

## Revelation 2:1-7

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W Z M Y C N J W P I K X P E L  
U F W K D X X R C I H W B P Z  
L E P T N D L O F I I M H H U  
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F H X X Y J K N A W S M P K X  
O V E R C O M E M L K E Y R E

LABOR  
NICOLAITANS  
PATIENCE  
REVELATION

FIRST  
LOVE  
PARADISE  
REPENT  
WORKS

EPHESUS  
LAMPSTANDS  
OVERCOME  
REMEMBER  
STARS

## Scripture of the Week

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” -Matthew 22:37-40

I have completed my Bible studies for the following days:

- ☐ Lord's Day & Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday & Saturday

Signature

## Daily Bible Studies February 16-22, 2014 “Seven Letters: Ephesus” Revelation 2:1-7



## The Lord's Day and Monday

This week's text is **Revelation 2:1-7**.

*To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: <sup>2</sup> "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; <sup>3</sup> and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. <sup>6</sup> But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. <sup>7</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*

This week we will begin to study some very powerful passages of Scripture that should challenge us. Specifically, we will study the seven letters written to seven real churches found in the book of Revelation.

If you look back at Revelation 1:1, you will notice that it opens with the words "The revelation of Jesus Christ..." We learn that the book of Revelation is a book that reveals, or shows us, more of who Jesus is. It is important to remember when we are reading Revelation, or any part of the Bible for that matter, that it is a book about Jesus. Pastor Tim reminds us of some of the many descriptions and titles that we could appropriately give to Jesus such as holy, sinless, creator, almighty, savior, conqueror, and the Lion and the Lamb. Most importantly He is the God that saves His people from their sins. No matter how bad things may look, we can be confident that Jesus will save His people. He has already conquered sin, Satan, death, and Hell, so turn to Him in faith. Forsake your sins and come to Jesus believing that He is the God who rewards them that diligently seek Him.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Romans 8:38-39

## Friday Quiz

Write down three things you learned this week and share them with your parents.

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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Suggestion for Prayer

*Father, thank You for ultimate deliverance and salvation through Jesus.*

## Pray for the Lord's Day Service

1. Pray that everyone would think it is important to come and be able to come.
2. Pray for Sunday School and Pastor Tim's sermon.
3. Pray that we would encourage each other to love the Lord Jesus.

### Friday

The final reading for this week is **Revelation 2:6-7**.

*“But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”<sup>7</sup> “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*

Jesus says that he and the Ephesians both hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Is that OK? Can Jesus and His people have hatred towards something? The answer is yes. If you love life, you will hate murder. If you love kindness, you will hate rudeness. If you love holiness, you will hate sin. Pastor Tim says, “If we love anything or anyone with passion and intensity, we are bound to hate anything which threatens to ruin the object of our love.” That is true.

Finally this week, Jesus makes a promise. He promises those that overcome that they will eat from the tree of life. We can and do overcome if we are in Jesus because He works in us. If this is the case for us, we can look forward to the day when things will be restored to the way they were before the Fall. Jesus promises that those that overcome will have eternal life. They will eat from the tree of life in the Paradise of God.

### The Lord’s Day and Monday Quiz

1. What are the names of the seven churches that receive a letter in Revelation?

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2. What or who is being revealed in the book of Revelation?

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3. How will you live differently after you study these letters? What do you plan to change about your life?

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### Suggestion for Prayer

*God, teach me this week from Sacred Scripture the wonderful reality that Jesus has won the battle for His people. Help me to see and obey what He has to tell me.*

### Pray for Family

1. Dad and Mom
2. Brothers and Sisters
3. Grandparents, Uncles and Aunts, Cousins

## Tuesday

Today we will study **Revelation 2:1**.

*"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.'"*

As we study the seven letters that Jesus wrote to the seven churches you will notice that they all have seven similarities or seven things in common:

1. The name of the church is given.
2. A description of Jesus is given.
3. A summary of the church's spiritual health is given.
4. Jesus praises (for the good things) or reproves (corrects, scolds) the church.
5. The church is exhorted. It is told what it must do and it is encouraged to do so.
6. Jesus gives promises to those that overcome.
7. A command is given to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Today we see that the first letter was addressed to the church at Ephesus. Ephesus was an ancient city that is found in modern day Turkey. In the first century Ephesus, though it was not the capital, was the greatest city in the Roman province of Asia. It was a harbor city where boats could safely load and unload their goods; therefore, Ephesus was a city of great riches. Many roads led to and from Ephesus into and out of the rest of Asia. Its great wealth combined with its great immorality and sin lead some people to compare it to that famous fictional city, Vanity Fair, from *Pilgrim's Progress*. Actually, Ephesus was a very religious city, but it was false religion. Within the city stood the Temple of Artemis. Artemis was a mythological Greek "goddess." Her temple in Ephesus apparently was quite beautiful and remarkable since it is known as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The temple was a place where criminals could hide and be safe from imprisonment. It was a place filled with prostitutes and immorality. One non-Christian man, Heraclitus, said it was impossible to live in Ephesus and not cry

## Thursday Quiz

1. What reproof does Jesus have for the Ephesians?

2. What is the first thing they must do to correct the problem?

3. What is the next step, after remembering?

4. What is the last thing that Jesus requires them to do?

## Suggestion for Prayer

*Father, help me remember, repent, and do by your grace and power.*

## Pray for All Men

1. Mr. Robert J. Breidenstein, Superintendent of Schools, Salamanca
2. Dr. John B. King Jr., NYS Commissioner of Education
3. Mr. Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education

## Thursday

The reading for today is **Revelation 2:4-5**.

