

GUESS WHO CAME TO CHURCH TODAY!

Revelation 1:9-20

Int. My seminary classmates often asked, “Who is in chapel today?” They meant, “Who is singing and who is preaching.” Often the answer determined whether the student attends. When a student asked one professor this question, he answered wisely. “I do not know who is singing or preaching but I know the Lord will be there. Will you join me in meeting with him?” John said the Risen Lord stands “in the midst of the seven lampstands,” i.e. the seven churches in Asia Minor. When his people gather the Lord comes among them! So guess who came to church today. The Lord Jesus! When he comes to church it is to

COMMEND

For two churches the Lord saw nothing to praise. But *Ephesus* worked to the point of exhaustion yet endured in their labor and stood determinedly for the truth. *Smyrna* suffered poverty because of Christ and unbelievable slander from a local Jewish synagogue. *Pergamum* stood for the Lord in a hard place where Satan had his headquarters and one of their number had already been put to death. *Thyatira* was on the go and on the grow. *Philadelphia* set a remarkable record of patient endurance.

Look through the Lord’s eyes. What might he see here to commend?

COMPLAIN

For two churches the Lord had only praise. But in *Ephesus* love was cold. In *Pergamum* some had gone wrong and most did not care. In *Thyatira* they put up with a “Jezebel of a woman” who led believers astray morally. *Sardis* was spiritually dead. *Laodicea* was lukewarm, useless for a hot bath or for a cold drink.

Look through the Lord’s eyes. What might he find here to complain about?

COMMAND

To all seven churches the Lord gave orders. “*Ephesus*, return to your first love. *Smyrna*, stop fearing the persecution about to break on you. *Pergamum*, fight false teachers and false doctrine. *Thyatira*, keep the faith and stay pure. *Sardis*, become doers of the word and not hearers only. *Philadelphia*, go through the door of opportunity before you and hold firmly what you have. *Laodicea*, repent and pay attention to spiritual matters.”

What orders did the Lord Jesus give today to his people in this church?

CHEER

The Lord Jesus came to comfort and cheer these churches facing problems, persecution and even death. Look what he promised. To *Ephesus* the tree of life in the paradise of God. To *Smyrna* the crown which is life. To *Pergamum* a white stone, i.e. the ticket of admission to the banquet table of the Lord. To *Thyatira*, royal authority and the ay Star. To *Sardis*, to walk with him in white and have their names stand forever in the book of life. To *Philadelphia*, protection from the coming hour of trial and a place as a permanent fixture in the Lord’s own house. To *Laodicea*, a share of his rule in glory.

Who here did he comfort and/or cheer today?

Con. The Lord Jesus came to church today! Did it make any difference in your worship experience? To know the living Lord is really here should radically change the way a person sings, prays, gives, listens and responds!