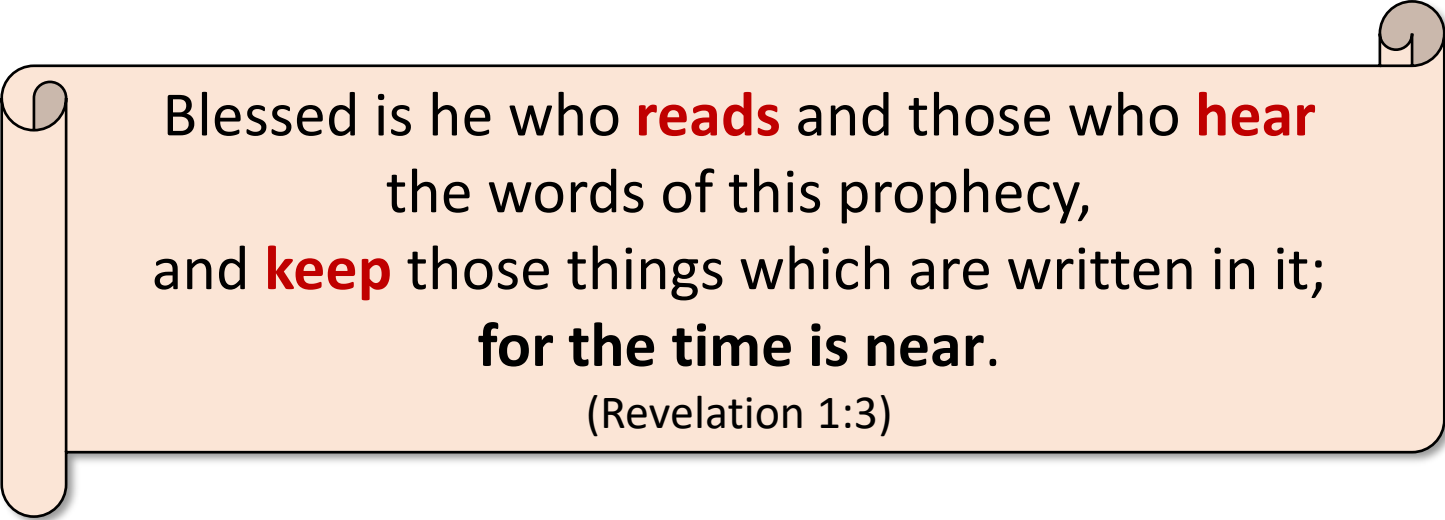




The

Revelation of **Jesus Christ**

3. The Lord's message to the churches - Ephesus



Blessed is he who **reads** and those who **hear**
the words of this prophecy,
and **keep** those things which are written in it;
for the time is near.

(Revelation 1:3)

Overview of the first section

Chapter 1

- Introduction
- The first vision – Christ in the midst of the lampstands

Chapters 2 & 3

- The Lord's messages to the seven churches

Chapters 4 & 5

- All heaven worships God upon His throne
- The Lamb takes the sealed scroll and is worshipped

Chapters 6 & 7 and 8:1

- The scroll's seven seals are opened



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*“Write what you see in a book
and send it to the seven churches...
(Revelation 1:11)*



“Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches...”

Ephesus

Smyrna



Pergamos

Thyatira

Sardis

Philadelphia

Laodicea

- To the angel/messenger of the church in...
- These things says He who...  Thus saith the Lord...
- **I know your works...**
- Commendation and/or correction, and guidance
- The call to hear what is said **to the churches**  We all must hear – no excuses
- A promise to each one who overcomes the challenges being faced



Individual responsibility

The Lord's message...

***To the messenger of
the church in Ephesus
write...***

EPHESUS in history

Ephesus was very **prosperous** in the first century.

It was a **major centre of commerce**.

It was famous for the **Temple of Artemis**.

Ephesus was destroyed by the Goths in 262 AD.

Despite some rebuilding the city's position and importance declined as **its harbour silted up**.



EPHESUS in the New Testament

➤ Acts 18

- Paul visited Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila on his second journey (c. 52 AD).
- Apollos later visited Ephesus and was taught by Priscilla and Aquila.

➤ Acts 19

- Paul returned to Ephesus on his third journey and **stayed three years** (c. 54 AD).
- After a riot in the city, Paul travelled west to Macedonia (c. 57 AD).

➤ Acts 20

- On his way to Jerusalem Paul called the elders from Ephesus and encouraged them, aware that they would see him no more (c. 58 AD).

➤ Ephesians

- Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus while a prisoner in Rome (c. 62 AD).

EPHESUS and Paul's warning to the elders

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock...

...after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you...

...and from among your own selves
will arise men speaking twisted things,
to draw away the disciples after them.

Therefore be alert,
remembering that for three years
I did not cease night or day to admonish
every one with tears.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

(see Acts 20:17-38)



EPHESUS in Paul's letter from Rome

Therefore I also, after I heard of your **faith** in the Lord Jesus and your **love** for all the saints...

(Ephesians 1:15-16)

For this reason I bow my knees... that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith —that you, **being rooted and grounded in love...**

(See Ephesians 3:14-19)

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And **walk in love**, as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us...

(Ephesians 5:1-2)



The
Revelation
of **Jesus Christ**

Revelation 2:1

Ephesus:

- A pagan and prosperous city
- The church began well through Paul and others
- They were warned of the dangers ahead
- They were encouraged to walk in love

Who is this letter from?

He is the head
of the Church

These things says He who holds **the seven stars** in His right hand,
who **walks** in the midst of the **seven golden lampstands**...

(Revelation 2:1)

His great love
is His Church

I know your works...

A painting of a man in a white robe and head covering, holding a staff, standing in a field with a large brown ox in the background. The scene is set in a rural, hazy landscape with a few trees in the distance.

