

Seven CHURCHES

Letters to the Early Church for the Ears of Today

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

SEPT 6, 2026

Jesus' Message to the Church

The book of Revelation is often approached as a book about future events, but the opening chapters focus on something much more immediate: Jesus' message to His church. In Revelation 2 and 3, Jesus addresses seven historical churches in Asia Minor, each facing unique challenges, temptations, and opportunities. While these churches existed in the first century, they also represent struggles and strengths that believers still experience today. Before Jesus speaks to the seven churches, Revelation 1 introduces us to the risen and glorified Christ, reminding us who is speaking and why His words matter. This week, we'll explore how Jesus prepares His people to live faithfully, courageously, and purposefully in the world.

- What images, allegories, or metaphors have helped you grow in your faith journey? (I.e., the Lion of Judah, CS Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, etc.)

READ Revelation 1:1-20

- In Revelation 1:5-6, Jesus is described as the One who loves us, frees us from our sins, and makes us a kingdom of priests. What stands out most to you about this description of our identity and calling?
- John's vision of Jesus includes symbols such as blazing eyes, glowing bronze feet, and a sharp sword from His mouth. What do these images teach us about who Jesus is and how He relates to His church?
- When John falls at Jesus' feet in fear, Jesus responds, "Do not be afraid" (Revelation 1:17). Why do you think this reassurance is so important for believers, both then and now?
- The sermon emphasized that every believer is part of God's mission as a "kingdom of priests." What are some practical ways you can help point people toward God in your everyday relationships, work, school, or community?



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- The message challenged us to consider whether our lives reflect the values of God's kingdom or the values of the surrounding culture. Where do you feel tension between following Jesus and fitting into the world around you?
- Knowing that Jesus is present with His church and is not distant from our struggles, what fear, challenge, or burden do you need to trust Him with this week?
- How can I live as I belong to the kingdom of Jesus?

Prayer

Spend time thanking Jesus for His love, His victory over sin and death, and His presence with His people. Pray for the courage to live faithfully in His kingdom, remain focused on His mission, and resist the distractions and values that pull us away from Him. Ask God to help your group discern what changes He may be calling each of you to make as you follow Him more closely.

Practice

This week, take five minutes each day to pray through Revelation 1:5–6. Ask yourself:

“How can I live like I belong to the kingdom of Jesus?”

Identify one specific action you can take to represent Christ in your home, workplace, school, or community, and intentionally act on it before your next group meeting.

