

Revelation 2:1-7 (NKJ) [The Loveless Church]

- 1** “To the ^[a]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:
- 2** “I know your works, your labor, your ^[b]patience, and that you cannot ^[c]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.
- 4** Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.
- 5** 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.
- 6** But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
- 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.”

Footnotes

[a] 2:1 Or messenger

[b] 2:2 perseverance

[c] 2:2 endure

Notes on Footnotes

The KJV / NKJV is based on the received text, the version where there exist most ancient Greek manuscripts. **NU** - stands for Netsle-Aland Greek New Testament /United Bible Society. These are texts based on the oldest, but not the most numerous ancient manuscripts.

The NU-Text found in the footnotes represent the text found in Alexandria / Egypt, because this text is considered to be oldest version of the new testament still in existence. However, old does not automatically mean correct. Alexandria is known to be the seat of occult teachings in ancient times. Even in the 1st and 2nd century there were already incorrect versions of Paul's letters in circulation, but the majority of the copies (i.e. the received text) agreed with each other.

M - Masoretic Text - Traditional text of the Old Testament. Often compared to the LXX (Septuagint, which is the Greek version of the Old Testament.)

See Acts 17:11 — Be like the Bereans; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”

Beginning of Pastor Scott’s Audio Study of Revelation 2:1-7

See Revelation 1:19 The outline of the Book of Revelation).

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

- ✦ Things you have **seen** — The revelation of Jesus Christ and introduction to the main subjects of the book (Chapter 1)
- ✦ Things which **are** — “are”, in the present tense, The church age with seven messages to the seven churches (Chapters 2 & 3)
- ✦ Things which **will take place** — Prophecy (Chapters 4-22)
- ✦ God sees from the beginning to the end, and everything in between

Seven Messages and Four Applications

Similar Structure:

1. An address to a particular congregation.
2. An introduction of Jesus.
3. A statement regarding the condition of the church.
4. A verdict from Jesus regarding the condition of the church.
5. A command from Jesus to the church.
6. A general exhortation to all Christians.
7. A promise of reward.

Applications:

1. Locally
2. Ecclesiastically
3. Individually
4. Prophetically/Historically

Four Element Pattern:

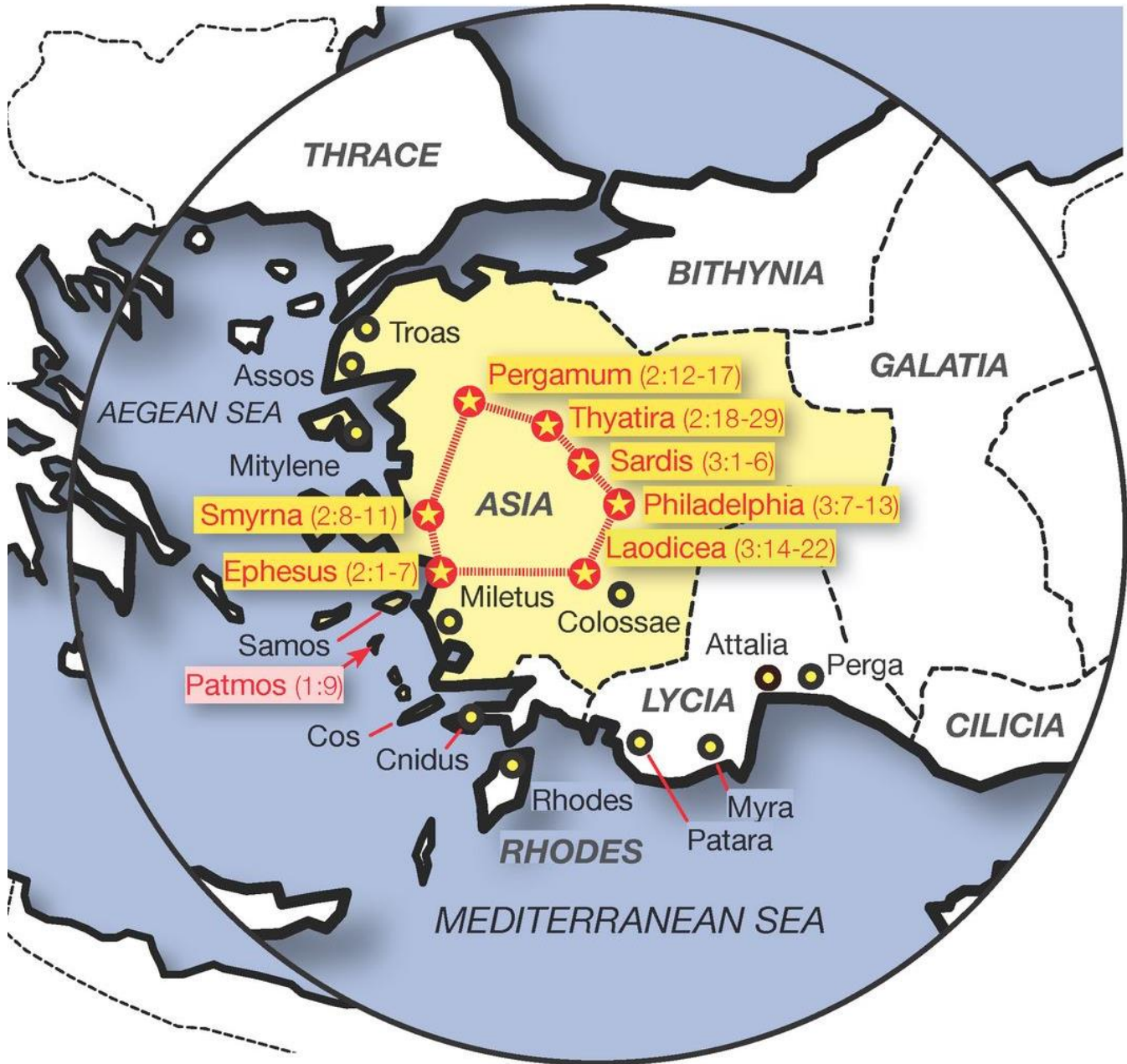
1. A Positive Affirmation
2. A Corrective Exhortation
3. An Eternal Motivation
4. A Partial Revelation of Jesus Christ

