

## The Church at Ephesus

**“Having Everything, Yet Having Nothing”**

### Part 2

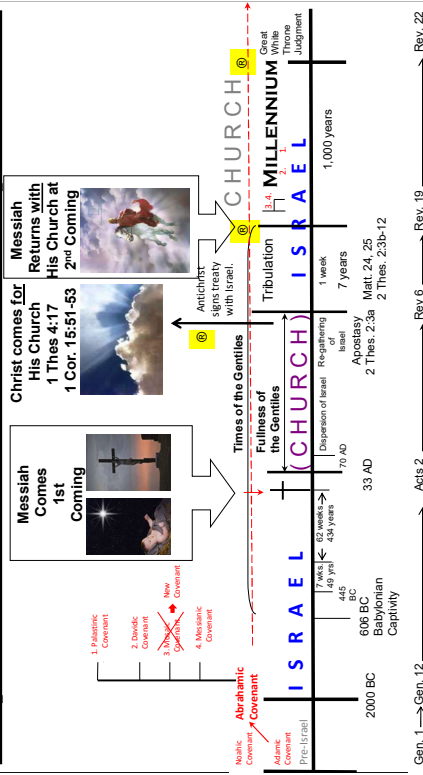
**Rev. 2:2-7**

Oct. 30, 2016

### Rev 2:1-7

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- 3 and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.
- 4 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.
- 5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent.
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- 7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

### Comprehensive Biblical View of Future Prophetic Events



Ⓢ = Resurrection

**Seven Churches of Revelation**  
Chapters 2-3

- 1 Ephesus
- 2 Smyrna
- 3 Pergamos
- 4 Thyatira
- 5 Sardis
- 6 Philadelphia
- 7 Laodicea

Island of Patmos: where John received the vision

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**“deeds” – εργων = acts that are done, performed, or accomplished.**

**Titus 2:13-14**

13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good **deeds**.

**Titus 3:8**

8 This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good **deeds**.

**Heb 10:24**

24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good **deeds**.

**James 3:13**

13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.

**1 Peter 2:12**

12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may be aware because of your good **deeds**, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**“toil” – κοπος = to work to the point of weariness.**

**1 Cor 4:11-13**

11 To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; 12 and we **toil**, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; 13 when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.

**1 Cor 15:58**

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your **toil** is not in vain in the Lord.

**Phil 2:16**

6 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor **toil** in vain.

**“perseverance” – υπομονη = the ability to endure.**

**Rom 5:3,4**

3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about **perseverance**;

4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

**Rom 8:25**

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with **perseverance** we wait eagerly for it.

**Rom 15:5-6**

5 Now may the God who gives **perseverance** and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,

**Eph 6:18**

18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all **perseverance** and petition for all the saints,

**2 Thess 1:4**

4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your **perseverance** and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.

**1 Tim 6:11**

11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, **perseverance** and gentleness.

**2 Tim 3:10**

10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, **perseverance**,

**Titus 2:2**

2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in **perseverance**.

**2 Peter 1:5,6**

5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,

6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your **perseverance**, godliness,

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**Who they are:**

**2 Cor 11:13-15**

13 For such men are **false apostles**, deceitful workers, **disguising themselves as apostles** of Christ.

14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as **servants of righteousness**, whose end will be according to their deeds.

**2 Cor 11:26**

26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among **false brethren**;

**Gal 2:4**

4 But it was because of the **false brethren** secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.

**Phil 3:2**

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the **false circumcision**;

## 2 Thess 2:11

11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false.

## 2 Peter 2:1-3

1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, 2 Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligne

3 and in their greed they will exploit you with false words;

## 1 John 4:1

4 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

## Acts 20:28-31

28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

29 "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

31 "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

## 2 Tim 3:2-6

2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

## 2 Tim 3:13

13 But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

## 2 Tim 4:2-4

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

## 1 Tim 4:1-4

1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

3 men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

## 1 Tim 6:3-5

3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

4 he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

## Jude 3-4

3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

## Jude 12-13

12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;

13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

False apostles

False brethren

False circumcision

False prophets

False words

Savage wolves

Deceitful spirits

Doctrines of demons

Men of depraved mind

Men deprived of the truth

Imposters

Ungodly persons

Hidden reefs

## What do we do with false teachers?

### Matt 18:15-17

15 "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.

