Revelation 2.1-7 – **Church of Ephesus:** **From Glory to Glory**

**1** Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

**2**I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

**3**And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

**4**Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

**5**Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

**6**But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

**7He that hath an ear**, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Subject Sentence: From glory to glory.

How?

1. Crucify the “Old Man”

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: **6**Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. **7**For he that is dead is freed from sin. **8**Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: **9**Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. **10** For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. **11**Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6.5-22)

Strip yourselves of your former nature [put off and discard your old unrenewed self] which characterized your previous manner of life and becomes corrupt through lusts *and* desires that spring from delusion; **23** And be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind [having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude], **24** And put on the new nature (the regenerate self) created in God’s image, [Godlike] in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4.22)

*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* (Gal 2.20).

How did the light shine through the *earthen vessels* when Gideon and the 100 with him *blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands* (Judges 3.19-20)? The light could not shine through until the pot was *broken.*

(2 Corinthians 3 – 4.7 The *light of the glorious gospel hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* ***7****But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

1. Grow In HIM

Keep beholding Him and being in HIS presence and hearing His life-changing Word which is able to keep us from falling and present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24)!

(The *fruit* of *HIS SPIRIT... How does fruit grow?* –Be *rooted and grounded in HIM:* ***Colossians 2:6*** *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:* ***7*** *Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

Behold Him through crucifying the old man, growing in Him and beholding Him and being in HIS presence and hearing His life-changing Word! *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* (2 Corinthians 3.18)

1. Seek Him/Wisdom as for Silver/Hid Treasures!

*So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;* ***3*** *Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;* ***4*** *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;* ***5*** *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.* Proverbs 2.2-5

Aim: This passage would cause me to: not rest where I am but to acknowledge it, see where I need to grow, and OVERCOME.

I.

1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars\* in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

Great study on the 7 churches of Revelation: https://www.patternsofevidence.com/

**\**seven stars; seven golden candlesticks***

**Revelation 1:16** And he had in his right hand **seven stars**: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.

**Revelation 1:20** The mystery of the **seven stars** which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The **seven stars** are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

**Revelation 3:1**   And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the **seven stars**; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

Summary: **I KNOW –** thy works\*, thy labor\*\*, thy patience\*\*\*; how you cannot bear them that are evil, you’ve tried them that say they’re apostles and are liars; you’ve borne and had patience and for My Name’s sake have labored and not fainted. Psalm 24.10 *If you faint in the day of adversity your strength is SMALL!*

 [2556. **κακός** kakos, kak-os´; apparently a primary word; worthless (intrinsically, such; whereas 4190 properly refers to effects), i.e. (subjectively) depraved, or (objectively) ***injurious***: — bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked.]

\**Works* [2041. **ἔργον** ergon, er´-gon; from a primary (but obsolete) **ἔργω** ergo (to work); toil (as an effort or occupation); by implication, an act: — deed, doing, labour, work.]

* **Matthew 5:16** Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good **works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
* **Matthew 23:3** All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their **works**: for they say, and do not.
* **Matthew 23:5** But all their **works** they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,...
* **Matthew 23:5** But all their **works** they do for to be seen of men:...
* **John 321** But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his **deeds** may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.
* **John 6:28**   Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the **works** of God? **29** Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the **work** of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.
* **John 9.**4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
* **John 17:4** I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the **work** which thou gavest me to do.
* Moses was *mighty in words and in* ***deeds*** (Acts 7.22).
* The golden calf was *the* ***works*** *of their own hands* (Acts 7.41).
* Dorcas was a *woman ...full of good* ***works*** *and almsdeeds...* (Acts 9.36)
* Barnabas and Saul were separated for the ***work*** whereunto they were called (Acts 13.2).
* He will render to every man according to his ***deeds*** (Romans 2.6).
* **1Corinthians 3:13** Every man’s **work** shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s **work** of what sort it is. **14** If any man’s **work** abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. **15** If any man’s **work** shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.
* **1Corinthians 15:58**   Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the **work** of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.
* **2Corinthians 9:8** And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good **work**:...
* **Ephesians 2.**8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9Not of ***works***, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good ***works***, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
* **Colossians 1:10** That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good **work**, and increasing in the knowledge of God;
* **Colossians 3:17** And whatsoever ye do in word or **deed**, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.
* **2Thessalonians 2:17** Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and **work**.
* **1Timothy 2:10** But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good **works**.
* **2Timothy 2:21** If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, *and* prepared unto every good **work**.
* **2Timothy 3:17** That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good **works**.
* **2Timothy 4:18** And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil **work**, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.
* **Titus 1:16** They profess that they know God; but in **works** they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good **work** reprobate.
* **Titus 2:7** In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good **works**: in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,
* **Titus 2:14** Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good **works**.
* **Titus 3:1**   Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good **work**,
* **Titus 3:5** Not by **works** of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;
* **Titus 3:8** *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good **works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.
* **Hebrews 4.**9There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. **10** For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own ***works***, as God *did* from his.
* **Hebrews 6:1**   Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead **works**, and of faith toward God,
* **Hebrews 9:14** How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead **works** to serve the living God?
* **Hebrews 10:24** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good **works**:
* **Hebrews 13:21** Make you perfect in every good **work** to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.
* **James 2:17** Even so faith, if it hath not **works**, is dead, being alone. **18** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have **works**: shew me thy faith without thy **works**, and I will shew thee my faith by my **works**.
* **1Peter 1:17** And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s **work**, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:
* **1Peter 2:12** Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good **works**, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.
* **1John 3:18** My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in **deed** and in truth.
* **Revelation 22:12** And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his **work** shall be.

