

A Time-lapse of the Church at Ephesus

The Seed is Planted (A.D. 52)

- Acts 18:18-21
- Paul is on the 2nd of 3 preaching journeys when he first visits Ephesus.
- He reasons in the synagogue, plants the word, and leaves behind Priscilla and Aquila to continue the labor (watering).
 - The church begins in Ephesus! Cf. 18:24, 26, 27
 - The plant has sprouted!
 - Paul promises to return.

Growth of the Plant (A.D. 54)

- Acts 19
- Paul is on his 3rd and final journey. He spends 3 years in the city and with the church at Ephesus.
- Acts 19:7, 8-10
 - Disciples are meeting daily and the word is getting out.
- Acts 19:19, 20
- Acts 19:23-27

The Plant Matures (A.D. 57)

- Acts 20:15-17
- Paul is traveling to Jerusalem as he concludes his 3rd preaching journey.
- Church now consists of elders: a sign of maturity.
- Acts 20:20, 26, 27 says a lot of a church willing to receive this type of teaching.
- Acts 20:28-32 was taken to heart.
- Acts 20:36-38 speaks of true brotherly love.

The Plant Blooms (A.D. 62)

- Ephesians
- Unlike in many of Paul's other letters, there is no hint of condemnation or error.
 - What does this tell us about the church at Ephesus?
 - Elders and saints are working and growing together. Ephesians 4:12, 13, 15, 16
- Paul speaks favorably of the church.
Ephesians 1:15, 16

The Plant Shrivels (A.D. 64)

- 1, 2 Timothy
- In a way, we are reading Timothy's personal mail, but it sheds light on the situation of the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3).
- 1 Timothy 1:3, 4 reveals the presence of false doctrine and that some were listening.
- 1 Timothy 1:18; 4:7; 5:20; 6:20, 21
- 2 Timothy 2:1-4, 14, 16, 23; 3:1, 13; 4:1-4

The Plant is Wilting (A.D. 95)

- Revelation 2:1-7
- Commendation of Ephesian church:
 - Works, labor, and patience (2:2a, 3)
 - Have tested and exposed false apostles (2:2b)
 - Hate deeds (doctrine?) of Nicolaitans (2:6, 15)
- Complaint about Ephesian church:
 - Have left their first love (2:4)
- Counsel for Ephesian church:
 - Remember and repent (2:5)

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Lessons from the Ephesian Church

- Church growth is due to various factors:
 - A local church being involved in preaching the word. Acts 19:10
 - A local church receives *and* accepts solid, biblical teaching. Acts 20:20, 26, 27
 - A local church identifies, prepares for, and rejects error. Acts 20:28-32
 - Members of the local church love one another. Acts 20:36-38

Lessons from the Ephesian Church

- Church decay is due to various factors:
 - Allowing space for false teaching. 1 Timothy 1:3, 4
 - Leaving our first love. Revelation 2:4

A Time-lapse of the Church at Chapman Acres

Questions for Chapman Acres

- What does our time-lapse look like?
- What will our time-lapse look like?
- How will you positively affect our time-lapse?
- What are you doing to negatively affect our time-lapse?

Questions for Chapman Acres

- Are we enthusiastic about spreading God's word and telling others of Jesus?
- Do we receive sound, biblical teaching?
- Do we accept sound, biblical teaching?
- Do we reject or tolerate false teaching?
- Is brotherly love palpable among us?
- Is our "first love" noticeable during worship?