

Revelation Spirituality Test

Compare the Seven Churches with You and Your Church

Use the following chart to determine your spiritual health and that of your church.

Wouldn't it be great if Jesus would agree to write a letter to your church? But if your church can't get Him to write a letter, what if He would write to some other church, and then let you read the letter? That would be valuable. Even better, what if He would write letters to a few different churches? For, if He did that, then we could read through them, and find out His thoughts regarding His followers generally. And then we could piece together His attitude toward us. For if we could carefully go through such letters, and if we are brutally honest, we could identify the statements that apply to us also, and those that don't. Well, we're in great shape! Because Jesus did write a handful of letters, seven of them, to seven churches. And Revelation chapters two and three record them for us.

At Denver Bible Church we have used those seven letters to create the following chart of Positives and Negatives. Any compliment Jesus gives to a church is a positive for them, and a criticism is a negative. When Jesus gives a commendation to a church, you can consider whether such a compliment applies to you also. If so, then put an asterisk in your Positives column. In this way, you can attempt to evaluate the true spirituality of both yourself and your church. If Jesus gives a compliment that you do not think you or your church would earn, then mark that in your Negatives columns, but if you judge that you (or your church) would receive the same praise, then mark your Positives column. And when He criticizes a church for something that your church does not do, then mark its Positives column, and if you (or your church) commit the same sin, then mark that item as a negative. Also, where we deem matters more important, we have subjectively weighted those issues more heavily than the others.

If you have any questions regarding the context of the commendation or criticism, see Revelation chapters two and three. The church grading could be done as a group activity. We strongly suggest that each Christian grade himself as a private exercise. God, please search us and help us to understand our own hearts and thoughts.

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
Ephesus 2:2 I know your labor [Your good works are evident.]	★					
2:2 your patience [You exhibit patience.]	★					
2:2 you cannot bear those who are evil [You despise wicked people and do not tolerate evil men.]	★					
2:2 you have <i>tested</i> those who say they are apostles [You do not passively accept those in leadership but actively determine whether they are true and faithful ministers.]	★					
2:2 and have <i>found them liars</i> [When you find leaders within or without your own church who are frauds, you identify and expose them as such.]	★					

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
2:3 you persevere [You persist in sharing the Gospel with others and in encouraging them, and you do not quit when difficulties arise.]	★					
2:3 and have patience [You endure not just by waiting through long periods, but in spite of obstacles, lying leaders, etc.]	★					
2:3 and labor for My name's sake	★					
2:3 and have not become weary	★					
2:4 Nevertheless I have this against you, you have left your first love [Since this criticism directly affects one's relationship with Christ, we have weighted it fourfold. If it fully applies to you, put four asterisks in your Negatives column, if it partly applies to you, put fewer asterisks in your Negatives. If it does not apply, put up to four asterisks in your Positives column.]		****				
2:6 But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, see 2:14-15 [You hate the teachings of those who accept violations of God's law, and especially those who tolerate sexual immorality, which includes pornography, fornication, homosexuality, and adultery.]	★					
Sub-totals: Ephesus	10	4				
Smyrna 2:9 I know your tribulation [Ignoring difficulties that arise from accidents, from your own sin, etc., you suffer for Christ's sake because of your efforts to share the Gospel.]	★					
2:9 And poverty (but you are rich) [Your attitudes, your relationship with God and with others, and your personal ministries are not hindered by economics.]	★					

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
2:9 And I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan (unlike the Smyrna church) [You are not like the false worshippers of Christ, for you have taken the board out of your own eye so that you can see clearly the sin in others, and you believe, love, and behave in a godly way, unlike them Mat. 7:5. Such a compliment, of course, should not produce self-righteousness, but humility, knowing that only by God's grace does His goodness flow through you.]	★					
2:10 Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested [You fight on the frontlines of the battle between good and evil in some way that gets you noticed by the enemy, and the wicked target you for harm because of the damage you do to their efforts.]	★					
Sub-totals: Smyrna	4	0				
Pergamos 2:13 I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And [yet] you hold fast to My name [You do not accept the commonplace wickedness that is all around you but rather you hold up the name of Jesus Christ against the evil of your neighbors.]	★					
2:13 you did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas, My faithful martyr, was killed among you [When persecution arises, even fiercely so, you do not shy away from your defense of the Gospel. If you fail to stand firm in persecution, rate this a negative. If you have never experienced persecution, leave it blank, unless it is your lifestyle that insulates you from ever being persecuted, then rate this a negative.]	★					

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
2:14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols [You publicly entertain evil thoughts rather than dismissing them out of hand; you accept the works of wicked men as though they were right; your refusal to oppose wickedness causes others to stumble.]		*				
2:14 you put a stumbling block before others to commit sexual immorality [You do not strenuously confront others who commit sexual immorality, but rather, in word or even with deeds you lower moral barriers so that they can more easily commit sexual sin.]		*				
2:15 you have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate [You do not bother to confront friends, church members, family members, and neighbors who hold beliefs that are contrary to the Bible. You might do this because: you willingly, flat out, agree with their evil views. Or you do not confront others because you are so weak in your relationship with God that you cannot discern evil, and you are so ignorant of the Bible that you cannot recognize the wickedness that God has already condemned. Or, you refuse to confront others because you are so needy that you desperately want to be liked by everyone, and, unlike Jesus, <i>you</i> put the goal of "being liked" above your concern for the welfare of others, and you make them pay, perhaps even an eternal price, to gratify your flesh.]		*				
Sub-totals: Pergamos	2	3				

