

## The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

**Revelation 2: 1-7** *"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.*

**2** *"I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.*

**3** *I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.*

**4** *But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.*

**5** *Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.*

**6** *Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

**7** *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'*

**Genesis 3: 22** *Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—"*

**23** *therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.*

*24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

### **Synopsis:**

This message follows along with the goal of every message we preach at LifeSpring Bible Church.

It is our desire that all the teaching we provide for our church family continues our established trend to disciple every child of God in this family.

In the book of Revelation, the church at Ephesus is addressed with all that is good as well as all that is bad and is followed by a warning.

### **Introduction:**

Have you ever asked yourself about the second tree addressed by God Himself in the Garden of Eden immediately after the fall in the third chapter of Genesis?

The story included the tree of the knowledge of good and evil of which they were told not to eat from.

The second tree was the tree of life, the tree that God would take measures to keep man away from because the fruit of that tree would allow Adam and Eve to live forever despite their sin.

This side note is the bulk of our introduction because I have been asked many times why I thought that people lived so long in the early Old Testament.

I can't help but believe that it took a long time for the effects of the tree of life to wear off in Adam, Eve and their descendants.

This account of the Church of Ephesus in Revelation tells us what was good, what was bad and what was ugly about the church.

I believe we have much to learn from this passage.



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This letter to the Ephesian church reminds us that we must:

**I. Live with a constant awareness of the presence of Christ.**

Three ways that the presence of Christ impacts our lives:

**A. Comfort**

***John 14:1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me."***

**B. Courage**

***Mark 4:40*** He said to them, ***"Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"***

**C. Conviction**

***Luke 22:61*** *And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."*

**II. Never become passive in our commitment to the purity of Christ's Church.**

**A. We stand against sin.**

***Revelation 2: 2a "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil,***

**B. We stand against false teaching.**

***Revelation 2: 2b but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.***

***Revelation 2: 6 Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.***

“The Nicolaitans”: No one knows for sure who this was.



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It was an identifiable heresy and false teaching present in the early church.

It seems to be linked in **Revelation 2: 14-15** in the letter to Pergamum with the teaching of Balaam, which involved idolatry and sexual immorality.

**Revelation 2: 14-15** *But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.*

**15** *So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.*

### III. Never grow weary in our perseverance for Christ.

**Revelation 2: 2a** *"I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil,*

**3** *I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.*

**1 Corinthians 15: 58** *Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*

**Galatians 6:9** *And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*

### IV. Guard against careless negligence in our passion for Christ ‘

**Revelation 2: 4** *But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.*

I'm too busy . . .

I'm too tired . . .

I'm too \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

## **Conclusion: Three Take-Aways**

- 1. We must never forget what we were BC, before Christ!**
- 2. We must understand what we would be every day WC, without Christ!**
- 3. We must long to spend the rest of our lives (eternity) with Christ!**