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Doctrinal Studies Bible Church

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Text: Rev.2:1-7

Series: Ministering to a Spiritually Declining Nation

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### **MINISTERING TO A SPIRITUALLY DECLINING NATION (part five)**

This lesson applies to all local churches in the world as well as to DSBC.

Our lesson text warns the local church that it could be removed as custodian of the truth of the Word of God and evangelism through the gospel of grace salvation.

This warning was issued to the first of seven churches of Asia Minor in the Book of Revelation. The first church listed is Ephesus:

(Rev.2:5) **“Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did it at the first; and if (1<sup>st</sup> Class Condition / it’s true) not (remember, repent, and do) I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of (ek+abl.of separation) its place (tou topos/ abl.sm/ geography) unless (ean me) [3<sup>rd</sup> Class Condition / maybe] you repent (metaneo/ a.a.subj.2ps) [local church of Ephesus].”**

(Rev.1:20b) “And the seven lampstands are the seven churches.” (Rev. 1:11)

The Church is the light of Jesus Christ to the world (John 1:4-13; 8:12; 2 Cor.4:4; 1 John 15-7).

This is the warning shot over the bow, a wake-up call to DSBC in America.

<b>This lesson will study <u>four aspects</u> of the warning of losing custodian privileges as a local church</b>
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#### **1. We will examine the warning to church of Ephesus by the following six homiletic points.**

- **Priest**
  - (Rev.2:1; 1:12-16)      10 features      (Heb.7:23-28)
  
- **Praise**
  - (Rev.2:2-3)      “I know” (2x)
  
- **Problem**
  - (Rev.2:4-6)      “I have this against you.” First love - Note three imperatives -
  
- **Perception**
  - (Rev.2:7a)      “Ears to hear”      (Mark 8:14-21)
  
- **Prize**
  - (Rev.2:7b)      Overcomers (nikao) (1John 5:4) [eat of tree of life in Paradise]
  
- **Point of warning**
  - (Matt.21:43)      What happened to the priest-nation of Israel could happen to the local church who does not heed the warning given to the church of Ephesus (Rev.2:5) (kineo)

## 2. Note the change between church in the singular and churches in the plural in our lesson text.

- (Rev.2:1) Seven lampstand churches of Asia Minor (Rev.1:11)
- (Rev.2:1-6) Church of Ephesus was one of these lampstands
- (Rev.2:7) What was said to the Church of Ephesus can be said to DSBC and other Christian churches through-out the world. In the Parable of Tenants, Jesus said that the priest-nation of Israel would be replaced by a “people (ethnos) producing the fruit of the kingdom of God.” (Matt.21:43)

## 3. We now know why each local Christian church should take responsibility of custodianship of the truth of God’s word? Now the question is how?

### Custodianship of The Word of God - Teaching:

#### MILK: (basic doctrines)

- (Heb.5:12-13) “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food (meat). For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an **infant (nepios).**” (1 Cor.3:1; Gal.4:3; Eph.4:14)

**Difference:** “Like newborn babies (brephos), long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation (soteria).” (1 Pet.2:2; 1:23) (Soteriology)

#### MEAT (solid food)

- “But solid food is for **the mature** (teleios), who because of practice have their senses trained to discern both good and evil.” (Heb.4:14) ([teleiology](#))

**Difference:** “Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.** As a result, we are **no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.**” (Eph.4:13-14; Col.4:12)

### Evangelism – Preaching the “Good News” of the Grace Gospel of Jesus Christ:

- **The message** of the world’s need for salvation must be clear (1 Cor.15:22; Rom.5:12; 1 Tim.1:15; Rom.5:8; John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Acts 26:18).
- **The message** of the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be clear to them (1 Cor.15:1-4; 1 Cor.1:18).
- **The message** of grace salvation by faith must be clear (Eph.2:8-9; Rom.1:16).
- **The message** of God’s security of salvation must be made clear to them (John 10:28-29; Eph.1:13-14; Col.1:13-14).

**The message** to the local church is that **each generation** of pivot believers must step-up and take responsibility for the custodianship of God’s Word and evangelism for their time in human history.

**MY Tombstone message:** “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2Tim.4:7-8; 1 Tim.6:12)