

# Lesson 4

## The Letter to the Church at Ephesus

### Revelation 2:1-7

Invite the Holy Spirit to teach and speak to you through the Word of God as you meditate on Revelation 2:1- 7 every day this week.

As you read through the verses presented this week, look for a special verse to make your memory verse for the week. We will share our verses at the end of our discussion time.

*“To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”*

*Revelation 2:7*

1. What was a new or interesting thought from last week’s lesson?

The letters of Jesus to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 are very important. They give us insight into what Jesus is looking for in His church, both positive and negative. These letters include several specific commendations and warnings that we need to apply to our corporate church and individual lives. Jesus re-emphasizes truths about His majesty that equip His church to follow and trust Him. He also motivates believers to spiritual maturity by promising twenty-two various eternal rewards.

These seven letters can be understood on several levels. First, they are meant to be applied to our individual lives. Second, they relate to our corporate church life. Third, when considered in successive order, each of the seven churches sketches the history of the church over the last 2,000 years. Finally, these letters will prepare the church that is alive at the end of this age for the events of Revelation 6-19 to overcome and thrive through the difficult times.

Historically, the church at Ephesus may represent the church from about

30-100 AD. During this time the church shifted from its first generation enthusiasm for the Lord to complacency and compromise.

2. In these seven letters Jesus points out specific things that the individual churches need to do to get ready for His return. How does Revelation 19:7 express that the words of the Lord have been obeyed?

3. Scan Acts 19 and describe Paul's time in Ephesus.
4. How does Paul describe this time in Ephesus in I Corinthians 16:9?
5. Describe the meeting of Paul and the elders of the church at Ephesus in Acts 20:17-38. Pay special attention to the warnings Paul gives. Discuss.
6. Who was the leader of the church at Ephesus after Paul? See I Timothy 1:1-5.

As we saw in Lesson 2, the word *angel* (angelos in Greek) means messenger and may refer to a supernatural messenger or a human messenger. In the context of the seven letters, the messenger is probably a human being, specifically the leader of the church, because John would not write letters to supernatural beings.

7. Discuss the responsibility of the leaders of a church as seen in Hebrews 13:17.
8. Read Psalm 17:6-8, John 10:27-29 and Daniel 12:3. What does it mean to you to know that Jesus Christ holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands?
9. Make a list of the things that the church at Ephesus has done that the Lord approves and affirms.
10. When Jesus talks about deeds or works in Revelation 2:2, is He talking about salvation? See Titus 3:5 and Romans 4:5.

11. How do deeds or works fit into a believer's life according to Ephesians 2:8-10 and Titus 1:16?
  
12. *Perseverance* (some translations use the word *patience* or *endurance*) means to bear up under pressure or tribulation or trials. What do Romans 5:3-5 and James 1:2-4 teach about perseverance?
  
13. Can Jesus commend you and your church for the same things He commended the Ephesians?

The Nicolaitans were a sect that stressed the grace of God and allowed their followers to continue in compromise and immorality without requiring repentance from sin. Clement of Alexander, an early church father who lived from 150-215 AD, said that the Nicolaitans acted like goats, indulging in self-pleasure.

14. Is Jesus "loving" and "politically correct" in His response to the Nicolaitans? Discuss.
  
15. What did Jesus have against the church at Ephesus?
  
16. What is the first and great commandment according to Matthew 22:37-38? Has this changed with the times?
  
17. What is one of the strategies of the enemy, Satan, according to II Corinthians 11:3?
  
18. Read the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. What is the only thing that Jesus says is necessary and cannot be taken away?

19. What was the cry of David's heart in Psalm 27:4?
  
20. How did Daniel cultivate his relationship with the Lord according to Daniel 6:10?
  
21. What promises are found in Psalm 1:1-3?
  
22. What specific steps does Jesus instruct the church at Ephesus to take and what will be the consequences if they do not take this action?
  
23. What do you think Jesus means when He says, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches"?
  
24. What specific reward is promised for those who overcome in Revelation 2:7? See also Revelation 22:2-14.
  
25. Turn to the chart in Section IV. Complete the portion that relates to the Church of Ephesus.
  
26. Share the memory verse that you found through this week's study and why you chose it.
  
27. From your meditation this week on Revelation 2:1- 7, what do you want to remember?

## Lecture Notes: