

TO THE CHURCH

The Church in Ephesus: Love | October 13, 2024

JESUS' ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS

Revelation 2:1-3 (NIRV) *Here is what I command you to write to the church in Ephesus. Here are the words of the One who holds the seven stars in his right hand. He also walks among the seven golden lampstands. He says, ²I know what you are doing. You work long and hard. I know you can't put up with those who are evil. You have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not. You have found out that they are liars. ³You have been faithful and have put up with a lot of trouble because of me. You have not given up.*

1 Thessalonians 2:9 *Brothers and sisters, I am sure you remember how hard we worked. We labored night and day while we preached to you God's good news. We didn't want to cause you any expense.*

1 Thessalonians 5:21 *Put everything to the test. Hold on to what is good. Stay away from every kind of evil.*

John 15:20-21 *Remember the words I spoke to you. I said, "A servant is not more important than his master." If people hated me and tried to hurt me, they will do the same to you... They will treat you like that because of my name.*

Jesus encourages the church in Ephesus in their hard work, truthfulness, and perseverance.

JESUS' CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS

Revelation 2:4-7 (NIRV) *⁴But here is something I hold against you. You don't have as much love as you had at first. ⁵Remember how far you have fallen! Turn away from your sins. Do the things you did at first. If you don't, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. ⁶But you do have this in your favor. You hate the way the Nicolaitans act. I hate it too. ⁷Those who have ears should listen to what the Holy Spirit says to the churches. I will allow those who overcome to eat from the tree of life in God's paradise.*

Matthew 22:35-40 *The Pharisees got together, and one of them was an authority on the law. So he tested Jesus with a question. "Teacher," he asked, "which is the most important commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied, " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.' This is the first and most important commandment. And the second is like it. 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' Everything that is written in the Law and the Prophets is based on these two commandments."*

1 Corinthians 13:1-8 *Suppose I speak in the languages of human beings and of angels. If I don't have love, I am only a loud gong or a noisy cymbal. Suppose I have the gift of prophecy. Suppose I can understand all the secret things of God and know everything about him. And suppose I have enough faith to move mountains. If I don't have love, I am nothing at all. Suppose I give everything I have to poor people. And suppose I give my body to be burned. If I don't have love, I get nothing at all. Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not want what belongs to others. It does not brag. It is not proud. It is not rude. It does not look out for its own interests. It does not easily become angry. It does not keep track of other people's wrongs. Love is not happy with evil. But it is full of joy when the truth is spoken. It always protects. It always trusts. It always hopes. It never gives up. Love never fails.*

Jesus challenges the church at Ephesus about their inner life of love, asking them if it is driving everything else they do.

1 John 5:5-12 *Who is it that has won the battle over the world? Only the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God... Here is God's witness. He has given us eternal life. That life is found in his Son. Those who belong to the Son have life. Those who do not belong to the Son of God do not have life.*

1 John 4:11-13 *Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we should also love one another. No one has ever seen God. But if we love one another, God lives in us. His love is made complete in us. We know that we belong to him and he belongs to us.*

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