

CONCLUSION:

The Book of Revelation began with this powerful image of Jesus Christ, the awesome, conquering, matchless One — but, at the end of most of these letters Jesus is seen to be marginalised by most of the churches. There is a recurring theme in that — Jesus keeps presenting himself as the “**Ultimate Conqueror**” — no matter what happens in the Church, the world or your life — in the end ‘**Jesus wins**’ — the only losers are those who refuse to respond favourably to Jesus’ invitation.

Note:

All seven letters begins with ‘**I know**’ — Jesus has intimate knowledge of our lives and our circumstances — also, in all seven letters Jesus gave an invitation to listen (hear) and to respond favourably to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

T.F. Glasson points out that both Isaiah and Ezekiel began their ministries with an overwhelming vision of the glorified Lord, similar to John’s vision, in the sense of seeing God in a way like they had never seen him before. Both Isaiah and Ezekiel (and even Peter) had similar responses as John to their vision of the Lord:

- Isaiah 6:5 “I am a man of unclean lips...”
- Ezekiel 1:28 “I fell upon my face...”
- Luke 5:8 (Peter) “Depart from me for I am a sinful man...”

Some take the seven letters to the seven churches as a preview of church history in its downward spiral over the centuries. Others see these letters as features of various kinds of images of Christian churches that have existed from John’s day to the present time. In either case, these were real historical churches in first century Asia Minor.

The general pattern of most of these letters is:

- Commendation (praise)
- Complaint (grievance)
- Correction (a second chance)
- Conditional reward (to those who overcome)

Throughout this time of study, the seven lampstands (**light in the darkness**) stood out for me and brings to mind the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:14-16:

Matthew 5:14-16

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

LORD, JESUS CHRIST, the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God’s creation, help me by your Spirit to keep my garment unsoiled in the world, that I might receive God’s eternal reward — YOURSELF, LORD JESUS CHRIST. **Amen**