

# REVELATION

## Every Knee Shall Bow

Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. - Rev. 22:7

### Revelation 2:1-7 Ephesus: What Is Your Motivation?

#### Introduction

- A. Review chapter 1 and the commission of John the apostle. In particular, look again at the seven golden lampstands and the seven stars in Jesus' hands.
- B. Tonight: (2:1-7) as we begin the second section of the book: (1:19) those things that are: the church age Jesus addresses in chapters 2-3. These letters are Jesus' only direct words to the church.
- C. For the next 7 weeks: what God thinks of the church. What are His desires and His wishes for us? And in the process, His word to each of us personally for the church is made up of individual saints.
- D. Each letter will follow the same basic format:
  1. Destination
  2. Description of Jesus from chapter 1
  3. Commendation for most
  4. A rebuke or exhortation
  5. A promise and warning combined
- E. Each letter has a main subject as determined by the Lord's words to them:
  1. Ephesus: motivation for walk and service
  2. Smyrna: satanic opposition
  3. Pergamos: religious compromise
  4. Thyatira: immoral lifestyles
  5. Sardis: spiritual apathy
  6. Philadelphia: lost opportunities
  7. Laodicea: material prosperity

#### (1) Destination

- A. To the leadership of the church, the one Jesus holds in His hand.
- B. Ephesus: chief marketplace of Asia, a large harbor with over a quarter million inhabitants. The city itself was extremely idolatrous, the center of the worship of the goddess Diana (Artemis Gk), the goddess of fertility. Her worship involved perversion and sexual intercourse with temple prostitutes.
- C. Her idolatrous influence clearly seen in the scriptures (Acts 19:35; 23-27).
- D. The church was established here by Paul, Aquila and Priscilla at the end of his 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey and for three years of his 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey (Acts 19).
- E. Paul had sent them a letter some 35 years earlier from a jail cell in Rome about 60AD and Jesus now writes again nearly four decades later.

### **(1) Description of Jesus**

- A. From (1:13,16); Jesus walking in the church amongst the saints holding the pastors in His right hand.

### **(2-3) Commendation**

- A. The approval list of Jesus for this fellowship is long and revealing. It is one thing to be given another's opinion, but this is the Lord Himself!
- B. I know your works: God sees all (Mt. 6:2,5; 1Co. 3:11-15) from action to motive (Heb. 4:13).
- C. Labor, patience, intolerance of evil and discerning heart: Working to the point of exhaustion, steadfast in persecution, holy and separate lives and discerning in their relationships.
- D. Who could ask for anything more than this kind of diligence. Few churches could pass this kind of muster for accomplishment, stamina and history (the church over 40 years old now). Yet the Lord sees what no one else can: looking beyond the outward to the heart and motive of the heart!

### **(4) Rebuke and Exhortation**

- A. Nevertheless: A word of comparison and contrast. One debit that negates all of the assets. What a sad day when the word nevertheless enters into our walks with God (Eph. 3:17-19, 2Co. 5:14, Lk.10:39-42).
- B. Our love for Jesus is the only motivation God accepts, no matter the amount of work or the sacrifice made to accomplish it. God wants our love (Jer. 2:2-3). It is important to realize here that God alone could have pointed this out. Rich in works, poor in love.
- C. How should the bride respond to her husband? What should be the driving force behind her relationship?

### **(5) Promise and Warning**

- A. The solution is summed up in three words:
  - 1. Remember: Love is something you leave, not fall out of! Take a walk down memory lane! It reminds me of the changing of gold to brass (1Ki. 14:25-27) or the warning of (1Co. 13:1).
  - 2. Repent: Turn around 180 degrees! Get back on track!
  - 3. Repeat or return: Do the first works again; by love or not at all! (Mk.7:6-7) (Gen.13:3-4)
- B. If not, the church soon loses His presence and their influence!

### **(6-7) Final Words**

- A. Jesus again finds another commendable attitude: the rejection of the ways of the Nicolaitans: two words meaning: gods over the laity. The establishing of religious hierarchy God rejects for there is only One Mediator between God and man and that is Jesus.
- B. He that has ears to hear: The true believers will respond and can look forward to eternal life! (1Jo. 5:4-5).
- C. Paradise indeed: (Lk. 16:22-23)(Lk. 23:43)(2Co. 12:4).
- D. Next week: Jesus writes to the church of Smyrna