

DEAR CHURCH,
THE 7 LETTERS OF REVELATION

STUDY GUIDE

KANKAKEE FIRST CHURCH

BY JANET L. PETERSON

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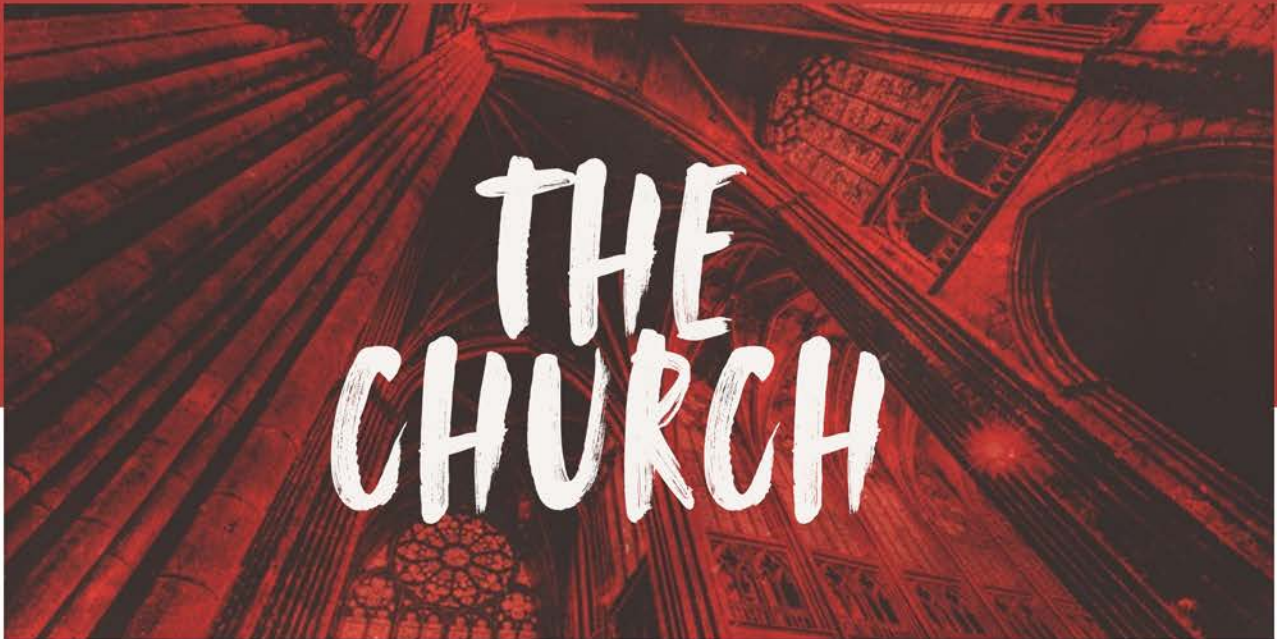
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CHURCH AT LAODICEA

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AUGUST 31, 2025

Pastor Jenna Luoto



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

The Church is God's chosen plan to bring healing, restoration, and the presence of His kingdom into the world. It is not a building, but the people of God, called together to be the Body of Christ and the hope of the world.

Welcome & Prayer (5 min)

Warm Up (5–10 min)

- Use Question 1: When you hear the word church, what comes to mind first?
- Encourage light sharing to break the ice.

Personal Experience (10–15 min) Questions 2–3

- **Leader Tip:** Allow both positive and painful experiences to be shared. If someone brings up hurt, don't rush to "fix" it. Listen, validate, and remind them that hurt is real because love and belonging matter deeply.

LEADER GUIDE, CONT.

Scripture & Theological Reflection (15 min) Questions 4–5

- Read 1 Peter 2:9 aloud as a group.
- **Leader Tip:** Draw connections back to Jenna's sermon: Israel → Jesus → the Church. Emphasize that God always works through His people.

Application: The Church as the Body of Christ (15–20 min) Questions 6–9.

- **Leader Tip:** Encourage participants to think locally (our city, our church) and personally (my role, my neighbors).
- **If the group gets “stuck” in theory, ask:** What's one practical way we could live this out this week?
- **Personal Challenge (10–15 min) Questions 10–12.**
 - Encourage people to reflect on their own gifts and callings.
 - **Leader Tip:** Some people may not feel confident about their gifts. Affirm that every person has a place in the Body, and invite others to speak encouragement into one another's lives.
- **Wrap Up (5 min)**
 - **Summarize:** The Church is God's plan for restoring the world—and there is no plan B.
 - **Challenge:** Ask each person to name one small way they can be the Body of Christ this week.
 - **Close in prayer, thanking God for His presence with His Church and asking for courage to live out His mission.**

LEADER NOTES:

Tone: Keep the discussion hopeful, not heavy. The sermon carried weight, but also deep love for the Church. Reflect that love.