We can see the state of each of these seven churches – and the state of our own walk with Jesus – by looking at what Jesus has to say to each church in each section.

See Psalm 34:3 Psalm 34 (The Happiness of Those Who Trust in God)

[A Psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.]

1 I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. **3** Oh, magnify the Lord with me. And let us exalt His name together.



See Acts 17:11 — Be like the Bereans; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”

Jesus’ letter to the church at Ephesus.

1 “To the ^[a]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 angel: — (Strong’s Greek: 32. ἄγγελος (aggelos-means n angel, messenger).

This angel may be the pastor of the church at Ephesus, or an angel looking over the church at Ephesus.

This angel represents this church. But the letter is written to the whole church.

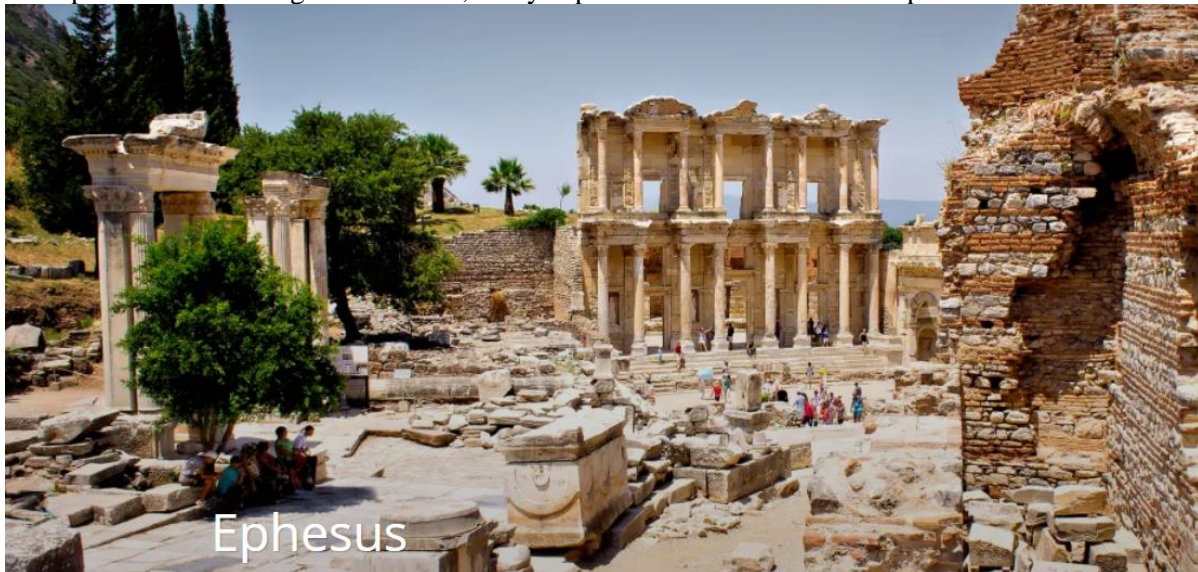
See: Revelation 1:20

12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying [NU, M omit to me] to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of [Unseen; the unseen realm]Hades and of Death. 19 [NU, M Therefore, write] Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 20 The [hidden truth]mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the [Or messengers]angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands [NU, M omit which you saw]which you saw are the seven churches.

