

“Ephesus: Doctrinally Zealous, but Lacking in Love”
Revelation 2:1-7

Revelation #4

The risen and exalted Christ ministers to His church at Ephesus.

1. Jesus’ Commendation

vv. 1-3

(1) The Jesus who Speaks – How He Presents Himself

*“These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand,
who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands”*

- **Significance:**

Directly related to Jesus’ admonition to this congregation and His call to repentance (vv. 4-6)

(2) Jesus Knows all about this church!

*“I know your works,
your labor, your patience, and
that you cannot bear those who are evil”*

-1- **A church laboring to maintain purity in life!**

-2- **A church zealous to maintain purity in doctrine!**

*“And you have tested those
who say they are apostles and are not,
and have found them liars”*

-3- **A persevering church!**

*“and you have persevered and have patience, and have
labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.”*

2. Jesus’ Admonition

vv. 4-6

(1) The Church’s Sin Identified (4)

*“Nevertheless I have this against you,
that you have left your first love.”*

- **“first love” - Not comparative, rather that love seen among them at their beginning.**

- cf. ESV; “the love you had at first”

- **Various interpretations:** Love to Jesus? Love to one another? Love to those outside, the lost?

- **Love for the lost – expressed in a zeal and compassion in sharing the gospel.**

- Fits best with the description of Jesus in v. 1: He walks amidst the lampstands.
The church is to be a light-bearing agent to a lost world.

- Fits best with Jesus’ call to “do the first works” (5a); active ministry seems to be in view.

Therefore, Ephesus is a church that had “turned inward.”

Preoccupied and busied with maintaining purity in life and doctrine.

(2) The Remedy (5a)

*“Remember therefore from where you have fallen;
repent and do the first works”*

-1- **Remember!**

- “be remembering” “continue mindful”
- “from where you have fallen”

A settled state is indicated, and *very different* from their character as a congregation early on.

-2- **Repent!** There is need to confess corporate and personal sin in the matter!

-3- **Do the First Works!**

- Gk. aorist: “Do at once”

(3) The Warning (5b)

*“or else I will come to you quickly
and remove your lampstand from its place
– unless you repent.”*

(4) Yet, a Gracious Commendation! (6)

*“But this you have, that you hate the deeds
of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”*

3. Jesus’ Promise

v. 7

(1) The Call to Hear

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

- The admonition is to be received by all – by every individual, and by all of the congregations

(2) The Promise

*“To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life,
which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”*

- **The Condition:** “to him who overcomes”

- Repeated in all of the seven letters
- Characteristic of all true saints
- Descriptive of the character of the Christian life

- **The Reward:** “I will give to eat from the tree of life...”

Emblematic of eternal, abundant life in the presence of God