Participation: Draw quieter voices in by gently asking, “What do you think, [name]?” but don't force.

Handling Hurt: If deep pain or trauma surfaces, listen well and affirm. You don't need to resolve it in group. Follow up privately if needed and connect them to pastoral care.

Flexibility: You don't need to cover every question. Aim for depth over breadth.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Key Application: *The Church is God's chosen plan to bring healing, restoration, and the presence of His kingdom into the world. It is not a building, but the people of God, called together to be the Body of Christ and the hope of the world.*

Opening Reflection:

1. When you hear the word church, what comes to your mind first—building, people, worship, community, or something else? Why do you think that is?

Personal Experience:

2. Share about a time when the church (local or global) made a significant impact in your life.

3. Have you ever experienced disappointment or hurt from the church? How has that shaped the way you view the church today?

The Church as God's Plan:

4. In the sermon, we traced how God has always chosen to work through a group of people (Israel → Jesus → the Church). Why do you think God chooses to use people instead of just doing everything Himself?

5. Read 1 Peter 2:9. What does it mean for us to be a "royal priesthood" and a "holy nation" in our world today?

THE CHURCH, CONT.

The Church as the Body of Christ:

6. In what ways do you see the church being the "hands and feet of Jesus" in our community?

7. Which of the specific ways Jesus ministered (preaching good news, forgiving, healing, welcoming the lonely, serving, etc.) do you feel most drawn to? Which ones challenge you the most?

The Church's Calling Today:

8. Imagine if the church fully lived out its calling as the Body of Christ. What would change in our city? In our neighborhoods? In our families?

9. On the flip side, what do you think happens when the church neglects its calling? (Think both practically and spiritually.)

Personal Challenge:

10. What unique gift, passion, or resource has God given you that could build up the church?

11. Where is Jesus (the Head of the Church) calling you to step more fully into your role as part of His body?

Looking Ahead:

12. As we prepare to go into the 7 letters to the churches in Revelation, what area of your spiritual life are you most open to Jesus correcting, strengthening, or igniting?

LOSING LOVE

Ephesus was strong in doctrine and discernment but had lost its first love. Jesus calls them to remember, repent, and return.



The issue in the Ephesians' Church concerns the loss of Christ's love within this community of faith. It appears that Christ's love had been replaced with "right religion." To protect against compromise or conforming to the thinking, values, beliefs, and practices of the culture, a church can allow God's truth to trump God's love to protect God's truth. Jesus calls them to remember, repent, and return to being a church of "Christ-like love."

SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

Pastor Dave Anderson



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

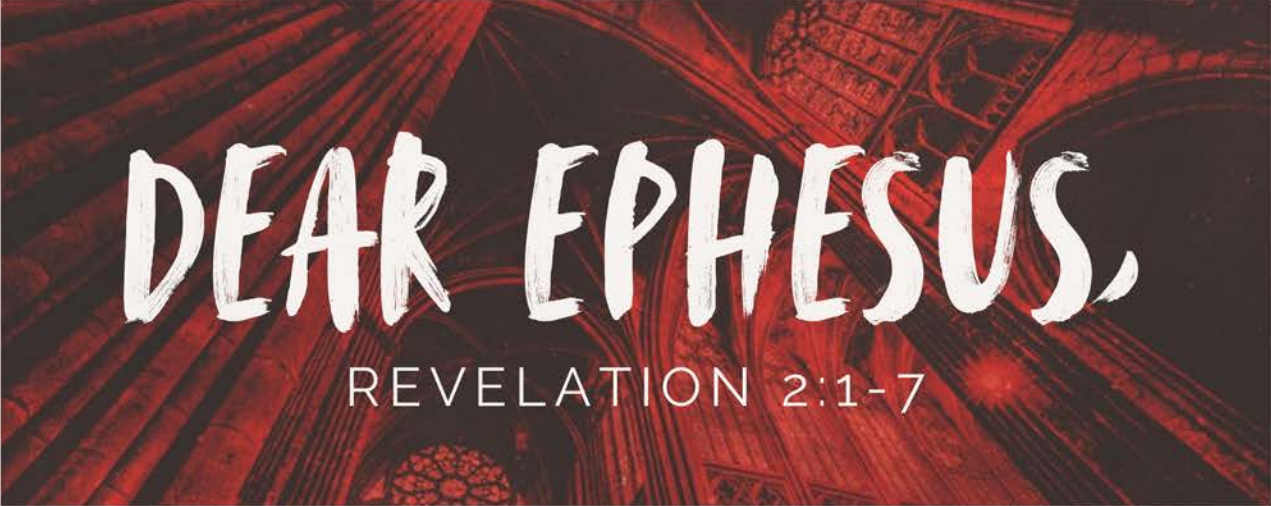
The Ephesian church was doctrinally strong and theologically precise, but Jesus rebuked them because they abandoned their "first love." Truth without love leads to a dead church, but God's truth wrapped in Christ's love brings life and freedom.

