

LETTER TO THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

Rev. 2: 1 – 7

INTRODUCTION:

1. The beginning of the church at Ephesus:

(1) Paul's first visit was brief, at the closing portion of his second journey (A.D. 53). Acts 18: 18 – 21

(2) At this time he left Priscilla and Aquila (their work is recorded in Acts 18: 18 – 21).

(3) Paul returned. Acts 19: 1 – 6

2. The city of Ephesus:

(1) Situated in Asia Minor on the West coast.

(2) It lay at the mouth of the river Cayster, and a mile from the Aegean Sea.

(3) Ephesus was one of the greatest seaports of the ancient world.

(4) It was a city of great commercial importance.

3. Ephesus was a city of greatest political importance.

(1) It was what was known as a free city.

(2) Rome had granted to it the right of self-government within its own limits.

4. Ephesus was a city of the greatest religious importance.

(1) Its greatest glory was the Temple of Diana. Acts 19: 26 – 27

(2) This temple was one of the seven wonders of the world.

(3) The image was so old that none knew whence it had come, and some said that it had fallen from heaven. Acts 19:35

(4) The image was a black, squat, repulsive figure covered with many breasts, which was the symbol of fertility. It held a club in one hand and a trident in the other.

(5) This image was, to millions of people, the most sacred thing in the world.

5. The character of the people was notoriously bad.
6. This was the second letter that had been written to the church at Ephesus.
7. The church had been there at the time of this writing about 40 something years.

I. THE LETTER IS ADDRESSED TO THE ANGEL OR MESSENGER OF THE CHURCH. Rev. 2:1

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEAKER. Rev. 2: 1 – 2

1. *“Holdeth the seven stars in his right hand”...*

(1) The stars are the angels or messengers. Rev. 1:20

(2) “Hold the stars in His hand” would mean that the TEACHERS of the church must depend upon him for the source of their knowledge.

A. Jesus. Matt. 28: 18; Heb. 1: 1 – 2

B. Paul. Gal. 1: 11 – 12; Eph. 1: 22, 23; Col. 2:10

(3) Today the same is true.

2. *“Walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks”...*

(1) The candlesticks are the churches, the local congregations. Rev. 1: 20

(2) A candlestick is a light bearer, each congregation is to hold forth the light of the gospel to the people of the world lost in sin. I Tim. 3:15

A. Christians are light bearers. Matt. 5: 14 – 16; Phil. 2:15

(3) Jesus dealt with each congregation separately.

A. This shows each congregation is to do its own work.

B. The New Testament congregations were independent and self-governing.

(4) This shows that Christ is present with us and knows what we are doing. Matt. 18:20; Heb. 4:13

3. *“I know”...*

(1) John 2: 24 – 25; Heb. 4:13

III. WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH.

1. *“Thy works and thy labor”... 2:2*

(1) Christians must work. Phil. 2:12; James 2: 14 – 26

2. *“Thy patience”* or steadfastness. Acts 2:42; I Cor. 15: 58

3. *“Thou canst not bear them which are evil”...*

(1) Must not fellowship the evil. II Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17; II John 9 – 11;
I Cor. 5: 1 – 6

4. *“Tried them which say they are apostles”...*

(1) Doctrine is important. Gal. 1: 6 – 9; II Cor. 11:13; Matt. 15:9

5. *“Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitians”...* Rev. 2: 14; 2:20

IV. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE CHURCH:

1. *“Hath left thy first love”...* Jer. 2:2 *“The love of thine espousals”*

(1) Verse five – *“do the first works”...*

(2) Their first early enthusiasm for the worship and progress of the church had waned.

(3) This is the trouble with many today.

V. ADMONITION. Verse 5

1. *“Remember therefore from whence thou are fallen”...*

2. *“Repent”...*

3. *“Do thy first works”...*

VI. THREAT. Verse 5

1. *“Will remove thy candlestick”...*

(1) A candlestick supports the light.

(2) No church can do this without *“First love”*.

VII. PROMISED REWARD. Verse 7