

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST – LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS 2:1-7

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:30pm, H 106 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by doughnut/vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell # 714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by Pastor Chuck Smith, Vernon McGee, David Hocking, Warren Wiersby and others.

Rev 2:1 *"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says*

who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:
He who holds the seven stars in His right hand,

Rev 2:2 *"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;

Revelation 2:1-7 - Notice six things:

#1 - v. 1. THE CONTROL AND CENTRALITY OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD - 1
#2 - vs. 2, 3, 6. THE COMMENDATION JESUS GIVES TO THE CHURCH .
#3 - v. 4. THE CONCERN OF JESUS CHRIST FOR HIS CHURCH .
#4 - v. 5a. THE CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH .
#5 - v. 5b. THE CONSEQUENCE WHICH THE CHURCH FACES IF IT DOES NOT REPENT.
#6 - v. 7. THE COMFORT WHICH THE LORD GIVES TO INDIVIDUALS –

#1 - v. 1. THE CENTRALITY AND CONTROL OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

CENTRALITY - “*who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands*”

CONTROL - “*He who holds the seven stars in His right hand*”
Neglected priorities are the result of taking our eyes off the One Who is the Head of the church and the One Who is in control of all things. The first and foremost objective of any church is the worship and praise of Jesus Christ our Lord. Are we expressing that love and loyalty to Him? The Ephesian assembly had enjoyed some “stellar” leadership — Paul, Timothy, and the Apostle John himself — but the Lord reminded them that He was in control of the ministry, placing the “stars” where He pleased.

#2 - v. 2 THE COMMENDATION JESUS GIVES THE CHURCH - 2-3, 6
v. 2a He commends them for their #1- DEDICATION to the work of the Lord
“I know your works, and your labor, (“toil to the point of exhaustion.”) and your patience”

v. 2b He commends them for their #2- DISCERNMENT in the work of the Lord
“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”
Cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Matt. 7:15, 21-23; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1-6.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:- EPHESUS - Called the “Metropolis of Asia”, a seaport, the capital of Asia Minor, and its largest city, a center of trade and business. It was a pagan city with the temple of Artemis (Diana), containing a multi-breasted colossal statute to a goddess of sex and fertility. It had an amphitheater seating 25,000 people, had a great library, and was a cultural center in the empire. Estimates of population vary from 250,000 to 500,000 people.

The church at Ephesus has its roots in a brief visit to the synagogue by the apostle Paul (Acts 18:18-21), a ministry by Apollos (Acts 18:24-28) who was taught by Aquila and Priscilla, an encounter by Paul with 12 disciples of Apollos (Acts 19:1-7), and a teaching ministry by Paul for two years (Acts 19:8-10). It included mighty miracles by the hands of Paul (Acts 19:11-20), a mighty revival in the city dominated by the occult, and a serious riot in the amphitheater (Acts 19:23-41).

The Book of Ephesians: Chaps. 1-3 The standing we have in Christ; Chaps. 4-6 How to walk!

Oh how important are praising, worshipping and loving Him!!!!

Works, labor, patience - all good things!! They are commended for this!

He also commends them for their discernment! What people believe is important! What was true in the early church, is also true today!

Beware of false apostles; deceitful workers!!
Beware of false prophets!! Of false teachers!!
Beware of false spirits!! Destructive doctrines!!
“Many have gone out”!

But “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world”!!!

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST – LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS 2:1-7

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Rev 2:3 **and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.**

Rev 2:6 But this you have, **that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans,** which I also hate.

Rev 2:4 **Nevertheless I have this against you,**

that you have left your first love.

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore **from where you have fallen;** repent and **do the first works,**

v. 3. He commends them for their #3 - DEVOTION to the Lord in being faithful in the work of the Lord - **"and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary"** Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:9.

v. 6. He commends them for their #4 - DECISION regarding the deeds of the Nicolaitans
"Nicolaitans" (conquer/victory + people) – possibly referring to a false division of clergy/laity

v. 1. THE CONTROL AND CENTRALITY OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD - 1 vs. 2, 3, 6. THE COMMENDATION JESUS GIVES TO THE CHURCH - 2-3, 6

#3 - v. 4. THE CONCERN OF JESUS CHRIST FOR HIS CHURCH - **"Nevertheless, I have this against you, that you have left your first love.**

"Nevertheless" (alla) - great contrast; on the contrary, but, yet, rather - Although they are commended greatly for their efforts and loalties, the problem is very serious. We often rationalize our lack of love by emphasizing our works.

"you have left your first love" - does not say "lost".

"left" - *aphiemi* - to move away; leave; depart from; to cause a separation; give up; abandon

"your first-protos- (foremost; first priority) love" - what is it?

Four Viewpoints:

1. Love for other believers - John 13:34-35

2. Love for the second coming of Jesus Christ - 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13

3. Love for the world (non-believers) - John 3:16; Jude 21-23

4. Love for the Lord Himself - Matthew 22:34-40; Eph. 6:24

#4 - v. 5a. THE CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH

"Remember, therefore, from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, ...unless you repent"

1. REMEMBER - **"from where you have fallen"** cf. 2 Timothy 3:4; 4:10 cf. 1 John 2:15-17

2. REPENT - Change of mind and conduct. We need a radical change - most of us have become accustomed to a performance-oriented Christianity; we have been taught to "do" more than to love.