Goals for Discussion

- Help participants recognize the danger of holding to truth without practicing love.
- Reflect on how Christ's love transformed their own lives.
- Identify practical ways to hold firm in God's truth while embodying Christ's love toward others.
- Encourage repentance where individuals (or the church) have withheld love in the name of "being right."

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 2:1-7 (read aloud as a group).



DEAR EPHESUS,

REVELATION 2:1-7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Truth vs. Love

- Jesus commends the Ephesians for their perseverance and doctrinal accuracy but rebukes them for forsaking their first love. Discuss the tension between being rooted in truth and expressing Christ's love.
- What are signs that someone (or a church) has lost their "first love"?
- Have you ever seen a church (or person) who was "right" but not loving? How did that impact you/others?

Personal Reflection

- Was it truth, love, or both that drew you to Christ?
- Have you experienced God's love? What difference did it make beyond just knowing the truth?
- How did God's love first change you?

Signs of Losing Love

- Explore ways churches (or individuals) can give the "religious finger" while defending truth. Share stories of when you've seen this happen.
- What are some warning signs that we (as individuals or as a church) may be losing our "first love"?

LOSING LOVE, CONT.

Repent & Return

- Jesus calls the Ephesians to "remember, repent, and do the things you did at first." Talk about what repentance looks like in this context.
- What might that look like in your life right now?

Living It Out

- What would it look like for K1 to be known as a people of both truth and love? Think practically - and how can you be a part of making that happen?
- What are you doing out of love for Jesus rather than obligation?
- How can you personally pursue someone in your life with Christ's love this week?
- Who is one person God might be calling you to actively pursue with love this week? What step can you take toward them?

FAITHFUL THROUGH THE FIRE

Smyrna was persecuted and poor, yet spiritually rich. Jesus calls them to remain faithful, even to death, with the promise of the crown of life.



Smyrna (which consisted of about 200,000 people) was deeply aligned with Rome. It was the first city in Asia to build a temple in honor of the goddess of Rome and it was awarded permission to build a temple to the Roman Emperor Tiberius. Also, at both ends of the city were Roman temples – one built for the local female god called Cybele and the other built to Zeus.

This strong allegiance to Rome combined with a large Jewish population that was actively hostile to Christians made it extremely difficult to live as a Christian in Smyrna. The historical evidence from other documents shows that their belongings had been looted, plundered and ransacked. Some of them had been oppressed, beaten, jailed, and even killed. Suffering for Christians in Smyrna was a given.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

Pastor Dave Anderson



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

Suffering in this life is inevitable, but it does not have to define or defeat us. Jesus calls us to be faithful in suffering, promising that those who remain steadfast will not be touched by the "second death" but will receive eternal life.

Key Themes

1. **False assumptions about suffering** – Suffering is not a sign of God's disapproval, nor is comfort always a sign of His approval.
2. **Faithfulness in suffering** – Jesus calls us to remain faithful "even to the point of death."
3. **Two lives and two deaths** – Physical vs. spiritual. Physical suffering/death is temporary; spiritual life/death is eternal.
4. **Suffering well** – Choosing to glorify God in our suffering by persevering, allowing God to shape our character, and giving hope to others.
5. **The role of the church** – We don't suffer alone; God gives us the body of Christ to walk with us.

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 2:8-11 (read aloud as a group).

SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

Pastor Dave Anderson



LEADER GUIDE, CONT.

Leader Notes:

- **Tone:** This is a tender and heavy subject. Allow time for honesty, lament, and prayer.
- **Preparation:** Re-read Revelation 2:8–11, Romans 5:1–5, and Luke 22:42. Be ready to share one personal example of how God met you (or someone you know) in suffering.
- **Group Dynamics:** Some participants may currently be in deep suffering. Be sensitive, avoid simplistic answers, and give space for silence if needed.
- **Action Step:** Encourage participants to identify one way they can “suffer well” this week—whether that’s inviting someone into their pain, shifting perspective toward eternity, or bearing faithful witness in the midst of hardship.



DEAR SMYRNA,

REVELATION 2:8-11

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker

When you were a kid, what was the worst “suffering” you thought you had endured? (e.g., chores, sibling drama, sports practice) How does that compare to how you understand suffering now?

Scripture Engagement

1. Read Revelation 2:8–11. What stands out to you about Jesus' message to the church in Smyrna?
2. Why do you think Jesus acknowledges their suffering but doesn't promise to remove it?

