

Revelation 2:1~7

Introduction:

1. John delivers Jesus' message to four churches of Asia Minor in this chapter.
2. There are several views on the interpretation of the next two chapters in Revelation.
 - A. The HISTORICAL view – States that the letters are past letters to seven literal churches with no prophetic or representative characteristics whatsoever.
 - B. The REPRESENTATIVE view – States that the letters were written to seven literal churches but characteristics of each church can be found in nearly every church today.
 - C. The HISTORICAL PROPHETIC view – States that the letters were written to seven literal churches, but each church represents a period of time or phase in successive church history.
 - D. The HISTORICAL, REPRESENTATIVE, PROPHETIC view – states that the letters were written to seven literal churches, that there are characteristics of each church listed in the letters that can be found in nearly every church today, and that they possibly represent seven distinct periods of successive church history.
3. The last view seems to be the most appropriate.
 - I. The Church At Ephesus (2:1-7)
 - A. The Splendid **City** of Ephesus (2:1a)
 1. The name “Ephesus” means “Desirable.”
 2. It was the religious and commercial capital of Asia.
 3. It was a beautiful sea-side city.
 4. It was the home of the Temple of Diana (Greek goddess – Artemis)
 - a. The temple was 418 feet long by 240 feet wide.
 - b. There were 100 exterior columns (36 were hand carved)
 - c. The building was constructed of marble and Cyprus wood.
 - d. It served as the bank of Asia.
 - e. It is listed as one of the “Seven Wonders of the World.”
 - B. The Spiritual **Condition** of Ephesus
 1. Worship of the goddess **Diana** was very lewd and sensual.
 - a. She was the goddess of fertility, sex and reproduction.
 - b. This religion propagated immorality, adultery and sexual mutilation.

- c. There were thousands of temple prostitutes and priests.
 2. There was tremendous **money** to be made in crafting silver idols of Diana. (Acts 19:24-27)
 3. The spiritual climate of the city was one of darkness. "...the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana." (Acts 19:35)
- C. The Supernatural **Church** of Ephesus
1. The church was founded by **Paul** in Acts 18:19-21; 19:1-41
 2. Paul spent 2 ½ to 3 years in the city grounding this church.
- D. The Sovereign **Counselor** of the Church of Ephesus (2:1b): Jesus holds the seven stars and walks among the seven candlesticks.
1. Each letter begins with a reference to the vision of chapter 1.
 2. Chapter 1 defines the candlesticks as the different churches and the stars as the "angels" or messengers (pastors) of the seven church (1:20)
- E. The Superb **Commendation** of the Church of Ephesus (2:2-3, 6)
1. It was a **laboring** church (2:2a, 3) – "Labor" means to "toil to exhaustion." "...hast borne...and for my namesake hast not fainted."
 2. It was a **persecuted** church (2:2a, 3) – "Patience" means "enduring as persecuted." "...hast patience..."
 3. It was a **separated** church (2:2b, 6) - "Cannot bear them which are evil.." 'But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate."
 - a. They possessed **intolerance** for the wicked, depraved lifestyle that was prevalent in the city due to the worship of Diana.
 - b. The church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:6) is commended for hating the "deeds" of the Nicolaitanes, and the church of Pergamos is blamed for having them who hold their "doctrines" (15). They were seemingly a class of professing Christians, who sought to introduce into the church a false freedom or licentiousness, thus abusing Paul's doctrine of grace (comp. 2 Pet. 2:15, 16, 19), and were probably identical with those who held the doctrine of Baalam (q.v.), Rev. 2:14. – *Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary*
 4. It was a **doctrinal** church (2:2c) - "tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:"
 - a. They possessed a purity of **doctrine** that confronted anyone who claimed to be "sent" (apostle) by God.
 - b. "...**tried** them..." suggests Conflict and Contending (Jude3)
- F. The Stinging **Chastening** of the Church of Ephesus (2:4): "...thou hast left thy first love."

1. Their love for Jesus had flickered to **duty**.
 2. The abundance of Duty will never make up for the lack of **Devotion**.
- G. The Stern **Counsel** to the Church of Ephesus (2:5)
1. The procedure involved (2:5a-5c)
 - a. They are to **remember** their first love (2:5a)
 - b. They are to **repent** (2:5b)
 - c. They are to **return** to their first love (2:5c)
 2. The penalty involved (2:5d): "...I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."
- H. The Solemn **Challenge** to the Church of Ephesus (2:7): Jesus promises all overcomers will eat of the Tree of Life.