

December 27 Answers

- 1) Jesus appeared to John and gave him the **revelation** (*apokalypsis*) which the Father had given Him. John wrote what he saw and sent it to the **seven** churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Jesus' choice of these congregations was no accident. There were other churches, such as Corinth, Philippi and Berea, but Jesus chose these because what He said to them needed to be heard by **everyone**. The message to Ephesus teaches us that it's possible to **abandon** the love we had when we first believed (Rev 2:4). When Jesus said, "Repent, and do the **works** you did at first" (Rev 2:5), He showed us that **obedience** is the heart and soul of love. The message to Smyrna teaches us that the believer who is poor in this world's wealth is **rich** in the glorious treasures of the next. There is a crown of life waiting for the one who will trust Jesus and be **faithful** unto death. The message to Pergamum teaches us that each church will be held responsible for allowing false **teaching** in their midst. Believers have a duty to call false teachers to repentance, and if they refuse, to **expel** them from the congregation. The message to Thyatira teaches us that each church will be held responsible for tolerating moral **compromise**. Those who promote immorality and sexual indulgence must be **confronted**, and if they will not repent, they must be **cut** off from the church. The message to Sardis teaches us that it's possible to have a godly reputation and yet be spiritually **dead** (Rev 3:1). The Spirit said, "Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (Jam 2:17), and Jesus commands us to show our faith by our **works**. The message to Philadelphia teaches us that it's possible to live in such a way that Jesus has **nothing** against us. Our responsibility is to believe God's Word and patiently **endure** the persecution of the world. If we do, Jesus will **keep** us from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole earth (Rev 3:10). The message to Laodicea teaches us about the self-deception of "**lukewarm**" works (Rev 3:15–18). Such works have the appearance of faith but lack the **obedience** of love.