



CHURCH OF EPHEBUS

<p>1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who <u>holds the seven stars</u> in his right hand, who <u>walks among the seven golden lampstands</u>.</p>	<p>*Christ holds the seven stars (angels/ messengers) means that they are under his control. He walks among the lampstands (churches) means that he is present in their midst and aware of their activities.</p> <p>How aware are we of Jesus presence in our lives and when we gather as a church? What would help us be more aware?</p>
<p>2 “ ‘I know <u>your works, your toil and your patient endurance</u>, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested <u>those who call themselves apostles and are not</u>, and found them to be false. 3 I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary.</p>	<p>Encouragement</p> <p>*Your works refers to your conduct and your way of life. Your toil refers to hard work doing good. Your patient endurance refers to the peace and forbearance under suffering and persecution.</p> <p>*These false apostles could possibly be the same people that Paul called 'savage wolves' and warned against in Acts 20:29.</p>
<p>4 But I have this against you, that you have <u>abandoned the love you had at first</u>.</p>	<p>Rebuke</p> <p>*The love that they had abandoned could be a love toward God, a love toward others or both. Regardless of what kind of love this refers to, how do we rekindle this love if we have left it?</p>
<p>5 <u>Remember</u> therefore from where you have fallen; <u>repent</u>, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and <u>remove your lampstand</u> from its place, unless you repent.</p>	<p>Warning</p> <p>*Remembering is the first thing we need to do in returning to the kind of relationship that Jesus wants with us. Jesus included 'remembering' when he told the parable of the Prodigal Son. When the son was longing to eat the food that he was hired to give to pigs, he 'remembered' what his life was like when he was at home with his father (Luke 15:17-19).</p> <p>Why is remembering important and how does it help?</p> <p>*Repentance includes a radical redirection of your entire life to go a different way, the way of Jesus.</p>



**BLUEPRINTS OF A DANGEROUS CHURCH
STUDY KEY**

	<p>*Removing their lampstand would mean removing His presence and they would no longer be a church who could reflect His light to those around. They would lose their true purpose as a church.</p>
<p>6 Yet this you have: you hate the works of the <u>Nicolaitans</u>, which I also hate.</p>	<p>Encouragement</p> <p>*There are a lot of different interpretations about who the Nicolaitans were, but not much can be said with certainty. All we know is that Jesus was not pleased with them.</p>
<p>7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the <u>tree of life</u>, which is in the paradise of God.'</p>	<p>Hope</p> <p>*In many of John's letter, he makes references to Genesis. Here the image of eating from the tree of life is used primarily as a promise to those who are victorious to return to the same fellowship God had with humans in the garden of Eden. This has an eternal sense of life in heaven, but also a sense of restoration (shalom) happening in our lives even now as we walk with Jesus.</p>