17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector

### 1 Tim 1:3-4

3 As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines

### Eph 5:11

11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

### 1 Tim 1:19-20

19 keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

20 Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.

### 2 John 10-11

10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting;

11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.

## **Rom 16:17, 18**

17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.  
18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

## **1 John 4:1**

4 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

## **1 Thess 5:21-22**

21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;

***“Today’s church cannot remain faithful if it tolerates false teachers and leaves their teachings uncorrected and unopposed.”***

- Al Mohler

***“The subtlety of false teaching is that it uses the Word of God but misrepresents its teaching . . . there is great danger to the church from subtle teaching that appears to be biblical and pulls away unwary souls from the faith.”***

- John MacArthur

***The believers at Ephesus said –***

1. We don’t want numbers for the sake of numbers.
2. We don’t want growth at the expense of holiness.
3. We don’t want those to come and teach and preach in our church regardless how many doctorate degrees they have.
4. We don’t want those who will come with slick talk and clever speech who will give a “feel good” message.
5. We don’t want those who come with techniques and marketing strategies straight out of the culture of this world.

## **Rev 2:1-7**

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4 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

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A letter written by Ignatius (A.D. 98-117) to the Ephesian church -

***“I have learned that certain people . . . have passed your way with evil doctrine, but you did not allow them to sow it among you. You covered up your ears in order to avoid receiving the things being sown by them.”***

- Ignatius

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### Matt 22:36-38

- 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"
- 37 And He said to him, " YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'
- 38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.
- ### Matt 10:37
- 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.
- ### John 14:23, 24
- 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "if anyone loves Me, he will keep My word;
- 24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

### Matt 7:21-23

- 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.
- 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'
- 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'
- ### John 21:15
- 15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."
- ### 1 Cor 16:22
- 22 If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed.
- ### 1 John 5:3
- 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments;
- ### 2 John 6
- 6 And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments.

***"A routine can become like a rut which can be nothing more than a grave with the ends knocked out."***

- Anon.

### The church has left its first love –

- When we love the church more than we love the Lord Jesus.
- When people leave the church services asking, "Was the service a success?" rather than "Was God pleased?"
- When worship and music turns from adoration to entertainment.
- When worship services become a "production."
- When there is more talk and praise for the church and its activities than for Christ.
- When the "success" of the church becomes more important than obedience to the Word.
- When more time is spent on organizing and planning than on prayer and Bible study.
- When we are more concerned with what we will be fed at the potluck than what we will be fed from the Word.

***"It is only as we love Christ fervently that we can serve Him faithfully."***

- Warren Wiersbe

- When we measure spirituality by performance of duties rather than the condition of the heart.
- When time at church is more of a checklist than a relationship.
- When business meetings are filled with statistics but devoid of God's Word.
- When our service for Christ is motivated more out of duty than our love for Him.
- When we are no longer moved by the preaching and teaching of God's Word.
- When people remain in a church after the Lord Jesus removes the candlestick.
- When the coming of the new building or new programs or new worship leader is more anticipated than the coming of Christ.

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### 3 Step Process:

#### 1. Remember

- 5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen,**  
Remember what your relationship with Christ used to be.

#### 2. Repent

#### 5 . . . . and repent

Confess your sin. Change the way you're thinking.

#### 3. Return

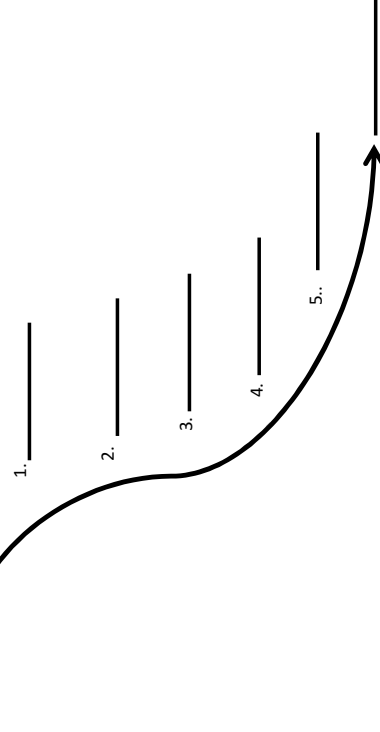
#### 5 . . . . and do the deeds you did at first;

Begin seeing and doing the things you used to do.

