

# The Ephesus Vision

Revelation 2:1-7

July 10, 2022

## I. Introduction

- A. What do these seven churches represent?
  1. Actual churches in Asia Minor
  2. Representative of all churches then and now
  3. Successive periods of church history
- B. Who are the letters directed to?
  1. Angels – angelic overseers
  2. Pastors
  3. Remember this is a pastor writing a letter to encourage his people to stay strong

## II. The Church at Ephesus

- A. The city – v. 1a
  1. Only Ephesus and Laodicea are mentioned previously in Scripture
  2. Ephesus means “desirable”
  3. Capitol of Asia Minor-largest in Roman Empire in 96 A.D. (225,000)
  4. Home of the temple of Diana (Latin), Artemis (Greek)
    - a. One of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.
    - b. See Acts 19:24, 27, 28, 34, 35
  5. A great trade city – lots of people
  6. Church established by Paul on his Third Missionary Journey (53 A.D.)
  7. This was a spiritually depraved city
- B. The Christ – v. 1b
  1. The one who holds (control and protection) the seven stars
  2. The one who walks (this adds a very personal touch) among the seven lamp stands
- C. The Commendation – vs. 2, 3, 6
  1. They were a working church – v. 2
  2. They were a consistent church – vs. 2, 3
  3. They were a separated church. – v. 2
    - a. Romans 16:17
    - b. Tolerance, not separation, best describes the church today.
  4. They were a discerning church. – v. 2
  5. They were a pure church – v. 6
    - a. Psalms 139:21, 22
- D. The Condemnation – v. 4
  1. You have left your first love
    - a. Literally “your first love you have left”
      - i. Jeremiah 2:2, 5; Is. 1:2, 3; Hosea 11:8, 9
    - b. “The original spiritual vitality of the church had been replaced by an orthodox routine.” C.C.R.

- c. “The primary qualification for a missionary is not a love for souls but a love for Christ.” Hudson Taylor
          - d. First loves have no rivals: Matthew 22:37; 10:37
          - e. It was not this way 35 years earlier when Ephesians was written.
            - i. See 1:15,16.
            - ii. Love is used 14 times in the book.
        2. Two relevant questions: Attitudes – Affections
          - a. What causes one to love the Lord?
            - i. Love is the greatest motivator – John 3:16
            - ii. To know Him is to love and trust Him
              - Isaiah 6; Jeremiah 9:23, 24
          - b. What causes one to forsake his first love?
            - i. Isaiah 59:1-4
            - ii. Matthew 24:12
- E. The Correction – v. 5
  1. Remember therefore, when you have fallen.
    - a. See Acts 19:11-20; 20:28-32; II P. 1:8-11
  2. Repeat
    - a. II Corinthians 7:9, 10 – “We have a malarial brand of Christianity; a fever and a chill, a fever and a chill.”
  3. Repeat
    - a. “do the deeds you did at first”. “Revival is the renewal of the first love of Christians” – Finney -or-
  4. Be Removed
    - a. If we do not accomplish the work of God, He will find someone who will.
- F. The Challenge – v. 7
  1. Hear and heed what the Spirit says.
    - a. See Hebrews 5:11
  2. Be an overcomer and partake of the tree of life.
  3. See I John 5:4, 5
- G. Prophetic Application
  1. “Ephesus, though a local church in the apostles’ day, is typical of the first century church as a whole.” C.J.S.
  2. “Ephesus was directed not only to one local church, but to the church of the first century, usually called “the early church”, or “the Apostolic church”. This covered the period of time from the day of Pentecost (about A.D. 30) to A.D. 100.” – Tim LaHaye
  3. This period is characterized by a “time of saving, organization and evangelism.” J.D.D.