



# LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

August 20<sup>th</sup> 2017 — Part 16

## “Responding to the Son of Man”



### Revelation & Visual Imagery

“Revelation [has a] capacity to create a symbolic world which its readers can enter and thereby have their perception of the world in which they live transformed....Revelation provides a set of Christian prophetic counter-images which impress upon its readers a different vision of the world...The visual power of the book effects a kind of purging of the Christian imagination, refurbishing it with alternative visions of how the world is and will be.” — Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*

### The Vision of the Son of Man—Rev. 1:12-16

1. Jesus is portrayed as the \_\_\_\_\_ who tends the lampstands in the temple of God.

Rev. 1:12-13a—<sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands,  
<sup>13</sup> and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man,

2. Jesus is portrayed as the sovereign \_\_\_\_\_ who has the same authority as God Almighty.

Rev. 1:13b-16a—clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.<sup>14</sup> The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire,<sup>15</sup> his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters.<sup>16</sup> In his right hand he held seven stars,

3. Jesus is portrayed as the \_\_\_\_\_ who proclaims the Word of God to the churches.

Rev. 1:16b—from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

### Jesus' Prophetic Warnings to the Churches

- The churches face external threats from the \_\_\_\_\_.

1. The “earth-dwellers” will always first seek to entice believers into idolatry and compromise.

Rev. 2:14—But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.

⇒ Should believers fall into these temptations, they lose their ability to stand as effective \_\_\_\_\_ to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

2. If believers refuse to compromise themselves, they will at times face persecution from the world.

Rev. 2:3— I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.

Rev. 2:9— “I know...the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Rev. 2:13b—you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

⇒ The danger of persecution is that it can lead to fear and \_\_\_\_\_

- The churches face internal threats because of their own \_\_\_\_\_ tendencies.

1. Complacency

Rev. 2:4—*But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.*

2. Idolatry

⇒ \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. 2:20—*But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.*

⇒ \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. 3:17a—*For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing*

3. Works-based righteousness

Rev. 3:1b—*“I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.*

4. Self-deception

Rev. 3:17b— *not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*

## Jesus' Invitation to the Churches

- Jesus invites the churches to \_\_\_\_\_ Him and be truly satisfied.

⇒ This is why each of the letters begins with Jesus presenting Himself to the church in His resurrected glory!

1. To enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ with Him.

Rev. 3:20—*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

2. To live \_\_\_\_\_ as His witnesses.

Rev. 2:10b—*Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

Rev. 2:25—*Only hold fast what you have until I come.*

3. To rejoice in their \_\_\_\_\_ in Him for the future.

⇒ Recall how each of the final promises given to the churches anticipate the events of Revelation 20-22 (2:7,11,17,26-29; 3:5,12,21).

## Our Response

1. Lam. 3:40—*Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the LORD.*
2. Rev. 3:19—*Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.*
3. 2 Tim. 3:14—*By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.*
4. Heb. 10:24-25—*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*
5. Eph. 6:18—*praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,*