

Passage: Revelation 2:1-7

Title: The Church of Ephesus – Left Their First Love (2:1-7)

Summary: The Church of Ephesus will go down in history as being known as the church (and individuals) that left their first love. Could that be us, could that be you today? Here is the vital point! They did not know it or notice it, even in the midst of all their good works and activities, the Lord had to speak to them to expose it. We would all do well, to hear this Word from the Lord today, and see if we could be in the same state and not know it.

The only book that comes with a promised blessing for those who read it:

(Revelation 1:3 NKJV) Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

John on the Island of Patmos receives this revelation of Jesus Christ.

Book of Revelation Outline

- The Things Which You Have Seen - (Chapter 1).
- The Things Which Are - (Chapters 2-3).
- The Things Which Will Take Place After This - (Chapters 4-22).

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

John wrote 5 Books / Believe – Eternal Life – Be Ready

The Apostle John wrote 4 other books to the church. The Gospel of John, and 1,2,3 John, and this fifth book, Revelation. In the Gospel of John he wrote that we might believe, he uses the word believe some 60 times:

(John 20:31 NKJV) but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

He wrote us in 1,2,3 John so that we might know that we have eternal life:

(1 John 5:13 NKJV) These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

So he wrote that we might believe, then that we might know, and now he writes Revelation so that we might be ready:

(Revelation 2:7 NKJV) "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."

Before Glorified Christ / Look for in Church – as Individuals / Praise – Problem -Promise

John is now before the glorified Christ, and Jesus says John now write these things to the 7 churches so that they might be ready, for this book is all about man coming before the Holy God:

Chapter 2

The Church of Ephesus (2:1-7)

The Church of Smyrna (2:8-11)

The Church of Pergamos (2:12-17)

The Church of Thyatira (2:18-29)

Chapter 3

The Church of Sardis (3:1-6)

The Church of Philadelphia (3:7-13)

The Church of Laodicea (3:14-22)

Now personally and practically for each of us, it is important to read what Jesus says is important for the church, and this is what we should look for in the church we choose to fellowship. And equally as important is what Jesus says is important for us as individuals. Jesus will praise, present, and promise each church. He will praise each church on the good things they are doing, He will then present each Church with a problem He sees in that Church (except Smyrna and Philadelphia), and then give each Church a promise they can hold on to. (Great outline for child rearing, praise them for what they are doing right, present them with their errors so they can correct, and always give them a promise of your love for them, give them security).

So the Outline for each of the 7 Churches will be the same:

- The Praise of the Church
- The Problem in the Church
- The Promise for the Church

Actual Churches – Church History – Churches Today - Individuals

When we study the 7 churches in chapters 2-3 we will see these 7 churches are Actual Churches in the day this was written, they also represent periods of Church History, conditions of Actual Churches today, and they represent each believer individually as each believer can fall somewhere into what is being said about that particular church. The order of these churches was an actual mail route in Asia Minor, it was a postal route, and God today still sends a personal letter, a love letter, to us.

(Revelation 2:1 NKJV) "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:

(Revelation 2:2 NKJV) "I know your works, your labor, your patience, 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;

(Revelation 2:3 NKJV) "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

(Revelation 2:4 NKJV) "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

(Revelation 2:5 NKJV) "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place; unless you repent.

(Revelation 2:6 NKJV) "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

(Revelation 2:7 NKJV) "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."

Left 1st Love / Period of Church History / Jesus will not Stay

The Church of Ephesus, the church that we know as the one who left their first love.

The church of Ephesus speaks

- of the period of church history from A.D. 33 to A.D. 100.
- By A.D. 97—the year John recorded this book—the church was already a mess.
- The Book of Acts presents the model of the way the church was supposed to function.
- But Acts only covers a span of thirty years. By the time John penned Revelation a mere sixty years later, the purity of the church had been compromised to such a degree that they were in a position to hear the Lord say, "Unless you repent, I'll not stay in your midst" (see verse 5).