3. RETURN - **"do the first works"** - NASB - "do the deeds you did at first" (interpretation), that's not what the original says. It is not an issue of timing, but of priorities - it should read the **"first works"**. Efforts that flow from an intense love for God Himself!

He commends them for their devotion to Him during difficult times. How about you?

Nike! Either the people are conquering or the people are being conquered-perhaps by evil in their lives.

Do you ever rationalize your lack of love by emphasizing your works?

Notice the reaction of our Lord!!! **He is against you!** Against those who have left their love for Him! They displayed works, labor and patience, but these qualities were not motivated by love for Christ! They were neglecting adoration!!

Have you left your first love? If so, for what?

Love for others?

Love for His appearing?

Love for non-believers?

Love for the Lord Himself? (maybe this is the best view!) **"grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity"** (Eph. 6:24)

The fundamental issue is to love the Lord with all your heart!

Do we understand that we need to repent when we return to our loving God?

Admonition (Rev 2:5-7). - "First love" can be restored if we follow the three instructions Christ gave.

First, we must remember (literally **"keep on remembering"**) what we have lost and cultivate a desire to regain that close communion once again.

Then we must repent — change our minds — and confess our sins to the Lord (1Jo 1:9).

Third, we must repeat the first works, which suggests restoring the original fellowship that was broken by our sin and neglect. For the believer, this means prayer, Bible reading and meditation, obedient service, and worship.

Do you love the things of the world, the most? Ourselves? Pleasure?

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST – LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS 2:1-7

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

Rev 2:6 But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Rev 2:7 "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."

v. 1. THE CONTROL AND CENTRALITY OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD - 1
vs. 2, 3, 6. THE COMMENDATION JESUS GIVES TO THE CHURCH - 2-3, 6
v. 4. THE CONCERN OF JESUS CHRIST FOR HIS CHURCH - 4
v. 5a. THE CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH - 5A

#5 - v. 5b. THE CONSEQUENCE WHICH THE CHURCH FACES IF IT DOES NOT REPENT

"or else I will come to you quickly, and remove your lampstand from its place"

1. Immediate REACTION from the Lord Himself
"I will come to you quickly" - cf. 2:16; 3:3
2. Complete REMOVAL of its light and presence
and remove your lampstand from its place"

#6 – v.7b.. THE COMFORT WHICH THE LORD GIVES TO INDIVIDUALS - 7

"To him who overcomes"

1. It is a message from the Holy Spirit - **"what the Spirit says"**
2. It is a message for all the churches - **"to the churches"**
3. It is for the one who overcomes - **"To him who overcomes"** cf. 1 John 5:4-5
4. It is given by Jesus Christ - **"I will give"** - cf. John 10:28-30
5. It is the promise of eternal life in the heavenly city
"to eat from tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" - Cf. Gen. 2:9; 3:22-24; Rev. 22:2, 14 - (Some MSS read "tree of life" in Rev. 22:19, instead of "book of life")

He is not speaking of "quickly" of the end times. But that the church will disappear when it leaves its first love!

The church **that loses its love will soon lose its light**, no matter how doctrinally sound it may be.

The number one reason to gather together is to worship and praise the Lord!!!

Here we see there is a comfort to the individual, even if his church has left its first love!
Rev 2:7 makes it clear **that individual believers within the church may be true to the Lord, no matter what others may do.** In these seven messages, the "overcomers" are not a "spiritual elite," **but rather the true believers whose faith has given them victory (1Jo 5:4-5).** Sinful man was banned from the tree of life (Gen 3:22-24), but in Christ we have eternal abundant life (Joh 3:16; Joh 10:10). We enjoy this blessing now, and we shall enjoy it in greater measure in eternity (Rev 22:1-5).

1Jn 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 1Jn 5:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, **but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

The church of Ephesus was the "careless church," made up of careless believers who neglected their love for Christ. Are we guilty of the same neglect?

Are you really an overcomer?

Are you loving Him with all your heart????

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST – LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS 2:1-7

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Questions:

1. How long does it take a vibrant, good, church to lose its first love? To neglect its priorities?
2. In verse 1, it says, “to the angel..” and that Jesus is holding the seven stars in His right hand. Who or what are they? Does that mean that all pastors are angelic?
3. What four things did the Lord commend the church of Ephesus for? Dedication, Discernment, Devotion, Decision
4. In verse three, He commends them for their devotion to Him during difficult times. How about you?
5. True or false? If you want to see Jesus, look at a Christian.
6. What does Nicolaitans mean? What shoe company names its shoes after the first part of this name? Laity-- People? Either the people are conquering or the people are being conquered- perhaps by evil in their lives??
7. Do you ever rationalize your lack of love by emphasizing your works?
8. What is “their first love- first priority”? Have you left?: Love for others? Love for His appearing? Love for non-believers? Love for the Lord Himself? Of these four, which do you think is the most important?
9. True or false? The church that loses its love will soon lose its light, no matter how doctrinally sound it may be.
10. How much are you into “performance Christianity”?
11. Who is the one that overcomes?

Oh Lord, you're beautiful

*Oh Lord, you're beautiful,
Your face is all I seek,
For when your eyes are on this child,
Your grace abounds to me.*

*Oh Lord, please light the fire,
That once burned bright and clear.
Replace the lamp of my first love,
That burns with Holy fear.*

*Oh Lord, you're beautiful,
Your face is all I seek,
For when your eyes are on this child,
Your grace abounds to me.*