

## The Seven Churches of Revelation: How They Apply to You – Ephesus

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**Ephesus:** first, desirable; shares its name with the Greek man's "hoped for bride." This church marks the beginning of the "bride of Christ" **Ephesians 5:25** Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself...

- Some scholars think the seven churches represent seven church "ages" that will be fulfilled before the return/rapture.
- Ephesus would be the first century church (AD 30 – AD 100 – known as "Apostolic church age. John passed, NT was written, 1<sup>st</sup> evangelical movement completed)– Laodicea being the end-times church
- In every church today, there are "Ephesian" Christians, "Sardis" Christians, - "Laodicean" Christians
- Also, in every Christian's life, we can find ourselves in one or more of these "stages" if we take careful inventory of our Christian walk.
- Most of Jesus messages to each church follows the same format: He reveals a particular aspect of Himself to each church; He commends areas of strength and addresses areas of weakness or sin; He then presents a choice and the consequences of the choice made – blessing or cursing; He ends with an address to the attitude of the hearer to His words – "he who has an ear to hear, let him hear..."

### To Ephesus:

1. To the \*angel of the church: angel there means to the messenger/one who brings tidings/leader/ or pastor of that church
2. \*write these things: (\*describe/ write)
3. \*He who holds the seven stars (**Rev. 1:20** – pastors) in His right hand. (The right hand usually is the strongest and is the one that signifies the authority of the user. Jesus, Himself is holding the pastors in His hand. They are under His authority and are called to answer to Him for the condition of their church – good or bad.)
4. Who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: (the lampstand is the church itself) Jesus gives the instructions on what to preach as He walks and "sees" all and knows what each one needs to hear.
5. V. 2: "I know your \*works, (**Heb 4:13**) your \*\*labor, your \*\*\*patience (\*work...occupation...acts) (\*\*cuts, pains, trouble); (\*\*cheerful, hopeful endurance – to stay under ...persevere ...remain).
6. "you cannot bear those who are evil (worthless; depraved, hurtful, malicious, have left original virtues...) (**Prov 6:19** ...he that sows discord among the brethren)
7. "you have \*tested those who say they are \*\*apostles and are not, and have found them \*\*\*liars (\*scrutinized); (\*\*ambassador of the Gospel with miraculous powers, set apart/for a mission); (\*\*untrue, deceitful, wicked, erroneous) **2 Cor 11:12-15**

8. "and you have \*persevered and have \*\*patience, and have \*\*\*]abored for My Name's sake and have not become weary. (\*kept walking at a pace, to take up, endure); (\*\* cheerful, hopeful endurance...); (\*\*\*) felt fatigued, worked hard, been hurt)
9. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have \*left your \*\*first \*\*\*love. (\* sent away); (\*\* foremost in time, place order or importance) (\*\*\*) benevolent affection)..no longer on fire...passionate...talking about Him and what He has done to everyone who will listen...got into the religious routine... lost the heart of "why" ..." It is not your 'do,' it is your 'who'... Apostate isn't just someone who has walked away morally. It is also someone who "talks the talk, but doesn't walk the walk inwardly... hearers – not doers...cast out devils – "I don't KNOW you"
10. \*Remember therefore from where you have fallen; (\* recall to mind, exercise the memory)
11. \*Repent and do (obedience – praying, Bible study, sharing your faith) the first works, (\* reconsider, and think differently afterwards) be honest with yourself...
12. Or else I will come to you \*quickly and remove your lampstand from its \*\*place ...judgment...(\* shortly, by surprise, suddenly); (\*\* location, position, opportunity)
13. Unless you \*repent (\* Reconsider and think differently afterwards)
14. But this you have, that you \*hate the deeds of the \*\*Nicolaitans, which I also hate. (\* detest/ persecute); (\*\* heretic, victorious over the people, - Nicolaus of Laodicea – Gnosticism: doesn't matter what body does as long as spirit/mind are saved.... Idolatry and sexual immorality have no bearing on my eternal destiny... **1 Pet 1:16** – "be holy for I am holy;" **1 Cor. 6:9-12**: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God: Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and
15. by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but will not be brought under the power of any.
16. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
17. To him who \*overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the \*\* Paradise of God (\* subdues, conquers, successfully – 'the struggle' – Matt 16:24: deny self...); (\*\* Eden: bringing us back to the place we lost – final restoration...
  - "saints" respond with joy, faith and obedience
  - "great company" respond as far as is convenient
  - tares" respond by getting offended, then try to validate their offense in the eyes of others
  - "wolves" respond by being outraged and trying to take over because they "know better"