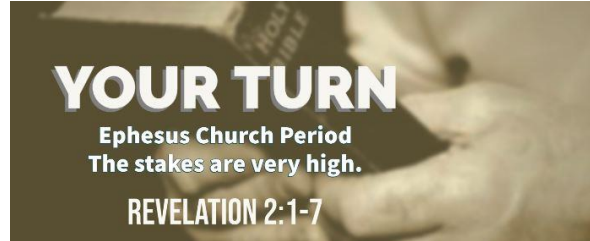


Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible  
Current Book: Revelation – verse by verse

**Scripture(s) for Today: Revelation 2:1-7 – Ephesus Church Period; the stakes are very high.**

Today's Message:

**"Your Turn"**



## INTRODUCTION

Last week, we were introduced to the divine Author – our triune God. John was catapulted in time “*in the Spirit*” to be present at the day of the Lord – His great and glorious day and was told to write. Today, we begin with the first letter to the first church – **EPHESUS** – which prophesied of the first period in Church History. This is the church period that was **DIRECTLY** and indirectly influenced by the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. God will speak many words of praise for them. Yet, their will be one thing that God will rebuke them for – leaving their first **LOVE**. May God open our eyes to see...

## LEARNING TOGETHER

**CONTEXT:** *Seven Letters to Seven Churches*

- Historically** The 7 letters to 7 literal churches in Asia addressing real situations and issues.
- Devotionally** The 7 letters are written to all churches; churches share these characteristics.
- Doctrinally** The 7 letters represent 7 periods of church history; Rev 2 & 3 continue Acts.

### 1. The Text Rev 2:1-7

**#1. The Church – Ephesus means “fully purposed” – in History (90-175/200AD)**

**SUMMARY:** This church doctrinally depicts the post-apostolic era with the gradual falling away of the church from its first love.

**HISTORY:** As we look back on church history, what happened during this time?

1. They were influenced directly and indirectly by the Apostles and their disciples.
  - ✓ *The **Twelve** – by their teaching and example – Foxes Book of Martyrs*
  - ✓ *Their **Disciples** – Church Fathers – Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Papias, Epicurus, Basilides, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Origen ... **Mt 12:2; 23:9***
2. They spread the **GOSPEL** and **PLANTED** churches – they were **disciple makers!**
  - ✓ *They did the work of the Lord – multiplying disciples! This is why we do!*
3. They used a line of Bible manuscripts traced back to **ANTIOCH**, Syria (Paul).
  - ✓ *Syrian (Peshitto), Old Syriac (100-200AD), Old Latin (not Vulgate; 200-300AD)*
4. They were **MURDERED** for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

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*Making disciples and caring for souls!*

✓ *Stephen (Acts 7), James (Acts 12); Nero 67AD; 4 of 10 Roman persecutions*

**NOTE** Their purpose was to bring God glory – same as ours! They were fully-equipped!

## #2. The Commendation – this was a hard-working, FAITHFUL church. (1-3,6-7)

1. It was a **hard-working** church ... *“I know thy works”*
  - ✓ *They were faithful do the Lord’s work – making disciples! Acts 13:2; 1 Cor 15:58*
2. It was a **persevering** church ... *“and thy labour, and thy patience”*
  - ✓ *Labour is not the same as work; it includes trouble and pain! Jn 15:20; Mk 14:6*
3. It was a **doctrinally sound** church ... *“thou canst not bear them... hast tried them”*
  - ✓ *They made righteous judgments based on WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS! Mt 7; Jn 7:24*
  - ✓ *They hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes (priest class, conquer laity)! Mk 10:43*

**NOTE** Remember, these are all commendations! Amen. They are an example for us!!

## #3. The Condemnation – this church chose to FALL out of love with Jesus. (4-5)

1. They LEFT their **first love** – Jesus Christ, who is called the Word of God.
  - ✓ *You cannot separate the two; they did and it hurt them! Jn1:1; 1 Jo 5:7; Rev19:13*
2. They began to use **words, phrases, and concepts** that are not found in the Bible.
  - ✓ *Priestly class, “catholic”, textual critic, philosophy, sprinkling babies; Satan’s lies.*
  - ✓ *Two lines began to develop – a **Biblical** line (saved) and a **Non-Biblical** line (lost).*
3. A devilish “Christian School” was growing in **Alexandria, EGYPT**. Job 14:4; Gen 3
  - ✓ *Philo’s “theological” school was designed to blend OT Judaism / Greek Philosophy.*
  - ✓ *Philo influenced two late 2<sup>nd</sup> century “fathers” – Clement and his pupil **Origen**.*

**NOTE** “Leaders” (viewed as **replacing the apostles**) began to deviate from clear Bible teachings. This led to corruption! God’s command to this church was REPENT!

## 2. The Lesson (How can we learn from our passage today?)

### 1. You also should be HARD-working, persevering and doctrinally sound.

- We can learn a lot from the Ephesus church. Amen! Does this describe your life?

❖ **Question:** “What is keeping you from this testimony?” 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Cor 5:14

### 2. You are in DANGER of falling out of love with Jesus Christ and His word.

- If it could happen to those within 1 generation of the Disciples, it can happen to us!

❖ **Question:** “What are you doing to avoid this danger?” Jer 2; Mt 24:12; Jn 14:15

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