(Revelation 2:1 NKJV) "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:

To the Pastor

Verse 1 - To the angel of the church of Ephesus - This word for angel (angelos), is messenger. So it is more likely that these letters were meant for the pastors of those churches, for why would God write a letter to an angel.. I take special attention to these 7 churches as a pastor so I can see what pleases the Lord in His church, and what doesn't, and stay in line with God's will for the church.

I'm Not into Church

Where is Jesus walking? In the midst of the church. You will meet Christians who say, "Well, I'm not into church." That's too bad, because Jesus is. "Yeah, but the churches around here are really hurting," they'll say. So were these. And yet Jesus was in their midst. God showed us the model for the church back in Acts:

(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Background on Ephesus

Verse 1 - Ephesus - The city of Ephesus

- was the Roman Empire's capital for the Asia Minor area.
- It was a large metropolitan area.
- It had an amphitheater that seated over 25,000 people (consider our machinery needed to build a modern stadium),
- it had a library that had over 500,000 hand written volumes.
- It was the banking, financial center of the whole region (liken it to our NY City).
- They had the temple of Diana there which at it's time was considered one of the 7 wonders of the world, it was supported by 127 pillars, each sixty feet high, and was adorned with great sculptures, and that temple had thousand's of temple prostitutes.
- We read about Ephesus in Acts 18-20, and the Apostle Paul said they were wholly given over to idolatry.

This area was not much different from the region we live in today. This was an advanced city, very prosperous, yet very much given to the fulfillment of the lust of the flesh. That is a hard place to stay pure as the temptations no doubt bombarded the Christians living in that region.

Attribute of Jesus – Personal Identifier / I Walk – I still Hold

Verse 1 - 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands –

We know from verse 20 of chapter 1 that the

- Stars – are the “angels” (messengers – pastors)
- Golden lampstands – are the churches

Revelation 1:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

Every church we will see an attribute of Jesus that was given in chapter 1, and is being used as a personal identifier of Jesus Christ to that Church, and is specific to the issue that applies to that church. Jesus is letting this Church I Am the One who walks among you, and the One who holds you in My hand. An important identifier to a Church that has left its first love, for it is you who has left God, not He that has left you, for He still holds you in His hand, and it is He that still walks among you.

God has something for you, every one of you who comes here, and every time you come here, for He walks among you, us, every time we are here. Tune in, settle in, and allow yourselves to receive what He has for you.

In verse 19 of chapter 1, John is told to “write these things”, and the Lord would say that to you today, get your pen out, get your paper, and be ready to write down what I am going to say to you personally and specifically:

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

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

The Praise of the Church

(Revelation 2:2 NKJV) "I know your works, your labor, your patience, 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;

(Revelation 2:3 NKJV) "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

God Knows / Consolation - Concern

Verse 2 - I know - When God says I know, that means He knows all about us. He knows everything about us, everything that is going on in our lives, He knows where you are, and where you are at in your life personally.

Now that can bring consolation to us or it can bring concern. Consolation when we are struggling with something and don't know what to do about it, and we can take consolation in knowing that He knows, and he will take care of it. But it can bring concern when we aren't doing right, He knows, we can't fool Him. We may justify and convince our self, but He sees through all that, for He knows.

Work to Exhaustion / God Admires the Worker

Verse 2 - I know your works, your labor - This word for labor means to labor until the point of exhaustion. These people were workers for Christ, and verse 3 tells us all the things the Church of Ephesus did, they did for Jesus name sake. Jesus takes note of each Church and their works. God praises them for their work, Jesus admires the laborer.

Patience – Endure under Pressure / Keep Working through Obstacles

Verse 2 - your patience - Patience means to endure under pressure. So this church worked hard and under tough circumstances, no doubt because of the environment they lived in. It is easy to work for Christ when things are flowing; it is a whole different thing when a worker continues to work for Christ when obstacles and opposition arise against them.

Firm in Discipline / Judge – Identify / Restore – Remove – Reconcile / Immune System

Verse 2 - and that you cannot bear those who are evil - It appears this church was firm in their church disciple. Church disciple is vital to the church. We are not to judge for condemnation, but we are instructed to judge for identification. There are 3 words involved in church disciple, restore, remove, and reconcile.

