

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

Revelation 2

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Revelation chapters two and three make up the second section of the book outlined in Revelation 1:19; **"the things which are."** This entire section is a series of seven letters to seven churches located in the ancient area of the Roman empire called Asian Minor. It was a prosperous area of the empire and was home to the strongest church and most prominent church in that era, Ephesus.

John begins to write under the direction of the "Messenger on the Island of Patmos", where the aged apostle had been exiled. The letter is addressed *"to the angel of the church at Ephesus."* The word for "angel" in the New Testaments is a transliteration of the Greek word "Angelos". The "os" is an ending that denotes case, gender, and number in the language. The word meaning is "messenger" and it can either refer to a "heavenly messenger" most often, or to an "earthly messenger" which is most likely the usage in Revelation 2 and 3 when addressing the congregation. The Lead Elder/Pastor is the messenger of the Lord to lead, teach, and disciple the flock of God. These leaders are held to a higher degree of responsibility in the church of Jesus. Some people do not like to hear this, but it is the consistent and confluent teaching

throughout the Bible; **"to whom much is given, much will be required"** Jesus, the Christ.

Space in this brief commentary will not allow each church to be addressed, not even one to be thoroughly dealt with, but let's look at the church of Ephesus as an example. The church had been started by the Apostle Paul, then led by Timothy, Apollos, and the Apostle John. Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon from Colossae was probably the next leader of the church after the exile of the Apostle John. The congregation had become the leading church in the Greco-Roman world at the end of the first century. Yet, with all their great work and leadership, they had a vital flaw. They were working in Jesus' Name. They were Servants in every sense of the word. They were doctrinally accurate and were outwardly the model to the rest of the churches worldwide, however, they had a marked and distinct flaw. They did not love Jesus as they once did. They loved Him, but they were serving the Lord out of routine and obligation, instead of out of a hot heart filled with love and admiration for their Savior. Jesus called to their attention that there needed to be repentance and return to their "First love" or their witness and testimony would soon be lost.

Prayer and Action Steps

Father, thank you that you are so merciful and kind to each of us individually and corporately as a church. Please forgive us when we do not love you deep in our hearts as we should. Please help me to take time each day to cultivate my love for you by spending time in your word and prayer.

Amen