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
Thyatira 2:19 I know your love [You exhibit the love of Christ in that your “love” is “without hypocrisy” because you “abhor what is evil” and “cling to what is good” (Rom. 12:9), for you love God and good things while abhorring evil. Mark up to two asterisks for this.]	**					
2:19 and your service [You serve God and you serve men in the name of the Lord.]	*					
2:19 and your faith [You have strong faith in God.]	*					
2:19 and your patience	*					
2:19 and as for your works, the last are more than the first [Your service of God and men has increased, not decreased.]	*					
2:20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel <i>[to call] herself a prophetess</i> [You do not confront those leaders who are in rebellion against God. You do not test leaders for adherence to basic biblical doctrine.]		*				
2:20 you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, <i>to teach</i> [Either knowingly or in ignorance, you sit under teaching which is obviously opposed to the Bible's teaching.]		*				
2:20 and to seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality [The teaching in your sphere of influence seduces men into thinking that sexual immorality is acceptable, not an abomination to God, and that it should be tolerated among Christians.]		*				
2:20 and eat things sacrificed to idols [When Bible teaching opposes common social practices, you tend to ignore God's law and go with society.]		*				

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
2:24 Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan... I will put on you no other burden [Even though your church has many people in rebellion against God, there are some there who obey Him, and you are among them.]	*					
Sub-totals: Thyatira	7	4				
Sardis 3:1 I know that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead [Outwardly, you look religious and spiritual, but inwardly, you are in rebellion against God. (Emergency Note: if this describes you, get Bob Enyart's tape album titled <i>The Tree</i> about the Christian life. If you cannot afford it, write to us and we will get it to you at whatever price you can afford. It's all about the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The tapes are extremely encouraging and fascinating!) If you are in any doubt as to whether this applies to you, ask God to search your heart and to lead you in the everlasting way. Mark up to four asterisks for this.]		****				
3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die [If your community of Christians are mostly dead, but there are wisps of life in you and a few others, then mark this as a weak positive. If you and your whole church is dead, then mark this in your Negatives column.]	*					
3:2 for I have not found your works perfect before God [No human being is perfect except for the Son of God who became flesh, Jesus Christ. However, <i>God finds fault with even your good works</i> because what you call good He calls sin, or acceptance of sin, or hypocrisy, etc.]		*				

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
3:4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments... they are worthy [Again, there are a few, just a few in your church who truly honor God with their lives. This is better than if there were none.]	*					
Sub-totals: Sardis	2	5				
Philadelphia 3:8 I know you have a little strength [You are not the strongest of Christians, but at least you are a true Christian and care about My ways more than your own ways.]	*					
3:8 you have kept My word [Even when society, your friends, and family encourage you to do otherwise, you honor Me with your behavior and thoughts.]	*					
3:8 and you have not denied My name [When pressured to go along with the crowd in a godless activity or discussion, you refuse and apply influence for the others to turn toward Christ.]	*					
3:9 Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan... come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you [You accept that God will exalt you because of your humility before Him, while He will debase others in front of you, namely, those who reject him. Consider warning those who are fraudulently spiritual, urging them to turn toward God or prepare for this devastating and certain outcome.]	*					
3:10 you have kept My command to persevere [In the face of adversity and opposition you do not give up loving and honoring God and you continue to encourage others to submit to Him.]	*					
Sub-totals: Philadelphia	5	0				

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
Laodiceans 3:15 I know you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot [Your life exhibits neither great wickedness nor strong Christian values. You are more lukewarm, middle-of-the-road, than either a sinner or a saint.		*				
3:16 because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth [Living as a middle-of-the-road Christian, you seduce others into a false sense of security, thinking that they must be right with God because either you approve of them in their sin, or because in comparing their life to yours, even pagans look pretty good.]		*				
3:17 you say, 'I am rich... and have need of nothing' [Even though God is disgusted with your life, you've misjudged yourself as not in need of his mercy and grace. If this is you, mark the negative column and brace yourself for the future. Or, if this is you, repent, and then mark the plus column.]		*				
3:17 you do not know that you are wretched [Not only are you wretched, but you do not even realize your condition. If you are wretched, but realize it, then leave this line blank. If your spiritual condition is not wretched, then mark the Plus column.]		*				
3:17 you do not know that you are miserable [Evaluate this and the next three criticisms just like the previous one.]		*				
3:17 you do not know that you are poor		*				
3:17 you do not know that you are blind		*				
3:17 and you do not know that you are naked		*				

Christ's Compliments and Criticisms from Revelation	Positives	Negatives	Your Church Positives	Your Church Negatives	You +	You -
3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten [Even though things in your life and at your church are pitiful, God does love you as one of his children. Give yourself a plus for that. Or, you also get a plus if these Laodicean criticisms do not apply to you. If the above criticisms do apply to you, without any mitigating factors, and you are not a born-again Christian, mark this a negative.]	*					
3:20 I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him [Jesus Christ is not even in your church (or in your life), but is locked out, and He is knocking at the door, attempting to get in.]		*				
Sub-totals: Laodiceans	1	9				
Sub-totals: Ephesus	10	4				
Sub-totals: Smyrna	4	0				
Sub-totals: Pergamos	2	3				
Sub-totals: Thyatira	7	4				
Sub-totals: Sardis	2	5				
Sub-totals: Philadelphia	5	0				
Sub-totals: Laodiceans	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>				
Grand Total	31	25				

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
try me, and know my thoughts;
and see if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the everlasting way.
-Psalm 139:23-24