\*\**Labor* [2873. **κόπος** kopos, kop´-os; from 2875; a cut, i.e. (by analogy) toil (as reducing the strength), literally or figuratively; by implication, pains: — labour, + trouble, weariness.]

* **1Corinthians 3:8** Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own **labour**.
* **1Corinthians 15:58**   Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your **labour** is not in vain in the Lord.
* Also translated ***weariness***or ***trouble***a LOT.
* **2Thessalonians 3:8** Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with **labour** and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:
* **Hebrews 6:10** For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and **labour** of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.
* **Revelation 14:13**   And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their **labours**; and their works do follow them.

\*\*\**Patience* [5281. **ὑπομονή** hupomone, hoop-om-on-ay´; from 5278; ***cheerful*** (or hopeful) ***endurance, constancy***: — enduring, patience, patient continuance (waiting).]

* **Luke 8:15** But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with **patience**.
* **Luke 21:19** In your **patience** possess ye your souls.
* **Romans 2:7** To them who by patient **continuance** in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:
* **Romans 5:3** And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh **patience**; **4** And **patience**, experience; and experience, hope:
* **Romans 15:5**   Now the God of **patience** and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:
* **2Corinthians 6:4** But in all *things* approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much **patience**, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,
* **Colossians 1:11** Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all **patience** and longsuffering with joyfulness;
* **1Thessalonians 1:3** Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and **patience** of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;
* **2Thessalonians 1:4** So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your **patience** and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:
* **1Timothy 6:11** But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, **patience**, meekness.
* **2Timothy 3:10**   But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, **patience**,
* **Titus 2:2** That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in **patience**.
* **Hebrews 10:36** For ye have need of **patience**, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.
* **Hebrews 12:1**   Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with **patience** the race that is set before us,
* **James 1:3** Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh **patience**. **4** But let **patience** have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.
* **2Peter 1:6** And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance **patience**; and to **patience** godliness;
* **Revelation 2:19** I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy **patience**, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first.
* **Revelation 3:10** Because thou hast kept the word of my **patience**, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.
* **Revelation 14:12** Here is the **patience** of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Application Questions:

1. What ***works*** does God see in me?
2. What ***labor*** does my life demonstrate?
3. What *supernatural* ***patience*** is demonstrated in my life?
4. How do I contend with them that are *evil* (#2556 **kakos** worthless, depraved, injurious, bad, harmful, noisome)?
5. Am I alert to *try the spirits* to see if they are of God? (1 John 4.1-5 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.)

6. Am I faithful to overcome adversity through Christ or am I being *overcome* instead?

 What are some examples?

1. Have I labored without fainting?

 (Galatians 6.9 *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*)

II.

4. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.\*

\*\*(Deeds of the) Nicolaitans

Acts 6.5 tells us Nicolas was a *proselyte of Antioch.* The fact he was a proselyte tells us he was not born a Jew but converted from paganism to Judaism. Then he experienced a second conversion, this time turning from Judaism to Christianity. From this information, we know these facts about Nicolas of Antioch:

* He came from paganism and had dee pagan roots, very much unlike the other six deacons who came from a pure Hebrew line. Nicolas’ pagan background meant that he had previously been immersed in the activities of the occult.
* He was not afraid of taking an opposing position, evidenced by his ability to change religions twice. Converting to Judaism would have estranged him from his pagan family and friends. It would seem to indicate that he was not impressed or concerned about the opinions of other people.
* He was a free thinker and very open to embracing new ideas and concepts. Judaism was very different from the pagan and occult world in which he had been raised. For him to shift from paganism to Judaism reveals that he was very liberal in his thinking, for most pagans were offended by Judaism. He was obviously not afraid to entertain or embrace new ways of thinking.
* When he converted to Christ, it was at least the second time he had converted from one religion to another. We don’t know if, or how many times, he shifted from one form of paganism to another before he became a Jewish proselyte. His ability to easily change religious “hats” implies that he was not afraid to switch direction in midstream and go a totally different direction.

