

A DIAGNOSTIC METHOD TO DETERMINE HOW TO HELP YOUR CHURCH - Cedric Vine

The Seven Churches	Searching Questions
<p>In the letters to the seven churches, found in Revelation 2:1-3:22, Jesus provided us with a representative sample of first-century churches whose situations reflect the circumstances future churches would face. To each church Christ pointed out their status, the actions they should take, and His role in enabling positive changes to occur.</p> <p>Our responsibility is to compare our church with the seven churches, identify those factors we have in common and the actions we should take. For example, if we are experiencing the problem of the Ephesian church, then it is our responsibility to implement the changes Christ required of Ephesus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Searching Questions to identify your churches current situation • Compare your situation with the seven churches in the table below • Prayerfully consider the actions Christ requires you to take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How active is your church? How often does the church as a whole undertake some form of outreach? • How loving is your church? When was the last time you shared a meal with another member? • What opposition do we face? How well would you be able to witness to someone of a different faith background? • How is our church changing? Is this change being driven by internal or external pressures? • What teachings are being taught? How do the current teachings of the church compare with those of a generation ago?

Church's name	Problem the church faces	Preach Jesus as ...	Action the church needs to undertake	Reward for undertaking action	Punishment for inaction
Ephesus	Very active but have lost their first love	The One in control of the churches	Repent and turn back to Jesus	Access to the tree of life in paradise	The church's lampstand will be removed
Smyrna	Facing persecution	The ruler of history	Be faithful unto death	Protection promised from the final judgement	
Pergamum	The 'world' entering the church	The judge of truth	Repent and turn back to Jesus	Spiritual nourishment and declaration of innocence	Jesus will come and judge personally
Thyatira	False teachings tolerated in the church	The judge of truth	Hold fast to truth	Participation in the future judgement	
Sardis	Appearance of being alive and energetic	The source of true life	Return to doctrinal basics	Eternal life assured	Jesus will come unexpectedly
Philadelphia	Small church in a hostile city	The guardian of salvation	Hold fast to what you have	Being part of a greater, heavenly, city	
Laodicea	Failure to witness due to self-satisfaction	The One who decides who is part of spiritual Israel	Repent and recognise your true state	The presence of Jesus	Rejection