I know your works,
your **toil** and your **patient endurance**,
and how you cannot bear with those who are evil,
and have tested those who call themselves apostles
and are not, and found them to be false.

I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up
for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.

(Revelation 2:2-3)

I know your works...

You have **deserted Me**,
your first love

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

(Revelation 2:4)

You have **abandoned**
the love you had at first

I know your works...

NOTHING

NOTHING

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...

If I have the gift of prophecy...

If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor...

(See 1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

NOTHING

Love is...

Love is patient and kind;
love does not envy or boast;
it is not arrogant or rude.

It does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful;
it does not rejoice at wrongdoing,
but rejoices with the truth.

Love

- ✓ bears all things,
- ✓ believes all things,
- ✓ hopes all things,
- ✓ endures all things.

(1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

What sort of person is this?



**A soul set free
to walk with God**

A soul set free



Yes, but how?



“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

Therefore **submit to God**.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners;
and **purify your hearts**, you double-minded.

(James 4:6-8)

Therefore...

...faith working
through love.
(Galatians 5:6)

1

Remember therefore from where you have fallen;

2

repent, and **do the works** you did at first.

(Revelation 2:5)

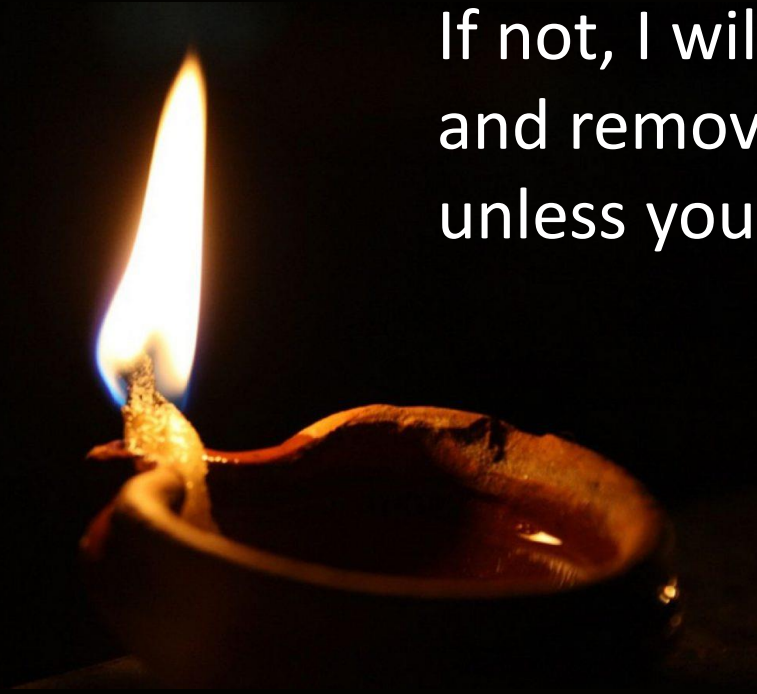
3

...a new
creation.
(Galatians 6:15)

There are consequences...

If not, I will come to you
and remove your lampstand from its place,
unless you repent.

(Revelation 2:5)



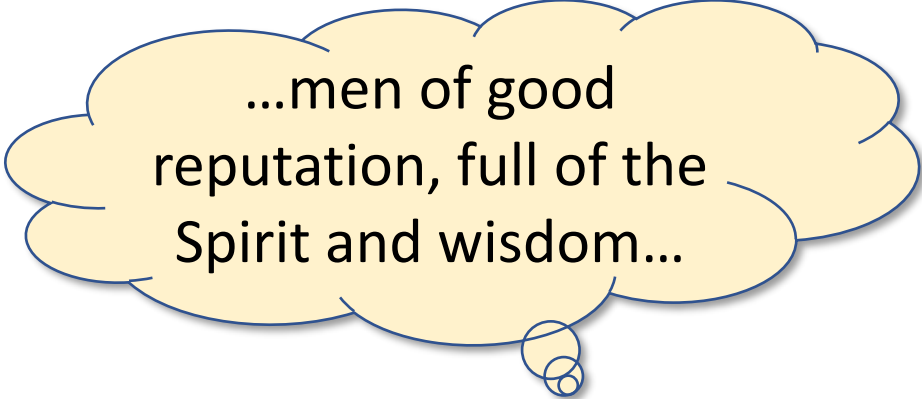
I know your works...

Yet this you have:

you hate the works of the Nicolaitans,
which **I also hate.**

(Revelation 2:6)

The Nicolaitans?



...men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom...

- 1 **Irenaeus** (c. 130-202) wrote that the Nicolaitans followed Nicolas (Acts 6:5) who promoted an immoral lifestyle. So too **Hippolytus** (c. 170-235).
- 2 Nicolaitan – in Greek a compound word from *nikos* (to conquer or subdue) and *laos* (the people). An elite group ruling over ordinary believers?
- 3 We can't know...

Pay attention!

He who has an ear,
let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
(Revelation 2:7)

Pay attention!

He who has an ear,
let him hear what **the Spirit** says to **the churches**.

(Revelation 2:7)

A gracious promise...

Conquers, prevails,
gets the victory

Fellowship,
shared Life

To the one who overcomes
I will give to eat from **the tree of life**,
which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

(Revelation 2:7)

With the Lord

The **Revelation** of **Jesus Christ**

Revelation 2:1-7

What have we seen?

- Ephesus was an ungodly city, and prosperous...
- The believers there received a lot of excellent teaching...
- They persevered and were active, but they had become cold...
- The Lord commanded repentance and to return to their first works...
- He promised Himself in love and fellowship to all who heeded His call.

The **Revelation** of **Jesus Christ**

To the angel of the church of Smyrna write...

(Revelation 2:8)