According to the writings of the Early Church leaders, Nicolas taught a doctrine of compromise, implying that total separation between Christianity and the practice of occult paganism was not essential. From Early Church records, it seems apparent that this Nicolas of Antioch was so immersed in occultism, Judaism, and Christianity that he had a stomach for all of it. He had no problem intermingling these belief systems in various concoctions and saw no reason why believers couldn’t continue to fellowship with those still immersed in the black magic of the ***Roman empire and its countless mystery cults.***

Occultism was a major force that warred against the Early Church. In Ephesus, the primary pagan religion was the worship of Diana (Artemis). There were many other forms of idolatry in Ephesus, but this was the primary object of occult worship in that city. In the city of Pergamos, there were numerous dark and sinister forms of occultism, causing Pergamos to be one of the most wicked cities in the history of the ancient world. In both of these cities, believers were lambasted and persecuted fiercely by adherents of pagan religions, forced to contend with paganism on a level far beyond all other cities.

It was very hard for believers to live separately from all the activities of paganism because paganism and its religions were the center of life in these cities. Slipping in and out of paganism would have been very easy for young or weak believers to do since most of their families and friends were still pagans. A converted Gentile would have found it very difficult to stay away from all pagan influence.

It is significant that the “deeds” and “doctrines” of the Nicolaitans are *only*mentioned in connection with the churches in these two occultic and pagan cities. It seems that the “doctrine” of the Nicolaitans was that it was all right to have one foot in both worlds and that one needn’t be so strict about separation from the world in order to be a Christian. This, in fact, was the “doctrine” of the Nicolaitans that Jesus “hated.” It led to a weak version of Christianity that was ***without power and without conviction — a defeated, worldly type of Christianity***.

Nicolas’ deep roots in paganism may have produced in him a tolerance for occultism and paganism. Growing up in this perverted spiritual environment may have caused him to view these belief systems as not so damaging or dangerous. This wrong perception would have resulted in a very liberal viewpoint that encouraged people to stay connected to the world. This is what numerous Bible scholars believe about the Nicolaitans*.*

This kind of teaching would result in ***nothing but total defeat*** for its followers. When believers allow sin and compromise to be in their lives, it drains away the power in the work of the Cross and the power of the Spirit that is resident in a believer’s life. This is the reason the name *Nicolas* is so vital to this discussion. The evil fruit of Nicolas’ “doctrine” encouraged worldly participation, leading people to indulge in sin and a lowered godly standard. In this way he literally *conquered the people*.

God wants to make sure we understand the doctrine the Nicolaitans taught, so Balaam’s actions are given as an example of their doctrine and actions. Revelation 2:14,15 says, “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”

When Balaam could not successfully curse the people of God, he used another method to destroy them. He seduced them into unbridled, sensual living by dangling the prostitutes of Moab before the men of Israel. Numbers 25:1-3 tells us, “And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they [the daughters of Moab] called the people [the men of Israel] unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people [the men of Israel] did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor….”

Just as the men of Israel compromised themselves with the world and false religions, now the “doctrine” of the Nicolaitans was encouraging *compromise*. As you are well aware, compromise with the world always results in a weakened and powerless form of Christianity. *This was* *the reason Jesus “hated” the “doctrine” and the “deeds” of the Nicolaitans.*

Summary: **NEVERTHELESS** I have somewhat against thee: You have left your first love.

 **REMEMBER** from where you’ve fallen OR I’ll come quickly and remove your candlestick EXCEPT YOU REPENT.

 **THIS YOU HAVE:** You hate the deeds of Nicolaitans (which I hate).

(Shorter version) From He that holds seven stars (leaders of 7 churches) in His right hand has somewhat against thee: *you have left your first love.* REMEMBER and REPENT or your candlestick will be removed. This you have: You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans (which I hate).

Application Questions:

1. Have I put aside my **first priority?** In any way???

 2. How can I put things in place to ***NOT*** let go of my first love?!

3. How can I continue to be set on a hill and not hide my light but ***let it shine***?!

 4. How does my life demonstrate that I hate any ***COMPROMISE*** with the world and its pagan systems?

1. Is there any ***COMPROMISE*** in my life that I need to ***HATE***??!!

**BEWARE!!: *“Compromise is the water that puts out the fire of God!”***

III.

7. **He that hath an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Summary: TO HIM THAT OVERCOMES: He that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches!

 **OVERCOME:** I will give to eat of the tree of Life which is in the midst of the paradise of God! (Sin CANNOT eat of the tree of Life – it cannot be there!)

Application Questions:

1. What can I *overcome* or do I need to overcome to eat of the LIFE God gives me?