Table Host Discussion Guide

Week 2: Letters to the Seven Churches

This week's teaching shifts from John's vision of the risen Christ to Christ's own words to seven real churches in Asia Minor. Revelation was written to first-century believers facing real challenges—not as a coded timeline of church history, but as messages to actual congregations that still speak powerfully to us today. As Jesus addresses each church, a consistent pattern emerges. He knows His churches completely. He commends faithfulness, confronts sin, calls His people to repentance, warns of the consequences of refusing Him, and promises eternal reward to those who overcome. Although each church faces different challenges, every message points to the same truth: Jesus loves His church enough to both encourage and correct it. One church had truth but had lost its love. Another was suffering persecution yet remained spiritually rich. Others tolerated false teaching, relied on reputation instead of genuine life, remained faithful despite weakness, or became spiritually complacent through prosperity. While every church was different, Jesus ended every letter with the same invitation: **"Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."** The question for us is not simply, "Which church sounds most like Ekklesia?" but "Am I willing to hear what Jesus is saying to me?"

Discussion Questions

1. What do Jesus' messages to the seven churches teach us about how He views the local church?

Application: How does it change your perspective to realize that Jesus knows our church just as intimately as He knew Ephesus, Smyrna, or Philadelphia?

2. Which of the seven churches stood out to you the most, and why?

Application: Which church do you most identify with personally? Which warning or encouragement felt most relevant to your own walk with Christ?

3. One repeated theme throughout these chapters is repentance. Why do you think Jesus continually calls His churches to repent?

Application: When you hear the word *repentance*, do you primarily think of guilt or grace? Is there an area where Jesus may be inviting you to return to Him rather than merely changing your behavior?

4. What do these churches teach us about the difference between outward appearance and what Jesus actually sees?

Application: Is there any area where your outward Christian life appears healthier than your inward relationship with Christ? How can we help one another pursue genuine faith rather than merely maintaining appearances?

5. Every letter ends with a promise "to the one who is victorious" or who overcomes. According to these chapters, what does overcoming look like?

Application: What gives you confidence to persevere when following Jesus becomes difficult? How does knowing the eternal promises Christ offers strengthen you to remain faithful today?