Reflection on Suffering

1. In what ways does our culture (or even church culture) misunderstand suffering and success in the Christian life?
2. Have you ever felt like suffering was a sign that God was displeased with you? How did you wrestle with that?
3. How does the distinction between two lives and two deaths (physical vs. spiritual) change the way we view suffering?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

Living It Out

1. Romans 5:3–5 says suffering produces perseverance, character, and hope. Can you think of a time when suffering grew one of these in you?
2. "Suffering well" means glorifying God and remaining faithful in hard times. What might that look like in your current circumstances—or in the life of someone close to you?
3. How can we, as a group, walk with one another so no one suffers alone?

Prayer Focus

1. Pray for strength to remain faithful in suffering.
2. Pray for hope that looks beyond present pain to eternal life.
3. Pray for anyone in the group currently going through a season of suffering.

THE COMPROMISED CHURCH

Pergamum remained loyal to Christ's name but tolerated false teaching and moral compromise.



This letter to Pergamum calls the church to sober self-examination about cultural compromise. Jesus challenges us to consider how Christians can slowly adopt the values and practices of the surrounding culture (the "kingdom of the evil one") while still claiming Jesus, and cease to look distinctively different. Pastor Jenna urges us to choose holiness over cultural conformity so that we can experience the promises Jesus offers in this letter - hidden manna (nourishment of the soul), and a new, intimate name from Christ.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

Pastor Jenna Luoto



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

The church in Pergamum was faithful in name yet compromised with culture, and Jesus called them to repent. We too face the danger of blending in with the world instead of living distinctively different for Christ. Jesus promise is sure—those who overcome will share intimacy, nourishment, and a new identity in Him. Those who do not will be cut off.

Key Themes

1. **Faithfulness under pressure** – Jesus commends the church for holding onto His name even in a hostile environment.
2. **The danger of compromise** – Small, subtle shifts toward cultural norms can lead to spiritual drift.
3. **The reality of spiritual deception** – Satan often works through slow erosion rather than obvious attacks.
4. **Holiness versus cultural conformity** – God's people are called to live distinctly different from the world.
5. **The call to repentance** – Jesus urges the church to turn back and realign with truth.
6. **The promise of reward** – Those who overcome receive intimacy, provision, and a new identity in Christ.

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 2:12-17 (read aloud as a group).

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

Pastor Jenna Luoto



LEADER GUIDE, CONT.

Leader Tips:

- Model humility. Avoid sounding judgmental—this topic triggers defensiveness. Frame everything as “we” not “you.”
- Keep the conversation gospel-centered: call to holiness flows from love and grace, not shame.
- If someone becomes defensive, redirect to curiosity: “Help me understand what led you to that conclusion.”
- Keep conversation productive and curious - away from critical spirits, defensiveness, or collective negativity.
- Encourage action: the point is not only conviction but repentance and change. Help people pick one measurable, time-bound step.



DEAR PERGAMUM,

REVELATION 2:12-17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

2 Kingdoms

1. Revelation shows us two kingdoms in conflict: God's kingdom and the kingdom of the evil one. In what everyday situations do you feel the pull to live by the values of the wrong kingdom?

Compromise

2. Jesus commended the church in Pergamum for holding fast to His name but rebuked them for compromise. Why do you think compromise is often harder to notice than outright rejection of faith?

3. The sermon named "slow deception" as Satan's most dangerous strategy. Where have you seen this slow fade in your own life, in the Church, or in our culture? (See list for consideration)

Be Different

4. Jesus calls us to live distinctly different from the world. What's one area of your life where you feel your difference is noticeable? What's one area where you've blended in too much?

5. Who in your life needs to see something distinctively different in you?



DEAR PERGAMUM,

REVELATION 2:12-17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

Repentance

6. Repentance is not just confession but turning back to holiness. What is one specific step you sense God calling you to take this week to resist compromise and walk in obedience?

7. Jesus warns of a sifting and calls to repentance. What does repentance look like practically for you this week? Name one specific, measurable change you will do (or stop doing).

Promises

8. Revelation 2 promises hidden manna and a white stone with a new name to those who overcome. How does this picture of intimacy and reward motivate you to pursue holiness?

Live it Out

9. What obstacles (fear, shame, loss of relationships, economic risk) make it hard to choose holiness? How will you rely on the Spirit through these obstacles?

10. How can this small group support one another in pursuing holiness (accountability rhythms, prayer, practical help)? Be specific.

TOLERATING JEZEBEL

Thyatira was growing in love and service but tolerated a false prophetess leading believers into sin.