- We are to restore a repentant brother back to Christ,
- remove a person who seeks and sows division within the church,
- and we are to reconcile with a brother that we have personal problems with so we can keep the unity in the family.

This church was healthy, and did these things. A healthy body heals itself; the body has an immune system, and this church would put out a person that would infect others in the body.

(Matthew 7:1 NKJV) "Judge not, that you be not judged.

(Matthew 7:15 NKJV) "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

(Matthew 7:16 NKJV) "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?"

(Matthew 7:17 NKJV) "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

(Matthew 7:18 NKJV) "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

(Matthew 7:19 NKJV) "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

(Matthew 7:20 NKJV) "Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Tested the Spirits

Verse 2 - And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars -
This church would test the spirit. When someone came with some teaching, they would test them and if they did not line up they identified them and gave them the boot:

(Acts 17:10 NKJV) Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

(Acts 17:11 NKJV) These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Verse 3 - "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary - Also, the Ephesian church continued doing these things without becoming weary. They showed a godly perseverance that we should imitate. One of the greatest growing trends I see in the church and Christians across the world with all the resistance the church faces from culture and society, and that is to pull up, pull back, quite going against the tide, quiet down, and just go the easy route. But, this church of Ephesus was doing all things without growing weary.

I am reminded of Galatians, of not growing weary of doing good:

Galatians 6:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

I am also reminded of Paul, and his thanksgiving that he could be used by God, and that God counted him faithful to the ministry. What a word for all who serve the Lord:

1 Timothy 1:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, ¹³ although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴ And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Jesus Praises the Worker – Discipline – Tested / Apply to Our Lives

So Jesus likes those that are workers, those that work to the point of exhaustion, and those that test the spirit and make sure they are in line with the Word of God, both in lifestyle and in ministry. All things we should lay hold of, and apply for our lives. But, this Church had a problem:

The Problem in the Church

(Revelation 2:4 NKJV) "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

Left

Left – means to stop maintaining. That sums it all up, it is not complicated as we try to figure out why we don't have that passion and love like we once did, and it is because we "stop maintaining" our relationship like we once did, and therefore something else has replaced it.

They Didn't Notice It

Notice this, the pastor, the elders, the worship team, the ministry serving people, did not notice that they were a loveless church, for they had to be told by Jesus that they were.

And, if they left the love of Jesus, then this was a loveless church among themselves as well.

John 13:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Great Outside – Love Weaning / Motion – Emotion / Home - House

The problem was, even as much as they were doing good works, and testing the spirits, they looked great from the outside, but the love was weaning. Lots of motion, but no emotion. The home was turning into a house. It was about the structure, the walls and ceiling, more than it was about who was sitting on the couch. Mind you, this church wasn't involved in habitual sin like some of the others we will study.

It's All About the Relationship

Jesus is grieved, His heart broken, that they have turned this beauty of love into what it now has become. For Jesus it is all about the relationship, and if He didn't say, I wouldn't have believed it, but He is saying to each of us today (tomorrow and forever), I have this deep, passionate, desire for intimacy with you.

Ray come away with me, just the two of us.

Song of Solomon 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ My beloved spoke, and said to me: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away.

Calling us to Romance / Ephesus - Darling

Jesus is calling this church, and calling us to remain in a romance with Him. Ephesus means “darling - desired”, Jesus is saying come back to that time of romance and love we once had.

Letter to Ephesus – Love 20X / Called back to Love

Paul used the word love 20 times when he wrote the Book of Ephesians, and now here they are being called back to love.

(Ephesians 1:4 NKJV) just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

(Ephesians 3:17 NKJV) that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

(Ephesians 3:19 NKJV) to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Eph 5 – Singing Praise / Melody in their Heart

This is what the church in Ephesus was doing in the beginning, the praises of God continually on their lips, the love of the Lord made a new song in their heart, and they found themselves overflowing with the love of God and the love for God:

(Ephesians 5:17 NKJV) Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

(Ephesians 5:18 NKJV) And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

(Ephesians 5:19 NKJV) speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

(Ephesians 5:20 NKJV) giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

I Remember that 1st Love / Talking & Telling

I remember that love, that freedom in forgiveness, when I first got saved. I couldn't stop talking about Him. Mature Christians would say the obnoxious new Christian; I'll tell you what, I led more people to the Lord as an obnoxious Christian, than I do a mature temper Christian. I couldn't get enough of the Lord.

