

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION?

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This is another lesson that will involve every faithful brothers and sisters in the local congregation where he or she belongs. The purpose of these teachings is to enable us know where we are doing well and where we are lacking in roles and responsibilities as duties also in the local congregation. The reasons for this also is to improve our spiritual standard towards God who is Spiritual. ²³ *But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.* ²⁴ *God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.* – **John 4:23-24.**

After this understanding, let us all have the definitions of the key words, Role and local congregation. Role according to Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary of international student's edition, is defines as the function or position that one has or is expected to have in an organisation, in society or in a relationship: the role of the teacher in the classroom, an actor's part in a play, film, movie etc. Local congregation scripturally – **Philippians 1:1-2** – *Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops^[a] and deacons: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Before we go further, I want us to first of all understand what God had revealed to us according to **Revelation 1:10-11** – ¹⁰ *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and^[a] "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia:^[b] to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."* In this study, we are going to learn from these various local congregations, their role individually and collectively as a church independently and autonomously as we are also today.

1. **The church at Ephesus Was Said To Be Loveless – Revelation 2:1-7** – *"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, "These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ² "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³ and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. ⁴ Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do*

the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶ But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

2. **The Persecuted Church of Smyrna was Revealed – Revelation 2:8-11** – ⁸ *“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, “These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. On this wise, a local congregation with roles, responsibilities faithfully, spiritually and dutifully will also be welcomed into eternity because of Christ’s promise – **John 14:1-3** – “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father’s house are many mansions;^[a] if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.^[b] ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. This is an encouragement for all of us no matter the insults, frustrations, humiliation, intimidations, embarrassments, oppressions, tribal sentiments, injustice, we should all look forward and not backward again in Jesus name – but there is still one condition for individuals vs 11 – ¹¹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”*
3. **There was the compromising church as that of Pergamos – Revelation 2:12-17** – ¹² *“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, “These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 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, and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.^[a] ¹⁶ Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. ¹⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”* There is also hope for those who will not compromise.
4. **The Corrupt church was discovered to be that of the Thyatira – Revelation 2:18-29** – ¹⁸ *“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, “These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ¹⁹ “I know your works, love, service, faith,^[a] and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. ²⁰ Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow^[b] that woman^[c] Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce^[d] My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.^[e] ²² Indeed I will cast her into*

a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their^[a] deeds. ²³ I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. ²⁴ “Now to you I say, and^[a] to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will^[b] put on you no other burden. ²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come. ²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— ²⁷ ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’^[c]—as I also have received from My Father; ²⁸ and I will give him the morning star. ²⁹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

5. **The Dead Church as Revealed to be that of Sardis – Revelation 3:1-6** – “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ² Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.^[a] ³ Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. ⁴ You^[b] have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. ⁶ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”
6. **There Is Another Church Revealed – The Faithful Church – Revelation 3:7-13** – ⁷ “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”:^[a] ⁸ “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it;^[b] for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ⁹ Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ¹⁰ Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ Behold,^[c] I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. ¹² He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. ¹³ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”
7. **Finally, The Lukewarm Church revealed also – Revelation 3:14-22** – ¹⁴ “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans^[a] write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,^[b] I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments,

that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. ²² "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

My dear brethren, do you know it was only two churches out of seven that worked to the expectations through Christ Jesus in God? The rest of the five were given as loveless church, the compromising church, the corrupt church, the dead church and the lukewarm church. Take note also of the two others – the persecuted church and the faithful church.

Let us all be aware that it was in this world, these two churches play their role as a local congregation collectively. The questions available; can't we do the same thing like the Smyrna and Philadelphia congregations? Nevertheless, there are some revealed statements that can still encourage us individually because of the room given for repentance and again he who overcomes shall be clothed in white garment.

Before the conclusion of this discussion, it is also proper to learn from what happened to the crowd who left for the promised land in the Old Testament – **1 Corinthians 10:1-13** – *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. ⁷ And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."^[a] ⁸ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; ⁹ nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; ¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ Now all^[b] these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

May God help us all as a local congregation as examples was revealed and also as individuals to work out our salvations with trembling and fear and to finally keep us away from whatsoever will hinder us from safe arrival to eternity in Jesus Name – Amen.