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

<sup>5</sup> *Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*

Now, Jesus reproves the Ephesians. He says, “Nevertheless, I have this against you, that you have left your first love.” This statement is obviously not a positive one, but what does it mean? It could be interpreted a few different ways, but basically it means that the Ephesians had lost their enthusiasm for Jesus and His work. Once they were thrilled by Jesus, but now He had become boring and dry to them. I think of the words of Keith Green’s song “Oh Lord, You’re Beautiful.” It says, “Oh, Lord, please light the fire, that once burned bright and clear. Replace the lamp of my first love, that burns with holy fear.” The fire of passion and love for Jesus had gone out at Ephesus. Their love and their zeal needed to be rekindled and ignited.

Not only had their love for Jesus dwindled, but their love for each other did as well. Before they were eager to help one another, but now they had become careless.

The Ephesians had sound doctrine and they were hard workers but they were missing the point of Christianity. *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-40)*

Jesus exhorts them. He tells them what they must do. First, they must remember. Like the prodigal son, they must remember what they had in their Father’s house. Second, they must decide to repent and return. In order to repent we need to admit and confess that we are the ones who have sinned. We have caused the problem, not the Lord, nor anyone else. Lastly, Jesus tells them to do the first works. True repentance will result in action. Stop the sin and do the good. “No one has truly repented if he or she does the same things again.” - William Barclay

## Tuesday Quiz

about how evil it was.

Unfortunately, we aren’t much different in America today. We are wealthy and immoral as well, but there is good news and hope. Despite all of the immorality in Ephesus, one of the strongest and most vibrant churches that we read of in the New Testament was found there. An Archbishop of Dublin said, “Nowhere did the word of God find a kindlier soil, strike root more deeply or bear fairer fruits of faith and love.” Many of the “giants of the faith” like Paul, Timothy, Apollos, Priscilla, Aquila, John, and possibly even Jesus’ mother Mary had been there. A man by the name of Ignatius of Antioch gave us an idea of what kind of church was at Ephesus when he said, “You were ever of one mind with the Apostles in the power of Jesus Christ.” When is the last time someone said you thought or acted like the Apostles? Yeah, that’s what I thought. Praise the Lord that He is able to redeem people for himself out of such a corrupt city.

Finally today, notice that Jesus holds seven stars in his hand. These seven stars are the seven churches that will receive a letter, but the stars also represent the entire church. In other words, Jesus holds all of his people in his hand, whether they are in Ephesus, Salamanca, Japan, or Africa.

The text also mentions that Jesus walks in the midst of the seven lampstands. This indicates that Jesus is tirelessly working in the Church for our good and His glory.

## Suggestion for Prayer

*God, thank You that Your Gospel has power to save the worst of sinners like me. Thank You Jesus that You hold me safe in Your hand.*

## Pray for the Church

1. Mrs. Gayle Rockwell
2. Mr. Doug Sampson
3. Mr. and Mrs. Rick and Jill Stefanone

## Wednesday

Today's verses are **Revelation 2:2-3**.

Today, Jesus give the church at Ephesus it's spiritual check up and Jesus has quite a few good things to say about the church.

First, he praises the works or labor of the church. We know that salvation is "not of works" (Ephesians 2:9) and we are not saved by "works of righteous which we have done" (Titus 3:5) but that does not mean that the Christian life does not involve work. On the contrary, Paul made an amazing statement to the Corinthians when he said, "His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Corinthians 15:10) The Christian life does require hard work whether it be assisting missionaries, cleaning the church, helping the poor, teaching Sunday school lessons, or diligently praying. Considering what Jesus has done for us it should be natural for us to respond by working hard for our Lord.

Jesus also commends the Ephesians for their patience. What does it mean to be patient? Well, first of all it implies that you are suffering some type of "hardship." Sometimes you must patiently wait for a package to arrive. The wait is "hard." In the case of the Ephesians, or any Christian for that matter, the hardship could be persecution or the temptation to grow tired of doing good. Jesus wants us to be patient in those situations. We do that not by sadly saying, "Oh well, I guess this is just the way things are. It will be over eventually. I will just have to grit my teeth and take it until it's over." No, biblical patience, the kind that Jesus commends, is faith-filled. It sees present hardships and trials as blessings and opportunities from God to grow and to glorify Him. True patience makes a person joyful and complete. (James 1:2-4)

Finally, Jesus praises the Ephesians for the fact that they have recognized and exposed the false teachers in the church. Jesus (Matthew 7:15) and Paul (Acts 20:29) gave warnings about false teachers and the Ephesians apparently took them seriously. Some false teachers, like those in Galatia, tried to turn Christians back to the Law, and others tried to teach Christians that they could purposely "live like the devil" and God would forgive them. The Ephesians were not deceived though. They remained faithful to the Scriptures and to the Apostles' teachings and Jesus praises them for it.

## Wednesday Quiz

Read James 1:1-4.

1. What are we supposed to do when we fall into various trials?

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2. What are we supposed to know according to verse 3?

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3. What result does the work of patience have?

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4. Summarize this passage in your own words, out loud.

## Suggestion for Prayer

*Father, help me to work hard for you and your glory by following what you have told me in Scripture. Give me patience to endure for you and also wisdom and discernment to not be fooled and deceived by the lie of sin and the enemy of my soul.*

## Pray for Missionaries

Pray for missionaries who tell others about Jesus:

Mr. Rick and Mrs. Hilde Griffith tell teenagers in Belgium about Jesus. Pray for them and for their children.

