Revelation 2 Truth without Love

Jesus

Revelation 1:19 Write the things which you **have seen**, and the things **which are**, and the things **which will take place after this**.

Section 1: Ch. 1	Things which **were**	Glorified Jesus
Section 2: Ch. 2-3	Things which **are**	Church Age
Section 3: Ch. 4-22	Things which **will be**	gr. *Meta Tauta*. Rap/Trib/2nd/Mil/WT

I. Introduction Section 2 Things Which Are/Church Age

Ch's 2-3 Jesus writes Seven Letters to Seven Churches

- **4 Applications for Each of the 7 Letters**

  1. **Locally:** Churches of John's Day 1st Century
  2. **Universally:** Christendom as a whole
  3. **Historically:** Church Ages from John's day to Rapture
  4. **Personally:** Application to each of our Lives

- **Basic Pattern of Each of the Seven Letters**

  1. **Commendation**
  2. **Condemnation**
  3. **Correction**

- **Extended Format of Each of the Seven Letters**

  1. **Salutation:** Greeting
  2. **Self-Description:** Jesus partial revelation of Himself to each church

Jesus gives one of seven distinct partial descriptions of Himself to each of the seven churches. These seven partial descriptions make up the entirety of His description in Rev. 1. E.g. for Ephesus: *He who holds the seven stars…* [NJC]

  3. **Assertion:** Jesus supernatural knowledge of each church
  4. **Exhortation:** Jesus core message to each church; pos/neg
  5. **Promise or Threat:** From Jesus as Judge
  6. **Admonition:** Warning to Heed Jesus instruction
  7. **Blessing**: For Heeding/Overcoming by faith/obedience

- **Chapter 2**

  1. **Ephesus** **Truth w/out Love**
  2. **Smyrna** Persecuted Church
  3. **Pergamos** Compromising Church
  4. **Thyatira** Corrupt Church

- **Chapter 3**

  5. **Sardis** Dead Church
  6. **Philadelphia** Faithful Church
  7. **Laodicea** Love w/out Truth

- NOTE: Each church seemed to view themselves very differently than Jesus

II. Church of Ephesus Truth Without Love

- **Church Age:** Pentecost to 100 A.D. [Apostolic Age]

- **History of Ephesus**; i.e**.** Modern SW Turkey. Chief city in John's time

Haunt of Demonic Activity

- **Worship of Diana** AKA Artemis: "goddess of fertility" In the **Temple of Diana**

1. Largest Greek temple built at the time [418 x 239 sq ft.]Built over marsh
2. Artificial foundation of skins/charcoal as to not be affected by earthquakes!
3. One of Seven Wonders of the Ancient world





- **Acts 19:** Paul in Ephesus AD 52-55

1. Teaching in School of Tyrannus [Great window opportunity]
2. Preaching, healing, and casting out demons which were common in Ephesus
3. 7 sons of Jewish priest Sceva attempted to cast out demons as Paul…

Acts 19:15 [but…] the evil spirit answered and said, "**Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"** 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. [Revival followed by Riot] **…24** … [but] a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. 25 He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. 26 Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. 27 So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship."

- Riot moves into the Theater in Ephesus
- Paul's friends stop him from going in/Getting mauled
- City Clerk inside Theater tries to settle things down…

…35 [Cont.] And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which **fell down from Zeus?**

In the midst of this Demonic Charade
The Church of Ephesus became a Lamp of Truth

- Mary died there
- Paul, Timothy, and John Pastored there

In John's Day: A Beacon of Truth/Not a Bastion of Love
Truth without love is brutality… Wiersbe

John 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, **if you have love for one another."**

Jesus is both Truth and Love
Speak to One Another in Truth and Love

- Love for our others/especially bro/sisters demonstrates our love for God

1 John 4:20 If someone says, "**I love God**," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that **he who loves God must love his brother** also.

Ephesus **had been** characterized by their love for God/People
Something changed by the time Jesus wrote to them approx. 35 years later

1 [Salutation] "**To the angel** of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says **He who holds** the **seven stars** in His **right hand**, who walks in the midst of the **seven golden lampstands**:

Jesus begins with a Partial Description of Himself from Ch. 1

Revelation 1:20 The seven stars **are the angels of the seven churches**, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

- **7 Lampstands:** 7 Churches/**7 Stars:** 7 Angels or **Pastors** of the 7 Churches

I am holding My Pastors in My right hand
I walk in the midst of your congregation as High Priest

1. Fills our Lamps — Holy Spirit
2. Trims our Wicks — Discipline
3. Extinguishes Lamps — Apostate Churches

Jesus judges all Christendom; i.e. all those who name themselves Christians including believers/non-believers. E.g. Birds of the air nesting w/in the Kingdom of God. Mat. 13:32

