; Phi 2:15; Eph 5:8-13**). The description of Christ in verses **13-16** is like the descriptions in (**5:6; 14:14; 19:11-13**) is without a doubt symbolic rather than a literal description. The general character of the vision is one of the glory of Christ, the shining face being reminiscent of that which John had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration decades earlier (**Mat 17:12**). The golden band worn across the chest is an emblem of high rank in the ancient world, and the long, linen garment is probably priestly (**Heb 4:14**). White hair is the emblem of age and honor and possibly wisdom. The flaming eyes convey the idea of piercing visions (**Jer 17:10**), and the feet like fine brass suggest the irresistibility of His judgment (**2 Cor 5:10**). The two-edged sword from His mouth refers to His word (**Heb 4:12; Eph 6:17**), and the meaning of the seven stars is the angels of the seven churches. (**Act 17:26**) **And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.**

The Commissioning of John

1:17-19

A Mystery Explained

1:20

(Throughout Revelation significant people, things, and events are grouped in sevens)

1. Seven Churches	10. Seven Thunders
2. Seven Spirits	11. Seven Signs
3. Seven Lampstands	12. Seven Crowns
4. Seven Beatitudes	13. Seven Plagues
5. Seven Stars	14. Seven Golden Bowls
6. Seven Seals	15. Seven Hills
7. Seven Horns	16. Seven Kings
8. Seven Eyes	17. Seven Angels
9. Seven Trumpets	18. Seven Heads

The Interpretation of the Letters

2-3

(**Eph 5:25**) **Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. (Col 1:18) And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.**

1. Ephesus describe the church during the apostolic (twelve apostles who followed Christ) age.
2. *Smyrna, the church enduring persecution which suffered under a series of Roman emperors.
3. Pergamos is a church compromised with carnality and false doctrine.
4. Thyatira is the papal (relating to a pope) church until the Reformation.
5. Sardis church during the Reformation itself (from 1500 to 1700).
6. *Philadelphia is the church which experienced a resurgence of missionary activity (1700 to present).
7. Laodicean church was lukewarm and is likened to the liberal churches of modern times.

(* Smyrna and Philadelphia did not receive rebuke)