Thyatira, a smaller but economically active city in Asia Minor (modern Akhisar, Turkey), was known for its many trade guilds—dyers, potters, bronze-smiths, and others—which were deeply connected to pagan worship and social festivals that often involved idolatry and immorality. For Christians, guild membership was essential for economic survival but also carried constant pressure to compromise their faith. The church in Thyatira was commended by Jesus for its love, faith, service, perseverance, and growing ministry, yet it was also rebuked for tolerating a false teacher, symbolically called "Jezebel," who encouraged believers to blend in by participating in ungodly practices. Christ warns that such compromise corrupts the church's witness, calls them to repent and "hold fast" to His Word, and promises His presence and authority to those who remain faithful.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

Pastor Dave Anderson



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

Jezebel-like leaders teach that it is acceptable to “play the game” with culture. Jesus warns that compromise corrodes faith and weakens the church's witness, calling us instead to “hold on” to His truth and remain distinct even when it's costly. His promise is that those who endure will share His authority and presence, receiving Christ Himself as their guiding light and eternal hope.

Key Themes

1. **Love, Service, and Compromise** – Love and service are not indicators that compromise may not be at play.
2. **The power of leadership** – Voices of leadership hold power to influence - what voices are you listening to?
3. **All Disciples are leaders** – recognizing our positions of influence.
4. **Hold onto God's truth** – Jesus isn't asking us to do more, but to simply hold onto to what He has given us.
5. **The promise of reward** – Jesus' presence in every situation.

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 2:18-29 (read aloud as a group).



DEAR THYATIRA,

REVELATION 2:18-29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Tension

- What parallels do you see between the trade guilds/unions of Thyatira and the pressures we face in today's culture?
- In what areas of life are you tempted to "play the game" in order to fit in, avoid criticism, or protect your reputation?

2. The Praise

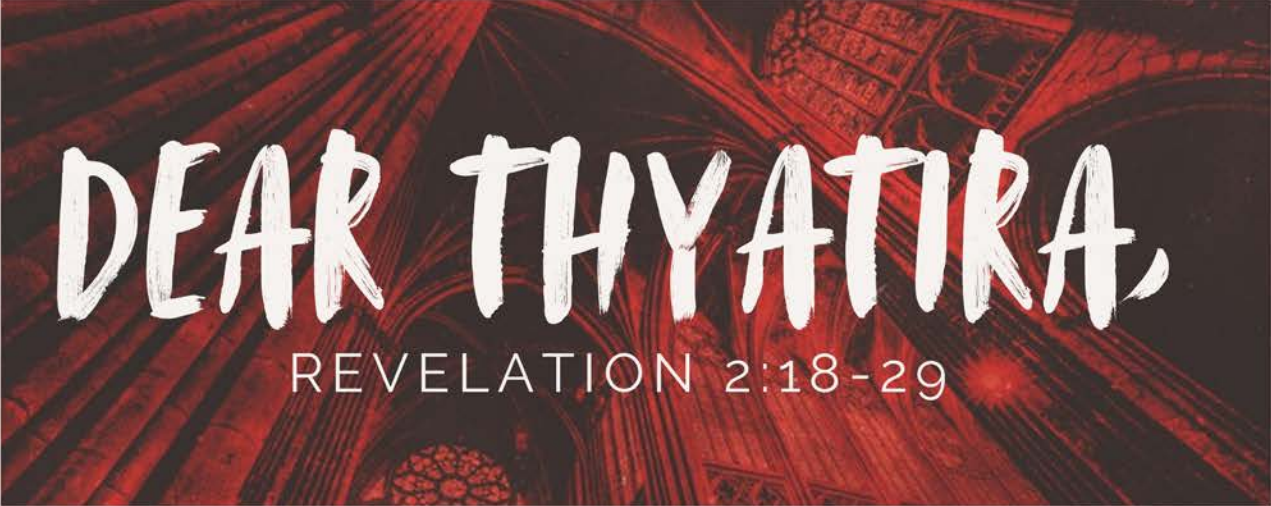
- Jesus praises the church in Thyatira for their love, faith, service, and perseverance (v. 19).
 - Where do you see these qualities in our church or in your life right now?
 - Why is it possible to be strong in love and service while still vulnerable to compromise?

3. The Correction

- How do you think the Jezebel-like leader convinced people that compromise was okay?
- What are some modern-day "Jezebel voices" you see influencing Christians? (podcasters, influencers, peers, cultural norms, etc.)
- Which of those voices are most tempting for you personally, and why?

4. The Warning

- Why do you think Jesus' words are so strong against compromise (vv. 21-23)?
- How does tolerating compromise in our own lives or in the church weaken our witness to the world?



DEAR THYATIRA,

REVELATION 2:18-29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

5. The Call to Hold On

- Jesus doesn't ask for something new — only to "hold on" (vv. 24–25).
 - What does it look like for you to "hold on" to God's truth in today's culture?
 - What spiritual disciplines or practices help you stay anchored?

