

# THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

## Revelation 2:1-7

### Introduction

Read Rev. 1:17-20

### Passage for this Lesson

Rev. 2:1-7

Angel and messenger are acceptable translations of the same word.

- We might prefer the word messenger due to the feathery, halo-headed images of an angel.
- Messenger allows for a human to speak in God's behalf, whereas an angel refers to a celestial being.

Conservative scholars believe Revelation to be written around 90 AD. That dating would make the seven churches, started by Paul, about 45-50 years old.

The pattern John followed in addressing these seven churches included complimenting, correcting and challenging them.

### What were the commendations given to the church at Ephesus?

- Hard work;
- Perseverance;
- Intolerance of wicked men;
- In a time when our culture seeks to be tolerant, how are we to understand the intolerant church?
- Tested false apostles;
- Apostles started churches, ministered cross-culturally and supervised established congregations.

### How do you imagine the congregation tested the apostles?

- Endured hardships;
- Not grown weary.

### What corrections was the Ephesian congregation to make?

- You forsook your first love.
- Remember the height from which you fell.

### **What was the challenge to the Ephesian church?**

- Repent.
- If you do not repent, God will remove the lampstand. What do you suppose that means?
- Do the things you did at first.

### **What did the church have in its favor?**

- A shared hatred of the Nicolaitans.

### **How do you explain God hating the Nicolaitans?**

- The Nicolaitans were a heretical sect who altered their theology to make themselves acceptable to their culture.
- They maintained spiritual freedom allowed them to practice idolatry and immortality.
- There was some question as to the church's ability to hear what the Spirit was saying.

### **What would the church need to overcome?**

### **What promise is given to the church if it overcomes?**

### **What is the promised paradise?**

- Paradise literally means a pleasant garden.
- Paradise is a place of happiness and renewal between death and resurrection.
- Eschatologically God and humans are restored to the perfect fellowship enjoyed before sin entered into the world.

### **Explain how this message from God addresses our church's need for renewal.**