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A MESSAGE TO THE
SEVEN CHURCHES
OF REVELATION

ALL OF LIFE IS REPENTANCE
REVELATION 2:18-29

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

-Revelation 1: 12-16

When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent', he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."

- Martin Luther, the first of the 95 Theses

“I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. Only hold fast what you have until I come. The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

-Revelation 2:18-29

THRACE

The Seven Churches of Revelation

ASIA

AEGEAN SEA

Pergamum

Thyatira

Smyrna

Sardis

Philadelphia

Ephesus

Laodicea

Athens

PATMOS

GALATIA

RHODES

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

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In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri began to reign over Israel, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years.

And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshiped him. He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

-1 Kings 16:29-33

At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

– 1 Kings 18: 36-37

Evil is evil, not because its evil. Evil is evil because it is anti-God.

Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

- 2 Corinthians 7:8-10

“When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.” Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah, “ Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son.”

- 1 Kings 21: 27-29

Refusal to search out and face up to our sins, or to confess them or admit them before God. Disregard of our sins or pretense that we are better than we are. Self-justification or discounting our sins as insignificant, natural or inevitable. Self-righteous comparison of ourselves with others. - St. Augustine, Book of Prayer

Jesus' message to the churches: You have compromised your faith in search of wealth, and have adopted a spirit of unrepentance.