

## THE REVELATION

### LESSON 5: THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS: WHERE IS THE LOVE?

#### Intro:

#### Background Information:

- Population of about \_\_\_\_\_. Largest & most important city in the Province of \_\_\_\_\_.
- It was the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Province, a prosperous \_\_\_\_\_ center on the trade route to Rome.
- Its \_\_\_\_\_ was able to accommodate very large ships.
- Due to silting up of its river, the city had \_\_\_\_\_ a few times.
- 560 B.C. Croesus of Lydia conquered and moved it further \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Artemision, temple to Artemis, or \_\_\_\_\_, was built.
- Cyrus defeated Croesus in 547, and it came under \_\_\_\_\_ control until \_\_\_\_\_.
- A fire damaged the Artemision in 356 B.C. It was rebuilt in 250 B.C. & is one of the Seven Wonders of the World.
- Lysimachus, one of Alexander's general, moved the city to higher ground due to floods.
- 189 B.C. it was given to the king of Pergamum as a \_\_\_\_\_ for military assistance.
- 133 B.C. it came under direct Roman control
- \_\_\_\_\_ planted the church in Ephesus on his 2<sup>nd</sup> journey (about 52 AD).
- John probably served there prior to being exiled to Patmos.

#### Jesus' Self-Revelation

<sup>1</sup>"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

- Jesus holds the "αγγελος" of the churches in His right hand.
- They rest securely in His powerful hand from which not even Satan can snatch them (Jn. 10:28-9).
- If it refers to men, pastors, they are secure though suffering persecution.
- Jesus is the divine \_\_\_\_\_, the ultimate \_\_\_\_\_, of the churches.
- Jesus will now assess this particular lampstand, or church.

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“Christ visits his people. He dwells with them. He walks among them. He inspects them. He knows them.” **John Stott**

How do you hear this news? What does it produce in you?

### The Good:

<sup>2</sup> "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. <sup>3</sup>I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. ... <sup>6</sup>Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

What is good about this church, according to Him who sees perfectly?

- \_\_\_\_\_ was not the only one worshiped in Ephesus.
- It was a center for \_\_\_\_\_ worship in the province.
- Many citizens practiced \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 19:18ff).
- \_\_\_\_\_ often required the worship of various gods.
- Christians would be persecuted, ostracized, for not worshiping these gods.
- Their ability to work, buy and sell would be \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Nicolaitans were a dangerous sect, a corrupt form of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Νικολαος means “\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_”.

“You all live according to truth, and no heresy has a home among you; indeed, you do not so much as listen to anyone if they speak of anything except concerning Jesus Christ in truth.”

**Bishop Ignatius of Antioch** to the Ephesian Church in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century

Does this description remind you of any churches you've been?

### The Bad:

<sup>4</sup>But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

What is the problem they had?

What does this even mean?

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Why is this so important?

### The Commands:

<sup>5</sup>Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

- Jesus did not leave them \_\_\_\_\_ as to what to do.
- Jesus didn't \_\_\_\_\_ them without \_\_\_\_\_ them.
- Early date: 1<sup>st</sup> generation of believers there. Late date: 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of believers.

What does it mean to remember?

**Remember:** to be \_\_\_\_\_ of, \_\_\_\_\_ to mind, to think about, \_\_\_\_\_ in memory

Why does remembering come before repenting?

**Repent:** to change one's \_\_\_\_\_ and/or \_\_\_\_\_. Hebrew word has the idea of "turn, return"; \_\_\_\_\_ from sin toward God.

What was their repentance to result in?

What would happen if they didn't repent?

"No church has a secure and permanent place in the world. It is continuously on trial." **John Stott**

### The Promise:

<sup>7</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'

- Not everyone would hear. They lacked "\_\_\_\_\_ ears".
- The \_\_\_\_\_ will hear what the Spirit says.
- Note the \_\_\_\_\_, churches. Churches in Ephesus or the 7 churches?
- Access to the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ will be restored to all who overcome (νικᾶω).
- Jesus' words anticipate Revelation 21-22 and the \_\_\_\_\_.

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“The cross is the blazing fire at which the flame of our love is kindles, but we have to get near enough to it for its spark to fall on us.” **John Stott**

**Application:** What does God want us to learn about ourselves from this letter to Ephesus?

**Conclusion:**