

## Revelation 2v1-7: Letter to the Church at Ephesus

### v1: The Recipient Church is Identified

Privileged Ephesus, visited by Paul (3x), Apollos, Timothy & John.

We know of its commencement (Acts 18-19) – representative of the immediate post-apostolic period.

Ephesus means '*desirable*'; it displayed commendable features of doctrinal orthodoxy & active service.

### v1: The Lord is Introduced (links with ch1v13,v16)

The Lord sovereignly "**holdeth the seven stars in His right hand**".

He actively & observingly "**walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks** (lampstands)".

His great interest presently is the spiritual condition of local assemblies as testimonies for Himself.

### v2-3: The Condition is Observed

With regard to themselves: characterised by "**works**", fervent activity in service for God, strenuous & wearisome "**labour**" and "**patience**", an attitude of consistent endurance (compare with 1<sup>st</sup> Thess 1v3).

Their motive for continuing steadfastly and not to faint was "**for My Name's sake**" (v3).

With regard to their correct relationships with others: intolerance of "**them which are evil**" (see also v6).

Not easily deceived by spurious false apostles; "**thou hast tried (tested) them ... found them liars**";

### v4: The Failure is Stated

"**Nevertheless I have [somewhat should be omitted] against thee**" – no small matter to the Lord.

"**because thou hast left** (set aside, forsaken, abandoned) **thy first love**" – diminished heart devotion & affection for the Lord (see also Jeremiah 2v2); activity alone does not compensate for lack of inward devotion for Him.

There can be recovery back to where we were; there can be leaving of "**first love**", but it never speaks of losing "**first love**". A believer cannot ever lose their vital & eternal link with Christ.

### v5: The Counsel & Warning is Imparted

3 steps of recovery; i) "**Remember ...**", in recognition that a fall had taken place.

ii) "**repent**", a repentant attitude, accepting responsibility and personal ownership for failure, and then a decision to move in a different direction in the future.

iii) **Return** to "**first works**", when the Lord had 1<sup>st</sup> place in their hearts.

The warning, "**or else I am coming**" in sovereign governmental judgment, if they did not repent.

"**I will remove thy lamp out of its place**", i.e. the place the assembly had in ch1, as a golden lampstand in the presence of God and bearing bright testimony for God in that pagan city.

### v6: Commendation is Given

Commended for hating what the Lord Himself hated, "**the deeds of the Nicolaitans**" (see also v15).

Nicolaitans means '*victory over the people*', i.e. a system of clerisy, domination over the common people.

### v7: The Challenge is Made & The Promise is Given to the Overcomer

All are challenged to hear the voice of the Spirit of God. What Adam & Eve forfeited in Eden because of their sin & disobedience to God, the spiritual overcomer is promised, to eat of "**the tree of life**", to enjoy eternal life in the heavenly paradise of God and to have fellowship with God fully restored (see Rev 22v14).