

Book of Revelation, part 12

I. The Letter to the church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7).

1. The location in Asia Minor, now Turkey, proximity to one another—map.
 - 1) Larger contemporary churches left out: Rome, Colossae, Magnesia, and Tralles.
 - 2) Specifically selected to reflect developments in Christendom.
2. “Traditional” interpretations:
 - 1) Historical: allegory, Alexandrian school, Augustine.
 - 2) Preterist: all fulfilled during the early church: allegory.
 - 3) Literal: says what it means, God-breathed, consistent with the rest of Scripture, Scripture interprets symbols.
 - 4) Etymology of ‘Ephesus’: “aiming at a thing, appetite, desire, desirable.”
3. Ephesus represents the apostolic period, about 33-96 AD.
4. Paul was involved with the founding of the church at Ephesus (Acts chapters 19-20).
 - 1) Taught there for three years (Acts 20:31).
 - 2) Taught them the full counsel of God (Acts 20:27 *cf.* Heb. 5:11).
 - 3) Warned the elders/pastors/bishops to:
 - i. Take heed to their own spiritual growth.
 - ii. Feed the flock (v. 28).
 - iii. Watch out for those outside the flock coming into the flock and not sparing the flock—the relationship of the flock to the shepherd and the Head-Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 1:16, 20).
 - 4) More enlightenment, more accountability (Mt. 11:20-22).
 - 5) Leaders from within the flock will speak distorted/counterfeit Scripture.
 - i. Satanic.
 - ii. To gain followers of themselves (1 Cor. 3:4-5; 22-23; 1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Pet. 2:3). *Follow the money.*

II. Verse one:

1. “The One holding the seven stars...”.
 - 1) Pastor neglected his accountable directly to Christ (Rev. 1:16, 20; Heb. 13:7, 17; Jam. 3:1).
 - 2) Pastor ignored his relationship to the Head-shepherd.

2. "He who is walking in the midst of the golden lampstands..."

- 1) The church has drifted from Christ as the center of its mission.
- 2) They have adopted another Jesus from a different spirit and with a different gospel (2 Cor. 11:4; 5:16)



The Seven Churches of Revelation 1-3