Self-Description from Ch. 1 Holding Pastors in in His Powerful Right Hand and walking among the churches c.f. Rev 1:20

V1 I AM Walking in the Midst of You w/All Authority to Judge…

2 "I know your **works**, your **labor**, your patience…

Commendation First…

- **I, Jesus know…**Your work. Your labor. That you are patiently working hard…

- Work, Work, Work. Martha? Sit. Working on what…

2b… and that you **cannot bear those who are evil**. And you have **tested** those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; [3] and you have **persevered and have patience**, and have **labored for My name's sake** and have **not become weary.**

- **Commendation:**

  1. **You Work:** You labor. Patiently working hard…
  2. **You Judge**: Don't tolerate evil…and people know it
  3. **You Discern:** Those who enter church. Expose frauds, liars, make-believers
  4. **You Persevere:** You endure, you have patience [2x] you labor [2x]

All for My Name/Not grown weary in that work

- Next Jesus Complaint

4 **Nevertheless** I have *this* against you, that you have **left your first love.**

I Corinthians 13:3 …though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor,* and though I give my body to be burned**, but have not love, *it profits me nothing*.**

- **First Love:** Jesus
- **Second Love:** Others
- **Third Love:** You. This is who you left for

They left Jesus their First Love/Didn't even Realize it
Manifested in Legalism/Self-righteousness…

Is it possible to stop loving Jesus/Be deceived we're working for Jesus?
To Fall from Grace/Love into Legalism/Condemnation
And Believe we're climbing higher?

Galatians 5:4 You have become **estranged from Christ**, you who **attempt to be justified by law**; you have **fallen from grace**.

Self-righteousness is a Satanic Substitute for Walking in the Spirit
Backsliding while thinking we're moving forward. Falling thinking we're climbing

Colossians 2:23 These things [commandments and doctrines of men] indeed have an **appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion**, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Falling from Grace: Working hard for Jesus w/out love for Jesus/His people
No intimacy with Jesus. You have left your first love

- **Commendation:** Patiently Working Hard
- **Complaint:** Left Me, your First Love
- **Correction…**

5 **Remember** therefore from where you have **fallen… repent** and **do the first works**…

Three-Fold Correction for a Lack of Love
Remember. Repent. Re-do.

Remember: God says…"I remember the kindness of your youth…" Jeremiah 2:2

Am I as spontaneously kind to God as I used to be, or am I only expecting God to be kind to me? Does everything in my life fill His heart with gladness, or do I constantly complain because things don't seem to be going my way? A person who has forgotten what God treasures will not be filled with joy... How much kindness have I shown Him in the past week? Has my life been a good reflection on His reputation? God is saying to His people, **"You are not in love with Me now, but I remember a time when you were."** He says, "I remember…the love of your betrothal…" . Am I as filled to overflowing with love for Jesus Christ as I was in the beginning, **when I went out of my way to prove my devotion to Him?** [Oswald Chambers Jan. 21]

Once on Fire, Ephesus was now a Cold, Legalistic, Loveless Congregation…

Acts 2:42 [Began well] … **continued steadfastly** in the **apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. [43] Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. [44] Now all who believed were **together**, and had all things in **common**, [45] and **sold** their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. [46] So **continuing** daily with one accord in the temple, and **breaking bread** from house to house, they ate their food with **gladness and simplicity of heart**, [47] **praising God** and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

What happened to Ephesus?

Acts 20:28 … take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departure **savage wolves will come in among you**, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 **Therefore watch,** and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. 32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God…

Warned to Protect Truth and they did
Swung the Pendulum too Far from Love to Legalism

- **Became…** Sin Sniffers/Log Bearer/Proud mockers/Signs of leaving our first Love
- **Jesus Simple Recipe for Correction:** Remember. Repent. Re-do

1) Remember

How you were saved? By Faith or Works? By Believing or Trying harder

Galatians 3:1 …Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, **are you now being made perfect by the flesh?**

- Began in the Spirit now walking in the flesh: Falling from [understanding of] Grace
- Resulting in Legalism/Self-Righteousness/Judgmentalism; lack of love for God/man

Remind yourself how you were saved from your sin
Or you will begin to slide away from Jesus

2 Peter 1:2 [You were growing]…adding to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 9 [Yet] **…he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.**

If you're not growing in the Lord it's because you're choosing to forget.
Remember who you were before you received the LORD.

