

Ephesus – Revelation 2:1-7

The Church That Lost Their First Love

Pastor Adam Hall ☞ Dryden First Baptist Church ☞ Sept 25, 2022

Revelation 2:1-7 ESV

¹ “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

² “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. ³ I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. ⁴ But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶ Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

REVELATION: ROME & THE SEVEN CHURCHES

© 2010 Mark Barry. Please do not republish without permission, but feel free to copy for personal use.



Introduction and Background

- have you ever lost a _____ for a food?
- you haven't eaten a particular food in a while and you forget how great it tastes
- you taste it again and _____ in love with it all over again
- Kellogg's Corn Flakes used this idea in their advertisements in the 80s!
- in these commercials they have a tough guy, a young cool kid and old cowboy trashing the cereal because it looks plain and does not have nuts or fruit
- then these brave men try the cereal and are just overjoyed in how great it tastes
- then the announcer says "Kellogg's Corn Flakes, taste them again for the first time"

- the _____ in Ephesus was doing a great job and the Lord _____ them but the Lord had something against them
- they had abandoned the _____ they had at first
- their love for the _____ and their love for _____ had become cold
- they did not love the Lord as they did at _____

- we see lots of people _____ their loves in society
- we see this by even a famous song that was written by Paul Simon called "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover"
- it is a _____ to see people fall out of love with one another
- but how much more of a tragedy is it when our _____ for the Lord grows _____

- in the book of _____ we see just how great the love of the Lord is towards us
- Jesus is the Lamb who was slain
- Jesus _____ and bore the wrath of God so that we could experience the _____ of God
- Jesus suffered and died to show His _____ for us

- we are called to love the Lord in _____ to His great love for us, it is shown in our _____ to Him
- we are also called to love one _____ because the Lord has _____ us His great love

- the book of Revelation is apocalyptic _____
- this means _____ are used to communicate the truths of the Lord
- the book of Revelation is hard to interpret because it uses symbols or _____ that we might not fully understand
- the gospels in the New Testament are _____ and they are easier to understand
- the letters in the New Testament are easier to understand
- because Revelation is not _____ literally, we must be careful & diligent with how we interpret it

- the book of Revelation was written by _____ the apostle

Revelation 1:1 The _____ of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant _____,

- this is the same John who wrote the _____ of John and the letters of John (1, 2 & 3 John)

- John was the beloved _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ

- but John _____ this letter in difficult circumstances

Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the _____ of God and the testimony of _____ .

- John was _____ to the Island of Patmos which would have been south of the City of Ephesus because he was _____ the gospel

- John faced _____ , because of his preaching of Jesus Christ, by the _____ who sent to him to Patmos

- he wrote this book to _____ churches, who were real churches during the 1st century

Revelation 1:11 saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the _____ churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

- the first church that John addresses is the church at _____

- we _____ a lot about the church at Ephesus because:

1) _____ wrote two letters to the church at Ephesus, the book of Ephesians and the book of 1 Timothy

2) _____ , in the book of Acts, talks a lot about that church at Ephesus in Acts 18-20

- Ephesus was a very important _____ city that also had three major _____ leading to it

- Ephesus was also the home to a _____ dedicated to the Roman _____ Diana

- Ephesus would have been a city of great diversity and great _____

- John writes to 7 _____ and they all have the same format

1) Church Angel is Addressed

2) Christ is Described

3) Christ Commends the Church

4) Christ Confronts the Church

5) Christ Warns the Church

6) Christ Exhorts the Church

7) Christ Gives Promises to the Church

- we will breakdown today's passage as follows:

- 1) (2:1) Christ Described
- 2) (2:2-3) Christ Commends
- 3) (2:4-6) Christ Confronts
- 4) (2:7) Christ Promises

1) (2:1) Christ Described

(2:1) "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

- when you read Revelation chapters 2-3 you will see that each church has an _____
- the angel is the _____ for that church and receives the _____ for that church
- do you see how Jesus is described here?
- in Revelation 2:1 Jesus is described as holding the seven _____ in His hands and walking among the seven _____
- John previously talked about Jesus in the same way in Revelation 1

Revelation 1:12-13 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden _____, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.

