

Hope for the Heart: The Seven Churches of Asia Minor *Revelation 1:9-19; 2, 3

John, the last disciple was a prisoner exiled by the Romans to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. There he has a vision through which he is told to write the book of Revelation. John beholds the glorified Son of Man, standing in the midst of 7 gold lamp stands, holding 7 stars in his right hand; representing 7 churches. Jesus dictates 7 messages. He appears to the Backslidden church in EPHESUS who had left their first love; He exhorts them to turn back & do the works they did at first. To the Persecuted church in SMYRNA, He is the First & Last, the One who was dead & is now alive! Promising the Crown of Life; He tells them to remain faithful. The Compromising church in PERGAMUM was at the receiving end of His sharp two-edged sword; they refused to deny Him but ignored pagan heresies. The Lax church in THYATIRA; Christ commends their loving service yet some entertained a false prophetess. To the Dead church in SARDIS He is seen holding the 7-fold Spirit. They needed to wake up from their spiritual sleep; except those still faithful. The Favored (open-door) church in PHILADELPHIA was praised by One who is Holy & True, (holding the key of David); giving them protection from testing. The Lukewarm church in LAODICEA was so distasteful in their indifference that God wanted to 'spit them out of his mouth.' These characteristics are accumulated throughout seven periods of church history: (Apostolic, Early Century, Constantine, Papal Apostasy, Middle Ages, Reformation & Last Days); also in present-day churches & individual believers as reflected in the 7 churches of Asia!

Help for the Home: New Sweet-and-Sour Pork

*1 cup long-grain rice *12 oz. lean boneless pork *1/2 cup fine dry bread crumbs
*2 T. margarine *garlic, minced *1 cup chicken broth *1/3 cup sugar *1/3 cup wine vinegar
*4 tsp. cornstarch *1 T. soy sauce *nonstick cooking spray *1-1/2 cups thin bias-sliced carrots
*1 green pepper, cut in 1 inch squares *1 red pepper, cut in 1 inch squares *3 green onions, bias-sliced in 1 inch pieces *1-8oz. Can pineapple chunks, drained

*Cook Rice. Trim pork, cut in 3/4 cubes. Bread crumbs in dish. Stir melted margarine & garlic in bowl. Add pork; roll pork in bread crumbs. Bake pork 375, 12 min. Sauce: mix chicken broth, sugar, red wine vinegar, cornstarch & soy sauce. Skillet: spray or use oil, add garlic, carrots, peppers & green onions, stir-frying each till crisp tender. Remove vegetables; stir sauce, add to skillet; cook till bubbly; stir in vegetables & pineapple chunks.

To serve, spoon hot cooked rice; add pork & vegetable mixture. *Makes 4 servings.