- We love Him because **He first loved us**

Ezekiel 16:6 "…when **I passed by you** and **saw you** struggling in your own blood, **I said to you** in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' 7 **I made you** thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you were naked and bare. 8 "When I passed by you again and **looked upon you**, indeed your time was the time of love; so **I spread My wing** over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, **I swore an oath to you** and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine," says the Lord God**…15 "But you trusted in your own beauty…"** [oops]

You forgot where/what I brought/bought you from/out of

Correct Doctrine is not Enough
Remember Who saved you when you were helpless/w/ hope in the world

- **Remember Who** saved you
- **Remember what** you were saved from: Sin, Self, Hell
- **Remember how** you were saved: By grace; God's unmerited favor not of yourself

1) Remember. **2) Repent**
Repent: Acknowledge Pride Accepted/Jesus Neglected/People Deflected

- **Turn from Self**-Righteousness/Legalism: Characterized by a desire to be known
- **Run back to Jesus** grace/mercy characterized by a desire to make Jesus known

1. Pray/Devote/Sit/Stop/Love/Admire/Be in awe of God in His Word by His Spirit
2. Move away from self and toward Jesus

1) Remember, 2) Repent…finally **3) Repeat**
Do the things you did when you first fell in love with Jesus

An Intimate relationship w/Jesus: Sitting at His feet communing w/Him
A Simple relationship w/Jesus: Loving people in practical Spirit led ways

2 Corinthians 11:3 [Walk in…] the **simplicity that is in Christ.**

1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal…[13] And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the **greatest of these *is* love.**

- **Remember, Repent**…
- **Repeat** do what you did when you first fell in love…

Warning from Jesus to Ephesus/All who left their First Love
Remember/Repent/Repeat…

5b… or else I will come to you quickly and **remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.**

- **Remove your Lampstand? Remove your church?**

1. Christ-less gathering still calling itself a church
2. Ephesus did not repent/Became a ruin [Fate of legalists]
3. It is Muslim controlled today

6 But **this you have**, that **you hate** the **deeds of the Nicolaitans**, which I also hate.

- **Commendation 1:** You work, patiently labor
- **Here, Commendation 2:** You hate sin

I'm not asking you to stop hating sin…
Just remember your own

- Ephesus did not tolerate *sins of Nicolaitans*

Early Development of Catholic Church?

- **Nicolaitans:** gr. *Nikao* "overcome" and *Laos* "people" i.e. to overcome the people

1. **Heretical sect** God's grace a provision for immorality/idolatry [Initiated by Deacon Nicolas Acts 6?]
2. **Taught:** Separation between Laity/Clergy. Super-duper saints [JVM], Robes, Hats, Works

E.g. Shepherding movement of the '70s

- **Ephesus** **Hated the deeds** of the Nicolaitans
- **Pergamos** v15 **Tolerated the doctrine** Nicolaitans

7 "**He who has an ear**, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches. To **him who overcomes** I will give to **eat from the tree of life**, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.'"

- **Note:** What Jesus says is what the Spirit says

He who has an ear let them hear
What the Spirit says to the church[es] plural: All Seven Churches/All Churches

To those who come back from leaving Me. Those who Remember/Repent/Redo
You will eat from the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden

- **Two Trees in Garden of Eden**

    1. **Tree of Life:** Analogous to the Cross
    2. **Tree of Knowledge of Good/Evil:** Analogous to Gnosis

Genesis 3:24 [After Adam/Eve ate from Tree of Knowledge of Good/Evil] [God] drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to **guard the way to the tree of life.**

God blocked the way to the Tree of Eternal Life until the Cross. The 'no Trespassing' sign is down [JV. McGee]

Eat from the Tree of Life?

Simply the Promise of Eternal Life

Revelation 22:2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was **the tree of life**, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations…**14** Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

- **Promise to those who overcome?**
- **Overcome:** Not trying harder but getting nearer to Jesus who overcame for us

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have ***overcome the world***."

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God **overcomes the world**. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 ***Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?***

Overcoming/Enduring: Exclusive to only those *In Christ*
Overcoming for the Ephesians/Any in the midst of leaving their first love?

- **Begin w/Remembering…**

    1. …Who saved us
    2. …What we were saved from: Sin, Self, Hell
    3. …How we were saved by grace. And how…

Titus 3:4 …**when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared**, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- Overcoming means…

    1) **Remembering**
    2) **Repenting** from self-righteousness/Falling before Jesus

3) **Repeating** the deeds we did when we first fell in love with Jesus/Word

Loving God means Loving Others

John 13:35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, **if you have love for one another."**

- **Laodicea:** Love w/out Truth
- **Ephesus:** Truth w/out Love

Truth without Love is Brutality
IOWs Correct Doctrine is not Enough

Have we left our first love and become critical and legalistic; have we left loving others to judging others? Do we hate the sins of others but refuse to recognize our own? Jesus says remember, repent, and repeat what you did when you first fell in love with Him.