6. Live it Out

- The sermon asked challenged us to reconnect with the Spirit within us:
 - Am I tolerating Jezebel voices that scratch my itching ears?
 - In what ways can our small group (or church as a whole) avoid the trap of performance-based faith and instead pursue Spirit-filled life?
-

Prayer Focus

- Pray for wisdom and discernment in who to listen to.
- Pray for strength to "hold on" to God's truth amidst cultural pressure.
- Pray for empowerment to lead well to those who are in our care.

FALSE REPUTATION

Sardis looked alive but was spiritually dead. Jesus calls them to wake up and strengthen what remains.



The city of Sardis was built around B.C. 500 and was once the capital city of Persia. It was positioned near mountains that housed many gold mines, making the city the monetary capital of the region. It's literally where currency as we know it was developed. And with all this gold flowing through, it made Sardis a very affluent city. They were known for easy money, luxury, and of course lavish immorality. Sardis was also well known for the massive graveyard in the city, and therefore engaged heavily in the worship of Cybele, a goddess said to be able to restore the dead to life. Geographically, the city was built on a narrow plateau 1500 feet above sea level, with cliffs on three sides and high walls extended up around the city, leaving only one major access point to protect. Armies never pulled off a frontal attack in the history of the city. However, twice in their history Sardis had been attacked, not by mighty armies, but of this luxurious city who had let their guards down living comfortable and overly confident. One attack came from intentional onlookers who simply spotted an unprotected gap, the other by a thief in the night who saw the easy opening, climbed the walls, and invaded.

OCTOBER 5, 2025

Pastor Jenna Luoto



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

True life in Christ is not about "doing church" but about being empowered and inspired by the work of the Spirit within us.

Key Themes

1. **Reputation vs. Reality** – A church (or believer) can appear alive outwardly while being spiritually dead inwardly. Jesus cares about what's real, not what looks impressive.
2. **The Danger of "Doing Church"** – Religious activity and ministry programs mean nothing if they are not fueled by the life of the Holy Spirit.
3. **Call to Wake Up and Return** – Jesus invites His people to repent, remember their first love, and rekindle the Spirit's fire within them.
4. **Hope of Renewal and Promise of Life** – Even the spiritually dead can be revived through Christ; those who overcome will walk with Him in purity and be secure in the Book of Life.

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 3:1-6 (read aloud as a group).

OCTOBER 5, 2025

Pastor Jenna Luoto



LEADER GUIDE, CONT.

Leader Tips:

- Help participants be honest about their own tendencies to go through the motions—share from your own life when you have fallen into this wrestle.
- Encourage testimony: have people share stories of when God reignited His Spirit in them.
- Draw out application: What practices in their lives and in your church bring true spiritual life vs. just activity?



DEAR SARDIS,

REVELATION 3:1-6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Ideal Church

When you think about what makes a “good church,” what factors stand out to you—and how do those compare with what Jesus values in Revelation 3?

“Doing Church”

Why do you think churches (and individuals) can so easily slip into looking alive but actually being spiritually dead?

Have you ever found yourself “doing church” but feeling spiritually empty? What helped you recognize it, and what brought you back to life?

What are some modern-day signs that a church might be more focused on reputation than on real spiritual life?

In what ways do you see the difference between activity for God and intimacy with God?

Go Back

Jesus tells Sardis to “go back to what you heard and believed at first.” What does that first-love moment with Jesus look like for you?

How can remembering back to when the Spirit was alive in you help revive your faith when it feels dry?



DEAR SARDIS,

REVELATION 3:1-6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

Promises

Jesus says to Sardis, "Wake up!" — what might "waking up" look like in your personal walk with God?

Jesus promises to those who keep the Spirit alive in their life a white robe (righteous and victorious), their name written in the book of life (secure eternity, and to walk with him (intimacy). Talk about what those promises mean to you.

Live it Out

What do you need to implement or remove in your life to give space for the Spirit to fan the flame inside of you?

How could our group encourage one another to keep the Spirit's flame alive, rather than just going through the motions?

Prayer Focus

- Go around and have each person pray for the person on their right. Listen to the Spirit as you offer a prayer over them.
- **Don't rush prayer tonight! Make sure to give it honorable space.**

THE FAITHFUL FEW

Philadelphia had little strength but kept Christ's word and did not deny His name. Jesus promises them protection and open doors.



The ancient city of Philadelphia, located in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), was a prosperous and strategically important city situated along major trade routes, often called the “gateway to the East.” Founded with the purpose of spreading Greek language and culture to surrounding regions, it was known for its missionary zeal in promoting Hellenism. The city was also famous for its fertile vineyards and the worship of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, which fueled its many pagan festivals and temples. Built on a fault line, Philadelphia experienced frequent and devastating earthquakes, leading many residents to live in constant instability and fear. Despite these challenges and strong cultural pressures to conform, the Christian church there remained faithful to Christ—a steadfast witness in a city defined by idolatry, prosperity, and impermanence.