The Church of Ephesus: Existed from 33 A.D. to 100 A.D.

The city of Ephesus: Was known as “The Gateway to Asia”, and was a religious, cultural, and economic center. The temple of Roman goddess Diana, a fertility goddess; worshipped with immoral sex, was located there. This temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Her temple was also a major treasury and bank of the ancient world.

Ephesus was a stronghold of Satan, many superstitious and satanic were practiced.



Ephesus Location:

Ephesus was built on a river bend, that was eventually dredged into a full harbor near the mouth of the Cayster River, on the western coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Along the coastal plain between Smyrna to the north and Miletus to the south, the site is now about six miles from the Aegean Sea. Because of the man-made harbor structure and the flow of the river, a backwash flow caused the harbor

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to frequently silt up. When the harbor was clear, Ephesus was a great seaport. The city sat at the convergence of three land routes with a shipping lane. The land routes that converged on Ephesus included:

- 1) The Colossae / Laodicea Road (traveling east),
- 2) The road to Sardis and Galatia (northeast), and
- 3) The Smyrna (north) main road.

Holds: (In the ancient Greek “kratein” and is emphatic). Jesus holds them securely they belong to Jesus.

Jesus describes Himself to the church at Ephesus: He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

— These images are taken from John’s vision of Jesus in **Revelation 1**. They emphasize the authority of Jesus in the Church (He holds the seven stars) and His immediate presence in the Church (He walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands). This introduction stresses that Jesus is central to the church, and should be recognized as central to the church.

See (also) Revelation 1:20 Vision of the Son of Man

9 I, John, [NU, M omit both] both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. **10** I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, **11** saying, [NU, M omit “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and,] “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches [NU, M omit which are in Asia] which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, **13** and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. **14** His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; **15** His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; **16** He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. **17** And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying [NU, M omit to me] to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. **18** I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of [Lit. Unseen; the unseen realm] Hades and of Death. **19** [NU, M Therefore, write] Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. **20** The [hidden truth]mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the [Or messengers]angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands [NU, M omit which you saw]which you saw are the seven churches.

This symbolizes his presence in the church and his observation of the testimony of the in Asia minor

2-3 What Jesus knows about the Christians of Ephesus.

2 “I know your works, your labor, your [b]patience, and that you cannot [c]bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

Matthew 7:1 (Do Not Judge)

1 “Judge [Condemn] not, that you be not judged. **2** For with what [Condemnation] judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. **3** And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? **4** Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? **5** Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

Matthew 7:15,16 (You Will Know Them by Their Fruits)

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. **16** You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? **17** Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **18** A good tree

See Acts 17:11 — Be like the Bereans; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”

cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

We don't judge but, we should be fruit inspectors

I know your works: Jesus looked at His church, and He knew its condition, it isn't hidden to Jesus. He would say the same thing to us today. I know your works.

b. Your works, your labor, your patience: They worked hard for the Lord. Patience (the ancient Greek word “hupomone”, means steadfast endurance).

c. You cannot bear those who are evil: The Ephesian church pursued doctrinal purity. Paul warned the Ephesians in **Acts 20:31 (The Ephesian Elders Exhorted)**

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. **18** And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, **19** serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; **20** how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, **21** testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. **22** And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, **23** except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. **24** [NU *But I do not count my life of any value or dear to myself*]But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my [course]race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

25 “And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. **26** Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent [*Lit. clean*] of the blood of all men. **27** For I have not [*avoided declaring f*]shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. **28** Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church [*M of the Lord and Godg*]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 [*Lit. clean*]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. **3** and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

4. What Jesus has against the church at Ephesus.

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

Nevertheless I have this against you: Nevertheless, which means “in spite of that”. Jesus took into account all the good in the Ephesian church, but, He had something against them, all the good in the Ephesian church did not cancel out the bad Jesus is about to describe.

b. You have left your first love: There is something seriously wrong. They have left, **not lost** their first love. They don't it have anymore.

Something can be lost quite by accident, but leaving is a deliberate act.

- When we lose something, we don't know where to find it.
- When we leave something, we know where to find it
- Without love, all is vain.

See 2 Kings 6 (The Floating Ax Head)

1 And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, “See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. **2** Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell.” So he answered, “Go.” **3** Then one said, “Please consent to go with your servants.” And he answered, “I will go.” **4** So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. **5** But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron axe head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, “Alas, master! For it was borrowed.” **6** So the man of God said, “Where did it fall?” And he showed him the place. So, he cut off a stick, and threw it in there; and he made the iron float. **7** Therefore he said, “Pick it up for yourself.” So, he reached out his hand and took it.

