

20210704 – THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS

Sunday AM – Revelation 2:1-7

I. SALUTATION TO THE CHURCH

A. This is a real church

1. Local, visible, organized to fulfill the great commission – REV 2:2a
2. ACTS 1:8 – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
3. People knew them – They had BORNE but NOT FAINTED

B. This is a church in a pagan city

1. Ephesus was the center of worship for the “goddess” Diana
2. Worship for this pagan goddess was highly immoral (Mardi Gras)
3. ACTS 19:34 – “But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. (35) And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?”

C. Paul labored here

1. ACTS 18:19 – “And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.”
2. ACTS 19:1 - And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,”
3. Timothy was the pastor here at one time – 1 TIM. 1:3 – “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,”

II. COMMENDATION TO THE CHURCH

A. They had patience for labor

1. The Lord commands us to have PATIENCE!
2. LUKE 21:19 – “In your patience possess ye your souls.”
3. ROMANS 5:3 – “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope:”

B. They had no patience for evil

1. “...canst not bear with them...” REV. 2:1
2. That means they were INTOLERANT of evil

3. 2 COR. 6:17 – “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”
- C. They had borne
1. This implies that they had labored with discipline (gardening rows)
 2. To bear, carry, uphold under a weight or a load, laden with a burden
- D. They had not fainted
1. The kept going forward for God – REV 2:3
 2. We should too!

III. REBUKE TO THE CHURCH

- A. Hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes – REV. 2:6
1. This is good!
 2. The “people conquerors”
 - a. I don’t use the word “laity” or clergy because of this verse
 - b. They held themselves ABOVE the rest of the church
 3. Diotrefes and Demetrius – This is the type – 3 JOHN 1:9-12
- B. But they left their first love
1. They had the right opinions but were not acting upon them!
 2. They did a lot of church work but not much JESUS work (witnessing)
 3. Mary and Martha – LUKE 10:38-42
- C. They had LEFT their first love not LOST it
1. Other priorities overshadowed their ZEAL for the Lord
 2. We must not allow our burden to drift into spiritual “coolness”

IV. WARNING TO THE CHURCH

- A. Remember
1. Stop and evaluate where we are
 2. God spoke to King David through Nathan (Singles Conference Friday)
 3. 2 SAM 7:8 – “Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:”
 4. We did NOT bring ourselves here!
- B. Repent
1. Jesus used this word TWO TIMES
 2. First accept the possibility that we are not where God wants us!
 3. And then agree with God on whatever He says!
- C. Return
1. Jesus instructs them to “Do the FIRST works” – REV. 2:5
 2. Repentance is never enough by itself
 3. To be Saved: Repent and BELIEVE (a change in placing faith!)
 - a. To return to our first love: Repent and RETURN

- b. It won't happen "just because" or with "well-wishes"!
- c. Some hard decisions must be made! Some gap-filling must occur!
- d. LUKE 14:28 – "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"

D. Repeat

- 1. Don't stop! Tomorrow: Remember, Repent, and Return (day after that)
- 2. Be "suspicious" of things in our lives – Have we moved forward?
- 3. If not, what's holding us back?

E. Or He will Remove

- 1. Here is the warning – Unless that church returns it will be removed
- 2. Candlestick is a perfect picture, once removed, no LIGHT (no Gospel)
- 3. The hand of God writing "Ichabod" (the glory has departed) on the door

V. PROMISE TO THE CHURCH

A. We must hear with a spiritual ear – we are responsible

- 1. But if we DO hear!
- 2. The overcomers eat of the TREE of LIFE
 - a. Lost in the Garden of Eden
 - b. Regain in Heaven – REV. 22:2

B. The Overcomer? All believers through FAITH

- 1. 1 JOHN 5:4 – "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."
- 2. This world is only temporary – our days are but a moment
- 3. This life is fleeting – but ETERNITY is forever
- 4. This is a call to the Church at Ephesus to WIN THE LOST
- 5. And a call to us as well!

C. What about you today?

- 1. Are you Saved?
- 2. Do you know the free pardon of your sins?
- 3. Sin is the problem, Hell is the penalty, and Jesus is the only answer