

December 9

Scriptures: Read Revelation 2

Key Verse: “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works...”
(Revelation 2:5)

Overview

I like the chart that the New Open Bible includes on p. 1518. For those who don't have it, I have reproduced this (with some modifications) below and have charted Jesus' accusations and messages to the seven churches of Asia:

The New Open Bible, in the prologue to its map, says, “Notice that John addressed the churches in exactly the order shown on this map — from Ephesus north to Pergamos, then south all the way to Laodicea. Some scholars believe Revelation was a circular letter that would have been read first by the Ephesian church, then passed on to the next church on the route.” That was a trade route, connecting these vital cities in Asia.

In this chapter, the churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and Thyatira are addressed. Perhaps the church to which most of us can relate is Ephesus — a church suffering from the loss of “first love”. Jesus commends them for their commitment, discernment, and toughness (vv.2,3), and then charts the way back to “first love”: “Remember ...Repent... do.” Remember how it used to be, turn back to God as number one priority, and love your neighbour for Christ's sake: just like you used to do!

Prayer

Lord, enable us NOT to take You, Your mercy, and Your grace for granted but to remember, repent, and do, in returning to our first love — You!