Place in the Book of Revelation

I. What you have seen (Rev 1).
II. What is now (Rev 2–3)—the seven churches of Asia Minor.
Introductory Comments

- An abundance of material dealing with local church problems and practices.
- Study these seven epistles as closely as you study any New Testament epistle.
A. Ephesus (2:1–7)

- Strategic.
- City of change: once inhabited.
- The citadel of idolatry: Temple of Diana.
A. Ephesus (2:1–7)

1. Characterization of Christ (v. 1)
   – He sovereignly controls the church at Ephesus.
   – He preserves the church at Ephesus with His power.
   – His presence abides with the church at Ephesus.
A. Ephesus (2:1–7)

2. Commendation from Christ (vv. 2–3, 6)
   - He commends the church at Ephesus for its works.
   - He commends the church at Ephesus for its orthodoxy.
   - He commends the church at Ephesus for its perseverance.
Nicolaitans

- Best view: Nicolaus (Acts 6:5) founded the Nicolaitans.
- Alternate view: They are a priestly hierarchy.
- The commitment to false teaching and immorality (cp. teachings of Baalam; Rev 2:14–15; see Num 31:16; 25:1–2).
- Only Revelation 2:6 and 15.
A. Ephesus (2:1–7)

3. Complaint by Christ (v. 4)
   – He complains that the church at Ephesus has left its first love.
A. Ephesus (2:1–7)

4. Counsel from Christ (v. 5a)
   - He counsels the church at Ephesus to remember what they used to be.
   - He counsels the church at Ephesus to repent.
   - He counsels the church at Ephesus to return to their former deeds.
5. Caution by Christ (v. 5b)
   – He warns the church at Ephesus that they are in danger of losing their witness for Christ—their light might go out and its doors close.
6. Commitment of Christ (v. 6)
   - The overcomers at Ephesus will partake of the tree of life (see 22:2, 14, 19).
A. Ephesus (2:1–7)

7. Practical Implications
   - Separation without compassion leads to a loss of fervor and freshness in service for Christ.
   - Love for Christ must energize the church’s compulsion for doctrinal purity.
   - Mature service for Christ must include freshness in fervor for Christ Himself.
Questions for Discussion

a) How can ______________________ gain Christ’s commendations that He gave to the church at Ephesus?

b) What could cause ______________________ to lose its/his/her witness for Christ?

c) How can ______________________ avoid Christ’s complaints about the church at Ephesus?
Implications Regarding Jesus Christ

- He is sovereign.
- He cares for His church.
- He preserves His church.
- He abides with His church.
- He knows His church.
- He instructs His church.