OCTOBER 12, 2025

Pastor Maddi Spacht



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

Faithfulness is possible because Jesus holds ultimate authority and opens doors no one can close. His people are called to endure, stay true to His Word, and walk through the opportunities He provides for gospel witness.

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 3:1-6 (read aloud as a group).

Leader Objectives

- Help your group see hope in Jesus' authority rather than despair over culture.
- Encourage participants to identify personal "open doors" where God might be calling them to act faithfully.
- Lead a conversation that builds confidence in Christ's sovereignty and our partnership with Him in mission.

Key Themes

1. **Reputation vs. Reality** – A church (or believer) can appear alive outwardly while being spiritually dead inwardly. Jesus cares about what's real, not what looks impressive.
2. **The Danger of "Doing Church"** – Religious activity and ministry programs mean nothing if they are not fueled by the life of the Holy Spirit.

OCTOBER 12, 2025

Pastor Maddi Spacht



LEADER GUIDE, CONT.

Key Themes, Cont.

3. **Call to Wake Up and Return** – Jesus invites His people to repent, remember their first love, and rekindle the Spirit's fire within them.

4. **Hope of Renewal and Promise of Life** – Even the spiritually dead can be revived through Christ; those who overcome will walk with Him in purity and be secure in the Book of Life.

Leader Tips:

- Begin by acknowledging that many in your group may feel weary or cynical about the church or culture. Create space for honesty before pivoting to the hope Jesus offers.
- Encourage real-life application—what does “walking through an open door” look like practically?
- End with prayer, inviting participants to ask the Spirit to reveal where He's already opening doors in their lives.



DEAR PHILIDELPHIA,

REVELATION 3:7-13

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Series Impact

Would you consider yourself an optimist, a pessimist, or a realist? In light of that, as you've gone through the Dear Church series, how has it affected your view of the Church today?

Little Strength

When Jesus says, "I know that you have little strength," how does that reshape our understanding of what faithful endurance looks like in seasons of weakness or discouragement? Where do you feel like you have "little strength" right now?

How can we remain faithful when it feels like culture is pulling us in the opposite direction?

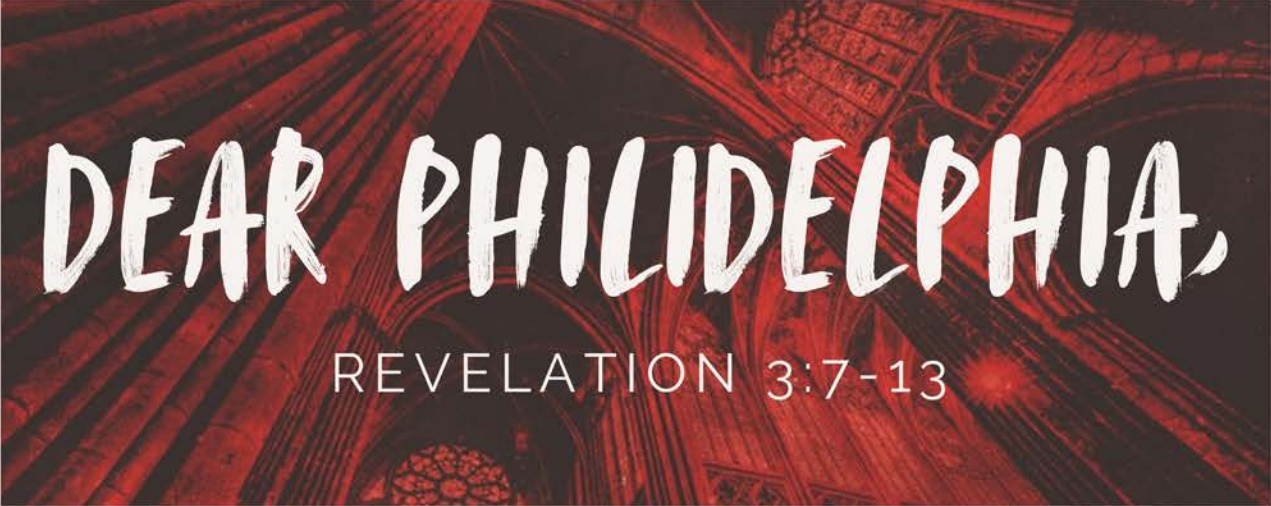
Open Doors No Man Can Shut

Jesus said that he will open doors no man can shut. These open doors represent opportunities for evangelism. How does this imagery change how you view your role in evangelism?

