

THE REVELATION

Right in the Head; Wrong in the Heart

Revelation 2: 1-7

As we turn our attention to the letters to the seven churches we note that there is a predictable formula that each letter takes: A salutation from Jesus Himself Who is the Divine Author, a commendation of the positive accomplishments of each congregation (if possible), and an expression of Jesus' displeasure of specific failures (if applicable). Finally there is a promise for those who heed the message and join the overcomers. This is especially encouraging because it appears not to depend on a response from the whole congregation in unison, but applies to any individual in the congregation who hears and applies the message personally.

I. The Salutation

- A. To the messenger of the church at Ephesus (angelos)
- B. [From] the One who holds the seven stars in His hand (symbolic for the messengers)
- C. [and] walks among the golden lampstands (symbolic for the 7 churches)

II. The Commendation

- A. I know your deeds and your toil and your perseverance
- B. You cannot tolerate evil men (Acts 20:29a)
- C. You put to the test the false apostles (Acts 20:29b, 2 Tim 1:15-18)
- D. You have persevered and endured for My name's sake
- E. You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans (nike + laos: victory people)

III. The Rebuke

- A. You have left your first love
 - 1. Fighting for orthodoxy can leave you cold
 - 2. Failure to cultivate the relationship brings emotional distance
 - 3. Disappointment with God damages trust (faith) and results in fatalism

IV. The Solution

- A. Remember from where you have fallen
- B. Repent and do the deeds you did at first
- C. Repent or I will remove your lampstand out of its place

V. The Promise for Overcomers

- A. To him who overcomes
- B. I will grant to eat of the tree of life in the Paradise of God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

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NOTES

Paul R. Martin
Lead Pastor
Alliance Bible Church of McHenry, IL

