



LESSONS FROM THE 7 CHURCHES OF REVELATION: EPHESUS & SMYRNA

(REVELATION 2:1-11)

SERMON NOTE

Revelation is addressed to first-century churches in seven cities of the Roman province of Asia (now western Turkey). Jesus sent his revelation to John to fortify His churches to resist the wiles of the devil, whether in the form of intimidating violence, deceptive heresy or beguiling wealth.

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I) The church at Ephesus (Rev 2:1-7)

A) The City of Ephesus:

- 1) Was the largest city in Asia Minor,
- 2) Was a major seaport which served as the primary trading center for all of Asia Minor.
- 3) Was the site of many temples, including a large one dedicated to the goddess Artemis/ Diana (**Acts** 19:21-41).

B) The church's Testimony

- 1) They worked hard for the Kingdom (**1 Cor** 15:58).
- 2) They didn't give up on Christ.
- 3) They refused to tolerate evil people.
- 4) They courageously exposed false teachers (**1 Jn** 4:1).
- 5) They remained loyal to the Gospel.

C) Their Failings

- 1) They had abandoned the love they had from the beginning.
- 2) In December of 1969 **B.B. King** released a blues song that became one of the greatest hits of his career! The title of this song represents the hearts of the Christians at Ephesus: "THE THRILL IS GONE."

D) Churches Lose Their First Love When....

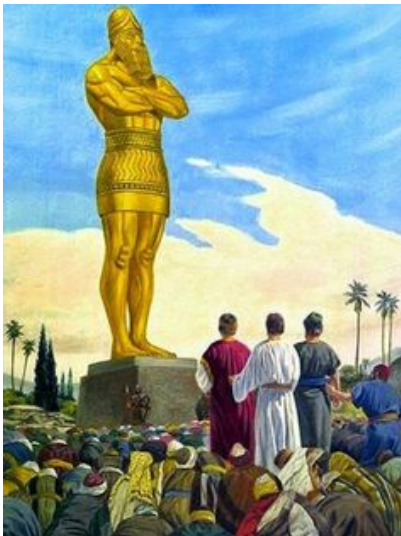
- 1) They become complacent .
- 2) Each member neglects personal evangelism .
- 3) Personal issues are allowed to extinguish spiritual zeal.

E) What they needed to do to survive (**Rev** 2:5)

My Sermon Notes

*"I know your tribulation and your poverty..." (Rev 2:10). **Did You Know:** When cities had large concentrations of artisans and craftsmen, trade guilds or unions were established. These guilds often required their members to participate in certain pagan activities. The believers' unwillingness to participate in these activities resulted in exclusion from the guilds and financial hardship (Heb 10:32-36).*

A great Old Testament example of this is found in the book of Daniel chapter 3, with Shadrach Meshach and Abednego.



II) The church at Smyrna (Rev 2:8-11)

A) The City of Smyrna

- 1) Was an important exporting city known for its beauty.
- 2) Was located on a protected harbor of the Aegean Sea next to a major road system.
- 3) It was the home of a temple to the Roman emperor Tiberius and was a center of the Roman imperial religion.

B) The church's Testimony

- 1) They had undergone much tribulation.
- 2) They were experiencing poverty.
- 3) Not only did this church face pressure from the pagan world but also found themselves in conflict with the Jews.

C) The Worst Yet To Come

- 1) Some would be treated as criminals.
- 2) Some would even be put to death.

D) What They Needed To Do To Survive (Rev 2:10b)

- 1) Never stop building on your relationship with God.
- 2) "God-Fearing" can't just be a phrase, it must be practical.
- 3) Crave eternal life.
- 4) Be a disciple after God's own heart.

