

Eschatology II: Revelation

The Messages to the Seven Churches

Ephesus: Revelation 2:1-7

I. The Church of Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)

A. Characteristics of Ephesus

1. Largest City in Region
2. Famous for its amphitheatre (seated 45,000 people)
3. World renowned for its commercial idol makers
4. Large center of commerce and trade
5. Sight of the Temple of Diana (one of the Seven Wonders of the world)

B. The Background of the church

1. Had a tremendous start (Acts 19:1, 8-12, 18-20)
2. Vast ministry there by apostle Paul, and later by John

C. The Message to Ephesus

1. Jesus asserts His authority over them (v1)
 - a. The Meaning of "Angel" (cf Luke 7:24,27;9:52)
 - b. His message is addressed to the angel (cf Heb 13:17)
 - c. His sovereignty over the angels is seen in the imagery (cf Jn 10:28-29)
2. Jesus addresses the spiritual condition of His church (vv2-4,6)
 - a. They laboured for Jesus (cf Eph 2:8-10) -vv2,3
 - b. They kept pure and took Paul's warning seriously (Acts 20:28-31)
 - c. In their difficulty, they remained patient (patience=hope in tribulation)
 - d. They hated the deeds of Nicolaitans
 - 1) pastors who asserted themselves over the congregation
 - 2) group that followed Nicolaites (who taught antinomianism)
 - 3) Notice it was the "deeds" (and not the people) they hated
 - e. But for all this, they left their first love (v4)
 - 1) This was keeping the faith w/o living it!
 - 2) This is the difference between a *social club* and *the Church*
 - 3) Love defines Christianity. It's not subservient to it: It is it!
 - 4) I Co 13:1-3; Ro 10:1-3; Jn 13:34-35; I Jn 4:20-21; Mt 22:36-40
3. Jesus exhorts them to repent of their backsliding and offers reward (vv5,7)
 - a. This love lost was not always the case in Ephesus (Ep 1:15-16)
 - b. It's with that in mind that He exhorts them to "do the first works" (v5)
 - c. There's always the chance of a church falling from grace (v5)
 - d. But He also wants to see repentance and rewards it (v7)
 - 1) Our Father seeks the return of His children (cf Luke 15:11-25)
 - 2) This would be the first of seven overcomer's promises
 - 3) This would be the first of seven exhortations that run: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" and will be distinguished from the Tribulational saying "If any man have an ear, let him hear" (Rev 13:9).