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### The Slippery Slope



- The word "remove", *κτινῶ*, means —"to set in motion", "to move". We get our English word "kinetic" from it.
- So Christ is saying that He will begin to set in motion the removal of the church from a sphere of blessing, from being effective in discipleship and evangelism, and from being a pillar of the truth to the world round it. He eventually will take it out of existence totally.

## The Slippery Slope



The Vanishing Authority of the Bible

1. Manipulate the text
2. Change the text
3. Ignore the text
4. Abandon the text
5. What text???

**“They repented for awhile but then were lost . . .”**

- Ignatius  
2<sup>nd</sup> century

The light of the church at Ephesus had not just been dimmed, but completely snuffed out.

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### “Nicolaitans”

#### Rev 2:14-15

- 14 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.  
15 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

  - This was an antinomian, lawless sect that advocated license in Christian conduct, and unrestrained indulgence in sexual immorality.

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### “Overcomer” in Revelation

1. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God (2:7).
2. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death (2:11).
3. To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it (2:17).
4. He who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from my father; and I will give him the morning star (2:26-28).
5. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels (3:5).
6. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name (3:12).
7. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne (3:21).

## 1 John 5:4,5

- 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith.
- 5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

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### Gen 2:9

9 Out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

### Gen 3:22-23

22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" —

23 therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

### Rev 22:2,14,19

2 On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

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3 and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.  
4 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.  
5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent.  
6 'Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.  
7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, **I will grant to eat of the tree of life** which is in the Paradise of God.'

## Luke 23:42-43

- 42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!"  
43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

## 2 Cor 12:2-4

- 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a man was caught up to the third heaven.  
3 And I know how such a man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows — was caught up into **Paradise** and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.



**Frederick Whitfield**  
(1827-1904)

This author, being the youngest child of Thomas and Jane Whitfield, was born January 7, 1827 at Threapwood in Shropshire, England. He was brought up in close connection with the gospel of God's grace and was saved early in life.

He graduated from Trinity College (Dublin University) in 1859 and became a deacon in the Church of England.

Mr. Whitfield was first married in 1861 to Miss Sarah Garforth who died five years later, leaving him with three small children. He remarried in 1871 to Miss

Sophia Butler who died after twelve years, three small children being left of this marriage. In 1899 his health began to fail, so he retired to spend his closing days at Norwood, England. He became absent from the body and present with the Lord on September 13, 1904. He was buried beside his second wife in Kensal Green Cemetery, London. Fredrick wrote more than 30 hymns.



## O HOW I LOVE JESUS

1. There is a Name I love to hear,  
I love to sing its worth;  
It sounds like music in my ear,  
The sweetest Name on earth.

### **Refrain**

**O how I love Jesus,  
O how I love Jesus,  
O how I love Jesus,  
Because He first loved me!**

2. It tells me of a Savior's love,  
Who died to set me free;  
It tells me of His precious blood,  
The sinner's perfect plea.

### **Refrain**

3. It tells me of a Father's smile  
Beaming upon His child;  
It cheers me through this little while,  
Through desert, waste, and wild.

### **Refrain**

4. It tells of One whose loving heart  
Can feel my deepest woe;  
Who in each sorrow bears  
A part that none can bear below.

### **Refrain**

- 5 It bids my trembling heart rejoice.  
It dries each rising tear.  
It tells me, in a "still small voice,"  
To trust and never fear.

### **Refrain**

6. Jesus, the Name I love so well,  
The Name I love to hear:  
No saint on earth its worth can tell,  
No heart conceive how dear.

### **Refrain**

7. And there with all the blood-bought throng,  
From sin and sorrow free,  
I'll sing the new eternal song  
Of Jesus' love for me.

**O how I love Jesus,  
O how I love Jesus,  
O how I love Jesus,  
Because He first loved me!**