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5-6 What Jesus wants the church at Ephesus to do.

5 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.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen: The first step in restoration for the Ephesian church (and us) is to remember; remember from where you have fallen. Remembering where they used to be in their love for the Lord and for one another.

When the Prodigal Son was in the pigpen, the first step in restoration was remembering what life was like back in his father's home

Luke 15:17-19 (The Parable of the Lost Son)

17 “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! **18** I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, **19** and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”

This is always the first step in getting back to where we should be with the Lord.

Repent: Means to change your direction, to go a different way, a change of attitude and conduct.

Do the first works: — Go back to the basics, to the first things they did when you first fell in love with Jesus. The things that we never grow beyond.

- Remember how you used to spend time in His Word?
- Remember how you used to pray?
- Remember the joy in getting together with other Christians?
- Remember how excited you were about telling others about Jesus?

Or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place —unless you repent: A stern warning. Unless they repent, Jesus will remove their light and His presence. When their lampstand was removed, they are no longer a true church of Jesus Christ. It would be the church of Ichabod, where the glory had departed

1 Samuel 4:21. Ichabod

19 Now his daughter-in-law, Phinehas’ wife, was with child, due to be delivered; and when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and gave birth, for her labor pains came upon her. **20** And about the time of her death the women who stood by her said to her, “Do not fear, for you have borne a son.” But she did not answer, nor did she

[pay any attention to] regard it. **21** Then she named the child Ichabod. [Lit. Inglorious] saying, “The glory has departed from Israel!” because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. **22** And she said, “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

1 Corinthians 13:2 (The Greatest Gift)

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. **2** 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. **3** And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body [NU so I may boast] to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. **4** Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not [arrogant] puffed up; **5** does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, [keeps no accounts of evil] thinks no evil; **6** does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; **7** bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **8** Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. **9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part. **10** But when that which is [complete] perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

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

But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate: Not be overly discourage the Ephesians, Jesus complimented them because they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

Revelation 2:15 The Compromising Church

12 “And to the [f]angel of the church in Pergamos write,

See Acts 17:11 — Be like the Bereans; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”

‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: **13** “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. **14** But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. **15** Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, [NU, M likewise] which thing I hate. **16** Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with sword of My mouth.

The Nicolaitans: appear to come from a sect group at the time that followed a man by the name of Nicolas. The Nicolaitans, he seems to have fallen away from his faith. During John’s time. The Nicolaitans buckled under the pressures of Roman rule and turned to idolatrous teachings, enforcing sacrifices to various Roman deities. The Nicolaitans encouraged the Christians in Ephesus to do the same in a time of dire persecution

Corinthians 6:12 Glorify God in Body and Spirit

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not [profitable] helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of [Or anything] any. **13** Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **14** And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.). In eating the food given to the idols, this implies they had gone to the temples to receive this food and would’ve had to engage in the immoralities there to acquire this meat.

Nicolas: Nic’o-laos His name comes from a Greek root words Nic’o means “conqueror” or “destroyer”, Laos means “the people”.

Some think Nicolas is the same man who appears to convert to Christianity

Nicolas Was:

- A Gentile converted to Judiasm
- Then converted to Christianity
- Then converted to this false doctrine
- Nicolas was a deacon - gone bad

Acts 6:5 (Seven Chosen to Serve)

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.), but lost his way to a teaching known as Gnosticism, a heretical teaching that swept away many members of the church in the second century. But nothing, other than the roots of his name, seem to link him to the sect that seemed to plague the church of Ephesus.

Which I also hate: This is a powerful statement from Jesus who is so full in (agape) love. God of love hates sin, and wants His us to also hate sin.

Hebrews 4:16 Our Compassionate High Priest

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **15** For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. **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.

2 2 Corinthians 1:24 (Sparing the Church)

23 Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. **24** Not that we [rue/] have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

7a A general exhortation to all whom will hear.

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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.”

He who has an ear: This qualifies everyone – or at least everyone who will listen. This letter was not only written to the church at Ephesus in the Apostle John’s day. It is written to us, all believers in Christ.

Let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches: Each of these seven letters apply to all churches, not just to one church. We must hear what the Spirit says to the churches. All of these letters were meant to speak to us, if we will only hear (listen, understand and do) what the Spirit says.

To him who overcomes: Jesus made us overcomers.

Psalm 34:8

8 Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

9 Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no [lack] want to those who fear Him.

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.

Footnotes

[a] 2:1 Or messenger

[b] 2:2 perseverance

[c] 2:2 endure