



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Ephesus – A Loveless Church (Rev 2:1-7)

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Legislators establish law which guides administrators and is defended by judges. In a roughly similar way, God sets the standards and passes judgment. God created The Church to help us in our vertical and horizontal relationships. God sent His Son, Jesus, to pay our sin debt (Matt 7:23). By grace, we accept His pardon and avoid God's judgment. Those without a relationship with Jesus must represent themselves at the great white throne judgment (Rev 29:12). Jesus had a first name relationship with each of His disciples and with those who called out to him. Does the Lord Jesus know you by name?

INTRODUCTION

The Apostle John was supernaturally transported out of the material world beyond the normal senses. John faces the risen Christ in all His grandeur and is given a message for each of seven churches. These are actual historical churches which represent types of churches throughout the church age. The message to their spiritual leadership is very relevant in today's culture!

Each letter has a salutation or greeting. Each contains Christ's self-designation or identity. Each includes a commendation (except Laodicea). Each includes a condemnation (except Smyrna and Philadelphia). Each includes an exhortation and a promise.

What would be in your letter from Christ?

LEADERS/MEMBERS IN EPHEBUS

Revelation 2:1-2 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and are not, and you found them to be false."

This church had caused the Savior's light to shine in a place of darkness (Luke 24:27). Ephesus was a center of commerce. The pagan temple of Diana was an area attraction and a refuge for criminals. The Apostle Paul was attacked here when his preaching impacted the sale of shrines (Acts 21:31). The church was praised for rejecting false teachers (Acts 20:27-32). **Have you searched the Scriptures to evaluate teaching?**

COMMENDATION

Revelation 2:3 "You have persevered, endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary."

The church at Ephesus had proved loyal to Scripture and stood through great trials and persecution by pagan idol worshippers, Jewish zealots, and the Roman government. They had held fast for over forty years at the time this letter was sent. **How many years have you been holding fast, growing in the faith?**

CONDEMNATION

Revelation 2:4-6 "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember from where you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favor: you hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

Their love for Christ had become cold, mechanical orthodoxy. Doctrinal and moral purity, a zeal for truth, and disciplined service were no substitute for love. Yet the church was praised for rejecting the teaching of Nicolas who attempted to lead them into immorality, replacing liberty with license. The church (and pagan temple) were gone and it was a place of ruin a couple of centuries later. **Is there something Christ might condemn in your walk or in your church?**

EXHORTATION AND PROMISE

Revelation 2:7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."

The promise is to them that conquer sin and the world's temptations. The prize is more than a blessed life; it is life eternal! Adam lost access to the tree of life (Genesis 3:22). The thief on the cross got it (Luke 23:43). **Do you have this assurance of life eternal!**

A PRAYER

Father God: Thank You for revealing the mystery of Your provision and Your promise as I endure these trials to become more than a conqueror in this life. I pray in Jesus's Name!