Revelation 1:16 In his right hand he held seven _____, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

- it is also important to note that in Revelation 1, Jesus is described with the use of several different imageries each of these _____ of Christ are applied to the 7 churches
- John in Revelation 2:1, is describing two important _____ about the Lord Jesus Christ
- 1) Jesus holds the 7 stars
- this indicates that Jesus is a _____ Lord because holding something in your hands shows that you have _____ and _____ over them
- this imagery could also be a _____ of the pagan nations who worshipped the stars
- this imagery points out to those who worshipped the stars that Jesus is sovereign _____ the stars, and Jesus is _____ than the gods and goddess that they worshipped

2) Jesus walks among the 7 golden lampstands

- this symbolizes His _____ in the church
- the lampstands refer to the 7 _____
- Jesus walks among the church and thus Jesus is _____ in His church

- when Jesus _____ you and delivers you from the bondage of sin, you are saved to belong to the _____ of Christ, where Christ is _____

- this glorious _____ that the Lord will _____ among His people is mentioned numerous times in the Old and New Testaments

- Jesus in the great commission gives us this promise

Matthew 28:20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am _____ you always, to the end of the age."

- Jesus is a sovereign God who _____ among His people

- Jesus rules and _____ and Jesus is with us – Praise the Lord

2) (2:2-3) Christ Commends

(2:2) "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.

- Jesus can confidently say "I know " because Jesus is a _____ God and walks _____ His people, Jesus knows His people and _____ what they are doing for the glory of the Lord and what they are doing to dishonor the Lord

- in 2:2 Jesus _____ the Ephesian church for 4 things

1) They work

- this church was eager to do the _____ of the Lord

2) They toil

- they worked _____ doing the labours of the Lord

3) They have patient endurance

- they endured and were faithful to the Lord in spite of _____ from the Roman state

4) They do not tolerate false teachers

- they did not _____ the false apostles

- in Biblical times there could be great financial benefit to being a _____ preacher

- this attracted all sorts of false teachers who were trying to make _____ off the church

- they were also teaching _____ doctrine

- we know that the _____ church was encouraged to be on _____ against the false teachers

- Paul _____ these Christians in Acts 20 that false teachers would come into their midst and try and _____ the gospel of Jesus Christ

Acts 20:29-30 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking _____ things, to draw away the disciples after them.

- Ephesus was an _____ church
- they were a church of _____
- they saw church not as a cruise ship where you are served and all your needs are met but as a _____ where the whole body of Christ worked _____ to serve the Lord
- but the Ephesian church also _____ the doctrine of the church to maintain her purity
- they did not _____ false teachers or false teachings
- they were able to do this because they were _____ in the person and work of Jesus Christ
- they _____ the teachings that were presented to the believers

(2:3) I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.

- Revelation 2:3 states again that Jesus “_____” because He walks among the churches and _____ among His people
- Jesus knows that this church has experienced persecution but has _____
- when Paul went to _____ for the first time, there was serious opposition to his _____
- those who made money off of _____ worship were upset at the message of the gospel because they knew if people were saved by the grace of Christ, and served Christ, their idol making _____ would dry up
- hear their complaining in Acts 19

Acts 19:24-27 For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. ²⁵ These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. ²⁶ And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this _____ has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. ²⁷ And there is danger not only that this _____ of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

- because of this controversy a _____ broke out in Ephesus against the Christians

3) (2:4-6) Christ Confronts

(2:4) But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

- there is a “_____” in Revelation 2:4 because the Lord is going to _____ this church

- although they were doing _____ things well, they had _____ to follow some other commands that the Lord required of them

- they abandoned the love that they had at first

- this love could refer to two types of love

1) their love for the _____

2) their love for one _____

- it is hard to know exactly which love Jesus is referring to here _____ the love that we have for the Lord is _____ to the love that we ought to have for each other

- it is possible that although they had good _____ and had resisted false teachers that they had failed to _____ one another

