

“Ephesus: The Church of Faded Love”
Revelation 2:1-7

Last Sunday: Christ and the Seven Golden Lampstands

The Four Schools (Views) of Revelation Interpretation:

1. Preterist (past)
2. Historicist (church history)
3. Idealist (spiritual)
4. Futurist (future)

*Eclectic (combines the strengths of the other four views)

Today: Ephesus, the Church of Faded Love

There are five parts to each of these seven letters:

- Description: Christ’s self-description (2:1)
- Commendation: What the church is doing right (2:2-3)
- Rebuke: What the church is doing wrong (2:4)
- Exhortation: Urging the church to take action (2:5-6)
- Promise: If you overcome, you will receive this reward. (2:7)

A few facts about the church:

- Ekklesia – The “called out” ones
- God calls out many peoples (NT), yet ultimately one flock, one shepherd (Jn. 10:16)
- The church is not a building, but a people.
- Luther referred to the church as “gathered” and “scattered.”

Ephesus the city: The largest of the seven cities (250K+)

- White marble buildings... Theatre seated 25K; Amphitheater seated 100K
- Temple of Artemis (Diana): the goddess of fertility; one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and the largest Greek temple ever built.
- Artemis: the goddess of fertility; prostitution
- Acts 19 speaks of their doing magic arts (the occult).

Ephesus the church:

- At forty years old, the church played a leading role in making disciples.
- It was established by Priscilla and Aquilla, who came from Corinth with Paul.
- Apollos preached there (Acts 18:24-26).
- Paul made Ephesus his home base and taught there for two to three years (Acts 19).
- Timothy pastored there (1 and 2 Tim.), and later John pastored there (his home church).

2:2/ “Apostle” – the term can be used in two ways:

1. Apostles of Christ (“The twelve”) – only John is left.
2. Apostles of the churches
 - a. 1st century: “*One who is sent.*” (EX: Paul, James, Barnabas, Silas)
 - b. Today: One who is sent to another people group to preach the gospel. Latin?

2:4/ “But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.”

How do faithful, loving believers become unloving to the Lord and to others?

1. The rocky ground of tribulation or persecution (Mt. 13)
2. The thorny ground of the desires for other things (Mt. 13)
 - a. Mk. 4:19 warns against “the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things...”
3. Putting service above love for Christ and others (Mk. 3:14)
4. Putting doctrine above love for Christ and others (Jn. 13:17)

Whatever happened to Ephesus, the Church of Faded Love?