



Letters to the Seven Churches

Revelation 2:1-7 NIV

“To the **angel** of the church in Ephesus write:

These are the words of him who holds the **seven stars** in his **right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands**. 2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

4 Yet I hold this against you: **You have forsaken the love you had at first**. 5 Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. 6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.
Written 60 yrs after Christ.

There were many more churches than these 7.

3 ways these letters can be looked at today.

As a condition of any church

As a view of periods in church history.

As exhortation to individual lives.

Historical- Prophetic Interpretation.

This view sees each of the seven churches as successive periods in the history of the church - from its inception as told in the book of Acts right on up to the End Times.

Ephesus – Apostolic Church AD 30-100

Ephesus means desired

Ephesus had the best possible teachers and preachers.

Acts 18 **Aquila and Priscilla, Apollas**

Beginning Acts 19 **Paul** was there for three years.

Acts 20 Paul trained the leaders there.

Timothy pastored the church at Ephesus.

Later **Tychicus**

Finally **John**.

(John was arrested in Ephesus and marooned on the island of Patmos)

Ephesus would have been a mega church.
The other churches were an extension of Ephesus.

City of Ephesus

It had its own political system.

Strategic location - Four great highways and the largest port of Corinth.

**v1. "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:
These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands."**

Angel - messenger or angel.

To the Teaching Elder –

Of the church - Ecclesia – not the building, the people.

Jesus holds the 7 stars in his right hand. Honor, power.
Possession.

Reminder to us that Jesus holds us in his hands.

This is all about Jesus.

We do not belong to ourselves. God has purchased, bought us by his blood. He has a right to us.

1 Corinthians 6:20

"You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies."

Seven lamp stands - the seven churches.

v2 Words of Affirmation " I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false."

I know your deeds - work to exhaustion, completely spent.

Perseverance - Patience.

You cannot tolerate wicked people, You don't tolerant sin. (Not the worlds view of tolerance) not a condemning attitude toward sinners. We must love others and not condemn.

When we tolerate sin we will suffer. Sin is always sin. Truth and grace. **Intolerant of Sin-**

v3 Endured hardships. Hard workers

“You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.”

Suffering for Christ. Speak the truth in love.

v4 Yet... I hold this against you.

“Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.”

You have “forsaken” the love you had for Jesus.

Remember at first - when you couldn’t get enough.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

“If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.”

v5. “Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first...”

It was a choice a decision. Small steps. But now they are far away.

REPENT!! Do what you did at first.

REMEMBER - couldn’t get enough.

REPENT – turn around - Change your mind. Sorry you sinned.

RETURN - Studying the word, praying. Telling others about Jesus.

v5 “...If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.”

Your, witness, light, influence.

v6 Nicolaitans- immoral. Once was with God but now leads others away.

v7 Ears to hear let him hear. Listen.

1 John 5:4-5 “for everyone born of God overcomes the world.

This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our

faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”

Theses 7 churches aren’t even around today. Turkey is 99.97% Muslim.

“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Are you listening?

In Christ Alone

--Stuart Townend

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.

What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save.

Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again.

And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.

No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.