- or it is possible that they just plain _____ a love for the Lord and they no longer acted out the love of _____ like they once did

(2:5) Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

- Jesus confronts them and commands them to _____

- did you notice that the word “repent” is used _____ times in this verse

- “repent” means they need to _____ their mind about their lack of love for the Lord or their lack of love for each other

- they need to be _____ for their sin

- they need to have a _____ for their sin

- they need to _____ away from their sin and seek mercy and grace in Jesus Christ

- they were to _____ sinning and change their ways

- Jesus _____ this church that if they do not _____ he will take their lampstand away

- Jesus warns this church that if they do not return to _____ Christ or others as they once did, they will _____ to be the church

- how many times have we seen churches who were once _____ to Christ and His mission and now they have _____ their first love

- this has happened a lot in Canada where many churches do not even _____ the same Jesus that was preached when that _____ was planted

(2:6) Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

- Jesus _____ this church again for what they stand for

- they _____ and despise the works of the Nicolaitans

- we do not fully know what the Nicolaitans are all _____
 - the _____ teachings of the Nicolaitans is also mentioned in Revelation 2:14-15
 - as Christ addresses the church at Pergamum He notes this _____ of people
- Revelation 2:14-15** But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. ¹⁵ So also you have some who hold the _____ of the Nicolaitans.
- it is obvious that the Nicolaitan teaching was connected to sexual immorality and _____ worship
 - Jesus connects this _____ teaching with Balaam and his misbehaviours
 - what did _____ do?
 - in Numbers 25 he led the Israelite men in worshipping the _____ of Moab and to join in their sexual immorality with Moabite women, which greatly _____ the Lord
- Numbers 25:1-3** While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. ² These invited the people to the sacrifices of their _____, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³ So Israel _____ himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.
- commendably, the Ephesian church had _____ sexual immorality and food sacrificed to idols
 - which is what Paul _____ them to do in the book of Ephesians 4-5

4) (2:7) Christ Promises

(2:7) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'

- Jesus calls the churches to _____ to what the Spirit of God is saying
 - the word of Jesus Christ is something that demands our attention
 - the word "conquer" in Revelation 2:7 is the Greek word "nike"
 - this word means to be _____
 - the church that is victorious over _____ and ins spite of persecution, is given an amazing _____
 - there is promise that the _____ believers in Jesus Christ will eat from the _____ of _____ in the paradise of God
 - of course this points us back to Genesis 2 when Adam and Eve had perfect fellowship with God
 - this paradise is described in Revelation 21-22
- Revelation 21:3-5** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the _____ place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things

have passed away." ⁵ And he who was seated on the _____ said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

- oh what a _____ it will be, to know the full presence of Christ
- this will be a _____ without sorrow and sin

Application

1) See the Beauty of Christ

- this section teaches us some amazing _____ concerning the Lord
- a) Jesus is a _____ God who rules over the universe and the whole world is in His hands
- b) Jesus is a _____ Saviour who delivers and saves His people by _____
- c) Jesus _____ among His people
- if you _____ to Christ you have the presence of Christ within you by grace
- but Jesus is also _____ to punish unrepentant sin and we see this clearly not only with the church at Ephesus but in the whole book of Revelation
- Jesus will remove the Ephesian church's lampstand if they do not _____
- this means that they will _____ to be the church of Jesus Christ if they do not _____
- the beauty of Christ is that He is _____, He will punish sin,
- _____ He is also gracious, he forgives the sin of those who repent and turn to Him
- Jesus is described quite accurately as a _____, which is not safe, and a _____ that is slain
- we see the _____ of Christ and His grace described here:

Revelation 5:5-6 And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the _____ of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

- Jesus is _____
- Jesus knows our weakness and His _____ is offered anyway
- but Jesus is also _____ and will punish sin
- C S Lewis was right to speak about Jesus when he said, "of course He is not safe, but He is _____"

2) Has Your Love for Christ Grown Cold?

