

John Stott, Interpreting Christ, pp. 178-180

Feature Emphasized as the Ideal Church in each letter in Revelation

1. Ephesus – Love!
2. Smyrna – Suffering!
3. Pergamum – Truth!
4. Thyatira – Holiness!
5. Sardis – Sincerity!
6. Philadelphia – Mission!
7. Laodicea – Wholeheartedness!

DIVISION	REF.	Ephesus – Character: Love
I COMMISSION	2:1	To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:
II CHARACTER	2:1	The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:
III COMMENDATION	2:2-3	'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them <i>to be false</i> ; ³ and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.
IV CONDEMNATION	2:4	But I have <i>this</i> against you, that you have left your first love.
V CORRECTION	2:5-6	Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. ⁶ Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
VI CALL	2:7	He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
VII CHALLENGE	2:7	To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

DIVISION	REF.	Smyrna – Character: Suffering
I COMMISSION	2:8	And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write:
II CHARACTER	2:8	The first and the last, who ¹ was dead, and has come to life, says this:
III COMMENDATION	2:9-10	'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but

		are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days.
IV CONDEMNATION		
V CORRECTION	2:10	Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.
VI CALL	2:7	He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
VII CHALLENGE	2:7	He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.”

DIVISION	REF.	Pergamum – Character: Truth
I COMMISSION	2:12	And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write:
II CHARACTER	2:12	The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:
III COMMENDATION	2:13	‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.
IV CONDEMNATION	2:14-15	But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit <i>acts of immorality</i> . ¹⁵ So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
V CORRECTION	2:16	Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.
VI CALL	2:17	He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
VII CHALLENGE	2:17	To him who overcomes, to him I will give <i>some</i> of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.’ death.”

DIVISION	REF.	Thyatira– Character: Holiness
I COMMISSION	2:18	And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:
II CHARACTER	2:18	The Son of God, who has ^[E] eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

III COMMENDATION	2:19	I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.
IV CONDEMNATION	2:20 - 23	But I have <i>this</i> against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit <i>acts of</i> immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. ²² Behold, I will throw her ^[k] on a bed <i>of sickness</i> , and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of ^[l] her deeds. ²³ And I will kill her children with ^[m] pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the ^[n] minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds
V CORRECTION	2:24,25	But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. ²⁵ Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.
VI CHALLENGE	2:26-28	He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; ²⁷ AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received <i>authority</i> from My Father; ²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.
VII CALL	2: 29	He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

DIVISION	REF.	Sardis– Character: Sincerity
I COMMISSION	3:1	To the angel of the church in Sardis write:
II CHARACTER	3:1	The Son of God, who has ^[o] eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:
III COMMENDATION		
IV CONDEMNATION	3:2	Be constantly alert, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God
V CORRECTION	3:3,4	So remember what you have received and heard; and keep <i>it</i> , and repent. Then if you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. ⁴ But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.
VI CHALLENGE	3:5	The one who overcomes will be clothed the same way,

		in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
VII CALL	3:6	The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

DIVISION	REF.	Philadelphia– Character: Mission
I COMMISSION	3:7	To the angel of the church in Sardis write:
II CHARACTER	3:7	The Son of God, who has ^[g] eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:
III COMMENDATION	3:8-10	'I know your ¹ deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have followed My word, and have not denied My name. ⁹ Behold, I will make <i>those</i> of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and <i>make them</i> know that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept My word of perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of the testing, that <i>hour</i> which is about to come upon the whole ^l world, to test those who live on the earth.
IV CONDEMNATION		
V CORRECTION	3:11	I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.
VI CHALLENGE	3:12	The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
VII CALL	3:13	The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches'

DIVISION	REF.	Laodicea– Character: Wholeheartedness
I COMMISSION	3:14	To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:
II CHARACTER	3:14	The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the ¹ Origin of the creation of God, says this
III COMMENDATION		
IV CONDEMNATION	3:15-18	'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of My

		mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have no need of anything," and you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to apply to your eyes so that you may see.
V CORRECTION	3:19,20	Those whom I love, I rebuke and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 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 will dine with him, and he with Me.
VI CHALLENGE	3:21	The one who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.
VII CALL	3:22	The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"