

Volume 12 (SUM15) Adult-Kid Connections

Unit 36, Session 3: God's Warning to Seven Churches

Revelation 1–3

Christ Connection:

Preschool: Jesus loves the church. He sent a message to seven churches to warn them. Jesus said that people should stop sinning and turn to Him. Jesus rescues sinners and changes them to be like Him.

Kids: Jesus loves the church. His message to seven local churches called them to turn away from their sin and remain faithful to Him. Jesus saves sinners and changes them to be like Him.

Adults: The saying goes, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” This is true of the church as well. The problems the church faces today aren’t too unlike the problems that churches faced in the first century: cliques, division, celebrity preachers, lawsuits, sexual sin, marriage, and finances. And that’s just to name several of the issues facing the Corinthian church. The churches mentioned in Revelation 2:1–3:22 have their share of problems too: a lack of love, poverty, false teaching, sexual sin, idolatry, spiritual lethargy, and persecution.

Why are such discouraging trends in behavior recorded in Scripture?

Because the entire church throughout history can benefit from knowing about these problems and how to deal with them. We are sinners—like first-century Christians—who have been saved by grace—like first-century Christians—and struggle to live according to the gospel—like first-century Christians. We possess a common identity in Christ and share common experiences as sinners. Hence, we should take the warnings written to the churches addressed in the New Testament as warnings to us as well. We are capable of the same mistakes, misjudgments, and sins.

Like the early church, we need reminders about who we are in Christ and instruction about how to live in light of His death and resurrection. We should be extremely grateful God has inspired and preserved for us the letters of the New Testament. God’s preserving of the letters serves as a means by which He preserves us in faith and godliness. Thank God for His provision of the letters to the churches that make up a large part of our New Testament. We need them!

Materials: paper, pencil, crayons

Give your kids time to draw a picture of your church building or a minister in your church.

Summarize the Bible story about the letters to the seven churches.

Ask: “What happened to John while he was on the island of Patmos?”

Remark how John was probably sent to this island because he told others about Jesus. While on the island, God gave him a vision. Jesus told John to write down what he saw in the vision and then send the message to the seven churches. John’s vision can be found in the Book of Revelation.

Ask: “What were some of the warnings Jesus gave to the seven churches?”

Remind your kids that most of the churches did some good things but then had areas they needed to work on. Invite your children to put some of Jesus' warnings to the churches in their own words.

Mention that many of the problems addressed in this letter are still problems in the church today. Hang up your pictures of your church or a church leader as a reminder to pray for them this week.

Pray, asking God to protect your church and leaders from being led astray from the truth. Ask God to reveal to your pastor any problems your church may have and give him the courage to address them.