- the book of Revelation was written _____ years _____ this church was planted so it might be expected that there might be some people who have abandoned the love they had at _____

- we have seen a similar _____ happen in Canada over the last couple of years
- people who once professed and claimed they loved Christ have _____ the love they had at first
- the evidence of this is seen by a massive _____ in church attendance in Canada

- Jesus' own words reveal clearly to us _____ we are to love Him

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will _____ my commandments.

John 14:21 Whoever has my _____ and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who _____ me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and _____ myself to him."

- maybe we are neglecting _____ with Christians
- maybe we are harbouring _____
- maybe we have joined with the teaching of the Nicolaitans and have _____ in sexual immorality
- maybe we have a _____ sin that we refuse to deal with
- Jesus Christ's command to us is clear!
- we need to _____, we need to change our mind about our _____ and we need to _____ from our sin
- finally, with a sorrowful heart, we need to seek _____ and mercy in Jesus Christ alone

3) Has Your Love for Others Grown Cold?

- we have been through some trying times and these trying times have challenged the church
- I have heard horror stories of how many Christians have _____ to love one another
- we need to be clear here, _____ we do not _____ one another, _____ we do not love God

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also _____ to love one another.

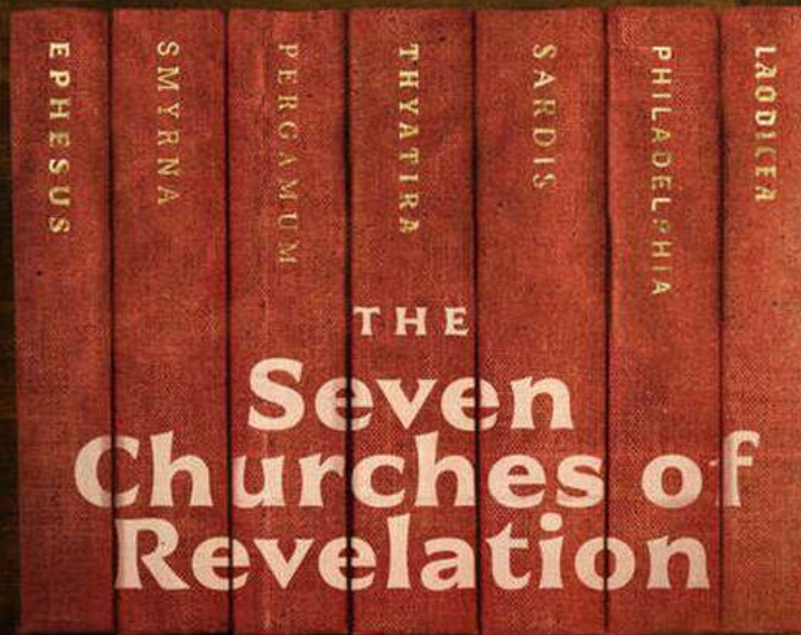
- if we are harbouring bitterness, we also need to _____ and change our mind about this bitterness and _____ mercy and grace in Jesus Christ
- if _____ was walking around our church what would he see?
- as we celebrate 115 years of God's faithfulness to us, let us strive to _____ for the Lord, and thus do the _____ of ministry
- let us strive to keep the gospel pure by _____ tolerating false teachers
- let us strive to love one _____ in the body of Christ by _____ one another in love

Coming UP

- Oct 2 Revelation 2:8-11 – Smyrna
-Communion/Benevolent Offering
- Oct 9 Revelation 2:12-17 - Pergamos
- Oct 16 Revelation 2:18-29 - Thyatira
- Oct 23 Revelation 3:1-6 - Sardis
- Oct 30 Revelation 3:7-13 - Philadelphia
- Nov 6 Revelation 3:14-22 - Laodicea

The Benevolent Fund

Our benevolent fund is distributed by the pastor and elders to meet the unexpected needs of people in our congregation as well as those in our community. If you wish to contribute to this fund, please place your cash donation, in a marked envelope, into the offering box. Please note that this fund is not part of the church's budget (which is based on regular tithes and offerings) and as such does not receive a charitable receipt.



September through November