What encouragement do you find in knowing that Jesus holds the keys—that what He opens no one can shut?

Hopeful Promise

Jesus offered some very specific words of hope to Philadelphia in response to the trials that they are facing. Using God's Word, what promises do you think the American Church need to be reminded of so that we may be filled with the hope we need to keep being faithful?



DEAR PHILIDELPHIA,

REVELATION 3:7-13

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

Hopeful Promise, cont.

Why do you think that Jesus did not correct or rebuke anything in the Philadelphia church? What message do you think Jesus wanted us to hear in that? (Pastor Maddi suggested that it tells us that it is possible to be faithful. Other thoughts?)

Live it Out

In what areas of your life or ministry do you sense Jesus inviting you to “hold on” and keep walking through the doors He’s opened, even when it feels difficult?

Prayer Focus

- Have each person share where they see an open door for evangelism in their life. Then ask what they need prayer about in order to faithfully walk through it.
- Spend time praying for one another to walk through the doors, but also for the Holy Spirit to go before them in whatever area they are being sent.

LUKEWARM NO MORE

Laodicea was lukewarm—neither hot nor cold. Jesus rebukes their self-sufficiency and invites them into restored fellowship.



Laodicea, located in the Lycus Valley of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), was one of the wealthiest and most influential cities in the Roman Empire during the first century. It sat at a key crossroads of trade and was known for three main industries: banking and finance, a thriving textile and clothing trade that produced luxurious black wool garments, and a renowned medical school famous for developing an eye salve used throughout the empire. Despite its prosperity, the city had a major weakness—it lacked its own water supply and had to pipe water in from nearby cities, which often arrived lukewarm and mineral-laden. This physical reality created the perfect metaphor for Jesus' critique of the Laodicean church in Revelation 3: though materially rich and self-sufficient, they had become spiritually tepid and ineffective.

OCTOBER 19, 2025

Pastor Dave Anderson



LEADER GUIDE

Big Idea

Jesus calls out Laodicea First church's lukewarm faith not to shame them, but to awaken them to intimacy with Him. True spiritual vitality flows from dependence on Christ and intimate relationship, not church faith or front-porch faith.

Scripture Reading

- Revelation 3:14-22 (read aloud as a group).

Leader Objectives

- Help participants recognize areas of self-sufficiency that have dulled their dependence on Jesus, and invite them to pursue a more intimate, transformative faith that impacts their everyday life.
- Set a reflective tone. This topic touches pride, comfort, and complacency. Encourage honest, grace-filled conversation.
- Share personally. Model vulnerability by describing a time when your own faith became lukewarm and how Jesus drew you back (or if you are there now in any way).
- Guide toward application. End the discussion by helping people identify one concrete step toward greater intimacy with Jesus this week.



DEAR LAODICEA,

REVELATION 3:14-22

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

False Security

Jesus said the Laodiceans thought they were rich but were actually “poor, blind, and naked.” In what ways has wealth, security, and comfort made you “poor, blind, and naked” spiritually?

Lukewarm vs. Hot or Cold

How does understanding the Laodicea's water problem (hot, cold, lukewarm) change the way you interpret Jesus' words to the church in Rev. 3:14? Why does he want us to be hot or cold?

Why do you think Jesus uses such strong language—“I am about to spit you out of my mouth”? What does that tell us about how seriously He takes spiritual complacency?

Church Faith vs. Everyday Faith

Do you ever find yourself living differently at church than in your everyday life? In what specific ways does this play out?

If the cure for lukewarm faith is intimacy with Jesus, what specific rhythms or practices help you cultivate closeness with Him in your everyday life?

Front Porch Faith vs. Intimate Faith

In what ways have you seen “front porch faith” (keeping Jesus at a safe distance) show up in your own life or in the church? What keeps you from letting Jesus come into every part of your life?



DEAR LAODICEA,

REVELATION 3:14-22

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

Hopeful Promise, cont.

Jesus says “buy from me gold refined in the fire [instead of chasing material wealth that dies with you] so you can become [spiritually] rich, and white clothes to wear [so you can cover your shameful nakedness], and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see [spiritually].” What did Pastor Dave say was the currency that we use to “buy” these things from Jesus?

Live it Out

Have you ever experienced intimate faith with Jesus in your life? What did that look like? Feel like? Produce in you?

What would it look like for your faith to become “hot or cold”—healing and refreshing—in your everyday life?

What's one practical way you can “open the door” to Jesus this week and invite Him deeper into your relationships, work, or habits?

Prayer Focus

- Create space for confession and repentance for any way that people may have been living lukewarm faith, church faith, or front porch faith.
- For those whose hearts desire, invite Jesus to come in and to be present in your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your heart toward Jesus so that your intimacy will grow.