

## Reach!

Revelation 2:1-7

### Reach in (1-3, 6)

A. Jesus identifies Himself as (v. 1):

1. The one who holds the seven stars in His right hand, which means that He has a \_\_\_\_\_ over the messengers (pastors) of the seven churches.
2. The one who walks among the seven golden lampstands, which means that He is ever present and a \_\_\_\_\_ among the seven churches.

B. Jesus compliments the pastor for his h\_\_\_\_\_ work (toil, labor) and his p\_\_\_\_\_ (vv 2,3,6)

1. He applied the t\_\_\_\_\_ of an apostle to those claiming to be apostles and proved them to be false (v. 2)
  - a. An apostle must have s\_\_\_\_\_ the resurrected Jesus (Acts 1:22; 1Cor 9:1)
  - b. An apostle must be c\_\_\_\_\_ by Jesus Christ Himself (no one can appoint themselves (Lk 6:13; Gal 1:1).
  - c. True apostles perform signs, miracles, and wonders – 2Cor 12:12).
2. He endured opposition for the sake of Jesus Christ's n\_\_\_\_\_ (v. 3)
3. He hated the d\_\_\_\_\_ of the Nicolaitans
  - a. Some early church fathers believed these to be followers of the d\_\_\_\_\_, Nicolas (Act 6:5).
  - b. The deeds were obviously s\_\_\_\_\_ deeds.

C. Maintaining doctrinal and moral purity must be an emphasis of our church and ourselves.

1. Doctrinal purity - teach
  - a. Philosophies threaten this (e.g. God is 1\_\_\_\_\_ and so will save everyone)
  - b. Cult groups threaten this (e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons – wrongly define who Jesus is and what salvation is)
2. Moral purity – teach and practice
  - a. Culture threatens this (e.g. homosexuality as an acceptable l\_\_\_\_\_)

- b. We need to lovingly keep one another morally  
a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Reach out (4,5)**

- A. Jesus rebukes the leader for leaving his f\_\_\_\_\_ love
1. Most understand this to mean that he did not love Jesus or possibly others like he used to (See NLT) – but this ignores the following verses and the previous context.
    - a. The Greek text reads word for word and in Greek word order: *the love of you, the first one, you have left*. The Greek word translated as *left* (NIV – *forsaken*; ESV – *abandoned*) is a very strong word and is translated as:
      - 1) L\_\_\_\_\_ in 1Cor 7:11 – to describe a woman leaving her husband so as to no longer be in the marriage relationship.
      - 2) F\_\_\_\_\_ in Matt 6:12 – When God forgives sin, He leaves it behind.
    - b. The previous context shows that this leader had not abandoned Christ, for apart from Christ the works done are counted as n\_\_\_\_\_ (Jn 15:5)
    - c. The following context tells us what the first love is
  2. The first love identified
    - a. Jesus commands the leader to r\_\_\_\_\_ from WHERE he had fallen (not from WHOM)
    - b. Jesus commands the leader to r\_\_\_\_\_ by going back to doing the deeds he did at first (The NLT does not translate but interprets – compare translations)
    - c. Therefore the first love is the first d\_\_\_\_\_
- B. What are the deeds that were first done? – the background of the Ephesian church is found in Acts 19-20.
1. The apostle Paul planted this church on his third missionary journey (52 A.D.) and in the two plus years he was there all who lived in Asia h\_\_\_\_\_ the word of the Lord (Acts 19:10)
  2. When the leadership was developed Paul continued on his missionary journey but warned the leadership that false teachers would come in and try to d\_\_\_\_\_ people away (Acts 20:28-30)
    - a. When this happened, T\_\_\_\_\_ was sent by Paul to deal with the false teachings;

- b. But Paul also instructed him to do the work of an e\_\_\_\_\_ (2Tim 4:5).
- 3. Conclusion - The first deeds have to do with spreading the gospel (evangelism).
  - a. The leader of the church of Ephesus at first did both in-reach and outreach (evangelism) but eventually became so preoccupied with in-reach that he neglected evangelism.
  - b. Jesus warned him that if he did not return to the first deeds, He would remove his l\_\_\_\_\_, which is the church – the church would cease to exist!
- C. The promise (v. 7)
  - 1. Given to o\_\_\_\_\_ (conquerors) – these are those who truly have trusted Jesus (see Rom 8:37)
  - 2. To e\_\_\_\_\_ from the tree of life
    - a. Originally, the tree of life was in the garden of E\_\_\_\_\_ and God closed access to it when Adam and Eve sinned.
    - b. God moved the tree of life to p\_\_\_\_\_ and we will see it in the new heaven and new earth (Rev 22).
    - c. The tree of life represents e\_\_\_\_\_ life (see Jn 17:3)

### **Reach up (7)**

- A. What is the Spirit saying to us as a church?
- B. What is the Spirit saying to you as a believer in Christ?