So Fresh – Exciting / First Dated – didn't Stain Deck - Wall

That love was so new, so fresh, so exciting. You know when me and Renee first fell in love, there were things we didn't do in that honeymoon phase, but all things we have done in the past few months, sometimes to the point of exhaustion. We didn't pressure wash the deck and then stain it, we didn't lay sod, build a brick retaining wall for the flower bed, establish a wireless network for our computers, analyze our financial situation, and research the aspects of public school versus home school.

Made Home Nicer – But not part of Honeymoon

All these things made our house nicer, more cozy, more efficient in some cases, and necessary in others. But none were things we did in our honeymoon phase, our first love stage.

1st 6 Months – Phone – Walks - Dinner

In our first 6 months of dating, we spent countless hours on the phone talking, dining together was our special time, holding hands, going on walks, watching movies, simply just being together was all that mattered. Love was exciting, it was fresh.

Ephesus Come Back to Romance / Marriage turned Work – Worship / We Quit Looking

God is tells this church of Ephesus to return to their first love, the way things were when they first fell in love with Jesus. How easy it is for my marriage to become more about works than about worship. How often our marriage is about all the stuff we have to get done, that we forget the fun part of love. Many times I catch myself looking at my wife and saying how beautiful. Our marriage can become so much work that I quit looking at her the way I first did when we first dated.

My Marriage Today

In my marriage today, yes there are things that need to be done or the house will collapse, but in that balance there are things that can left, must be left, so that we can keep our romance kindled. We need to go back to what we did when we first fell in love. Go for walks again, dinner, and coffee in the morning.

Calls to Balance Work - Worship

God praises them for their labor and work, but He calls them to balance it with worship and love.

(Revelation 2:5 NKJV) "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place; unless you repent.

Left

Left – means to stop maintaining. That sums it all up, it is not complicated as we try to figure out why we don't have that passion and love like we once did, and it is because we "stop maintaining" our relationship like we once did, and therefore something else has replaced it.

Remember – Repent – Return

The Church of Ephesus is the Church known for leaving their first love. Ephesus means darling, and Jesus was calling them back to that place of romance with Him, when they first fell in love with Him. Could this be you today? Jesus gives them the cure, He tells them to remember, repent, and to return the things they once did.

- Verse 5 – Remember - The "tense" of remember is to "continually remember".
- Verse 5 - Repent - means to change direction, to change one's mind. He that has an ear let him hear, God is saying there is still time to correct this.
- Verse 5 - Do the first works (return) - what was it that you use to do, when was your relationship sweet with the Lord, go back and do those things again.

What were you doing when you were on fire for the Lord? "I was going to church." Go again!

"I was getting up early for morning devotions." Do it again!

"I sang praise to the Lord as I drove down the street." Sing again!

"I taught Sunday school or visited the shut-in" Then teach and visit again!

Remember how it used to be when you were amazed by the Lord's goodness—do again what you were doing then, and you will see the romance rekindled in your heart.

Little Boy

I am reminded of the little boy who at Christmas time kept going back into the sanctuary as the family was trying to leave to go home; then he would come back out, and then go back in, and finally the dad said son what are you doing, to which the boy replied, I just wanted spend a little more time with Jesus.

Go back to Ephesus, a call for all of us, and read the promises promised to us, and fall back in love with "wow" for me?

Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV) ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

Ephesians 1:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Ephesians 2:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Ephesians 3:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 5 – Singing Praise / Melody in their Heart

This is what the church in Ephesus was doing in the beginning, the praises of God continually on their lips, the love of the Lord made a new song in their heart, and they found themselves overflowing with the love of God and the love for God:

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(Ephesians 5:20 NKJV) giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Acts 2:42

God gives us a simple model in the Books of Acts. Staying in the Word, strengthening each other through fellowship, going back to the Cross and remembering His work and love for us, and then that sweet time of just talking and walking with the Lord in prayer:

(Acts 2:42 NKJV) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

God Likes You

Can I add this here, beloved, we all know God loves us, never leaves us nor forsakes us, but I believe we forget that He likes us. He likes hanging out with us, He likes being with us. Sometimes in love, as in a family – “we can feel compelled to be with them because they are family – ohh boy Thanksgiving dinner together, I have to be with you for you’re family, its almost an obligation. But then there are those people, you just like being around, so much so you have a special bond in your heart together. The Lord loves you, and He likes you, He has that special bond in Heart for us, and when we think on that, it will open us up to an attitude that I’m not going to work or something like that, but to see an old friend, to be refreshed by their presence.

Or Else / Not forsake Us / Records His Name / God is Love

Verse 5 - or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place; unless you repent.

- I believe this is very specifically talking about the church, and is not applicable to the individual. For the Lord said that He would never leave us nor forsake us. But, I do believe that if a church was all about programs, and not about the person (Jesus Christ), about the love that eminent from Him, then God will remove His name, and Himself from that Church. God is love, and if the love of Jesus isn't what that church is about, he will remove Himself:

(Exodus 20:24 NKJV) In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you.

(1 John 4:8 NKJV) He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

(1 Corinthians 13:2 NKJV) And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

(1 Corinthians 13:3 NKJV) And 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.

(Revelation 2:6 NKJV) "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

More in Pergamos

We will talk more in depth about the Nicolaitans when we get the church of Pergamos.

Establishment of Priesthood

Just what are the deeds of the Nicolaitans? Often a group gets its name and the name describes the actions of that group. The word Nicolaitan is made up of two Greek words. “Nicos” meaning “conquest” and “laity” meaning “people of the church. It is the establishing of a priesthood, of men saying you need to come to me if you are to see God.

Priesthood Abolished by Jesus / No Intercessor between God and Man

Now, the Lord said that they hated that. He said He hated it too. The priesthood was a part of the old testament arrangement when God was not approachable by man, by sinful man. And the priest would approach God for the people with the sacrifices, then he would come out from the Holy of Holies to pronounce God's blessings upon the people. He was God's representative to the people. He was the people's representative to God. He was a mediator. He was a go between. And that was necessary in the

Old Testament period. But Jesus by His death abolished the priesthood. And now there's only one God and one mediator between God and man and that is the man Christ Jesus. He died in order to give you direct access to the Father. Now, He hates anyone who would come in between you and the Father, that your approach to God would have to be through some person. Not necessary, not possible unless that is the person of Jesus Christ. One God. One mediator between God and man. Jesus said I am the way, the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father but by Me. And so the priesthood had already begun to be established. We'll find it when we get to the church of Pergamos. That early in the church this idea of special holy men who can intercede to God for you and would be intermediaries between you and God. Not so. The Ephesians did accept that. In fact, they hated that and Jesus said He also hated it.

No other Man in Brides Life

Jesus is saying I don't want anyone or anything coming between me and my bride. Stay away from my wife, or you will find out about a jealous husband, and it won't be pretty.

Gospel / If You Were to Die Tonight

Personal

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Problem

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Penalty

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord

Provision

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Profession

Romans 10:13 (NKJV) ¹³ For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

Recognize

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Repent

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Receive

Romans 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

The Promise for the Church

(Revelation 2:7 NKJV) "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."

Ear – is singular, so talking to every individual.

Says – present tense, so still applicable to this very moment today, not for them then, but us today as well.

Churches – plural, so this applies to Ephesus, but every church should take inventory as well.

Eternal Motivation / Perspective / Live Life Backwards

What did the Ephesians lack? Love. What would they get if they changed their ways? The fruit of the tree of life, the fruit of the Spirit: love. Thus, the eternal motivation for the Ephesian church perfectly answered their greatest need. Jesus will end every letter to these 7 churches with an eternal view, to bring people to an eternal perspective. It is a key for life, live life backwards from heaven, eternity, and all the things of today and this earth will fit in their proper perspective.

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need