

I M A G I N E

experiencing the life you've always dreamed of

Imagine. . . The end of Ephesus

1. Approximately 40 years have passed since Paul's letter to the Ephesians.
2. Decline is inevitable unless intentional steps are taken to prevent it. STROKE THE FIRE
3. Routine that loses purpose loses effectiveness.
4. Love is the foundational purpose of all we do.
5. John relays seven messages to seven churches in seven cities.
6. The first message is given to Ephesus.

1. THE MESSAGE IS FROM JESUS TO THE EPHESIANS

Revelation 2:1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands:

1. The fact that Jesus said it **demands** our attention.
2. This fact that Jesus said **validates** the message.
3. The church at Ephesus had a **rich** history.
4. The city of Ephesus had an **anti-Christ** culture.

2. THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS HAD GOOD PRACTICES

Revelation 2:2,3 ² I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. ³ You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

1. They worked **hard**.
2. They **persevered**.
3. They **endured** hardship.
4. They **did not tolerate** wicked men.
5. They were **diligent** in **protecting doctrinal purity**.
6. They **endured hardship** for their faith in Jesus.
7. They **did not grow weary**.

3. THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS FAILED IN THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA

Revelation 2:4, 5a ⁴ Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. ⁵ Remember the height from which you have fallen!

1. They had **forsaken** their first love.
2. They had **lost** their spark.
3. They had **settled** for something much less than what they had before.

4. Without love all actions are meaningless. 1 Cor 13:1-3

4. THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS IS COMMANDED TO REPENT

Revelation 2:5b *Repent and do the things you did at first.*

1. The command is simple and clear.
2. Reestablish priorities.

5. IF THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS FAILS IT WILL LOSE ITS IMPACT

Revelation 2:5c *If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.*

1. The consequences of disobedience are severe.
2. What a tragedy to have the light removed.

6. THERE IS HOPE FOR THE LOVELESS CHRISTIAN

Revelation 2:6-7 *⁶ But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices 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 give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*

1. Keep practicing sound doctrine.
2. Listen to the voice of the Spirit.
3. Overcomers get rewarded.

What these means for you:

1. Make sure (everyday) the foundation of your faith is love for the Lord Jesus Christ. FIRST AND GREATEST COMMANDMENT
2. Demonstrate the love for God by loving God's family.
3. BE FILLED WITH THE SPPIRIT
3. Teach your children well by encouragement, example, and guiding them through experiences in life.
4. Don't be like Ephesus—possessing a great history but having no future.