

Short New Testament Letters from God: The SEVEN: Ephesus, All Head, No Heart

February 19, 2023

-A.M. SERMON NOTES -

“Short New Testament Letters from God:

‘The SEVEN: Ephesus, All Head, No Heart’”

(Revelation 2:1-7)

INTRODUCTION

Our 2023 Bible studies are from “Short New Testament Letters.” Every Sunday we study and apply God’s Word. Revelation 2-3 contain letters from Jesus to seven first century churches. Study His timeless counsel, encouragement, instruction and warnings. It seems this church at Ephesus may have become All Head, No Heart:

I. Approval (Revelation 2:2-3, 6) A. Serving (v. 2a) B. Sacrificing (v. 2a) C. Steadfast (v. 2b) D. Separated (v. 2c) E. Suffering (v. 3, 6) II. Accusation (Revelation 2:4) A. Much like Samson (Judges 13:24=25) B. Much like King Saul (I Sam. 11:6; 16:14) C. Much like Demas (Col. 4:14; Philemon 24; 2 Tim. 4:10)

III. Admonition (Revelation 2:5-7)

A. Recognize (v. 4) B. Remember (v. 5a) C. Repent (v. 5b, 5d) D. Repeat (v. 5c) E. Renewal (v. 7)

CONCLUSION

The church is God’s plan for changing the world, one life at a time! Jesus’ seven letters to the churches of Revelation 2-3 prove that a healthy local church is the hope of the world! Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself up for Her (Eph. 5:25)! Who will follow Him in this?

God's plan is to reach and redeem the world with the message of the Cross through the local church! In reality, all seven of Jesus' short letters are to Athens Christian Church today!

-Applying Today's Sermon to Your Life -

1. Our 2023 Bible studies focus on Short New Testament Letters from God (Galatians-Philemon, James, 1/2 Peter, 1/2/3 John, Jude, and Jesus' letters in Revelation 2-3). Our Verse-of-the-Week today is Ephesians 3:21, "To God be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen." The general pattern in Jesus' seven letters is commendation, concern and correction. What would He commend here? What concern would He hold? What correction would He share? Would you (we) receive Him?
2. Read Revelation 2-3 to get a feel for all seven of Jesus' letters to the churches.

Try to note one strength and one weakness of each church.
Write an overview of

each of the seven churches and discuss with a friend how these are actually

timeless letters for every Body of Christ, every church, today:

A. Ephesus, The Loveless Church:

B. Smyrna, The Persecuted Church:

C. Pergamos, The Compromising Church:

D. Thyatira, The Corrupt Church:

E. Sardis, The Dead Church:

F. Philadelphia, The Faithful Church:

G. Laodicea, The Lukewarm Church:

3. Jesus is looking to use a local church to make disciples who will follow Him. Is

our congregation available for His use? Are you, personally, available? How so?

What will your role be in the local church for His plan? Be very specific.

4. Chuck Swindoll suggests Jesus' messages to these seven churches are:

A. Remember your first love! E. Wake up!

B. Stay faithful! F. Hold fast what you have!

C. Return to the truth! G. Trust in God's riches, not your own!

D. Keep pure!

The church in Ephesus was sound in doctrine and works, but they had become a

loveless church. How is Jesus' admonition in 2:5-7 the answer? What's the

application for you/us?

5. I'd grade my work in Christ's church with an: A B C D F (circle one).

6. Describe and discuss your own "first love" (2:4) for Christ. What was that like?

A loving relationship naturally changes. But how do you know if you have left

your "first love"? And if you have, how do you renew your relationship (2:5-7)?

7. Imagine living today without faith, without knowing Jesus, without knowing how

to pray, and without a supportive church family. Now think about your neighbors,

your coworkers, your relatives, your classmates, your friends,

and people in your

circle of acquaintance. Who needs your faith, your Jesus, your prayers, your

church family? Will you ask Jesus to make His appeal to them through you?

8. I will put today's Bible study into action now by: