

Doctrinal Studies:
PROSPERITY OR DISASTER (Rev. 2:3)

1. Believers are the products of their own decisions. In AD 96 Ephesus was the wealthiest city in the Roman Empire.
2. At the time John wrote, (AD 96) Ephesus had a level of prosperity second to none. This prosperity was related to their love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and their response to Biblical teaching.
3. Ephesus had 3 great Pastors - Paul, Timothy and John.
4. Believers were passing tests and contributing to a large enough pivot to make prosperity possible.
5. For at least 184 years the believers were contributing to the up trends of history.
6. Believers must be so careful in times of prosperity because often prosperity will cause God's Plan, God's Word to become secondary.
7. Believers in Rev. 2:3 are described as "having endurance" (ὑπομονη) – the ability to keep plodding – even in the midst of difficulty and tests.
8. Up trends of history are evident when believers are in love with the Lord Jesus Christ, perceptive and applying God's Truth, having the right attitude toward the resurrected Christ ("My Name's sake"). Passing tests advances spiritual growth.
9. *We are what we decide.* Volition is the major issue!
10. *We are not sinning when filled with the Holy Spirit; but when choice accepts temptation, we are knocked to the outside* of the divine dynasphere, and the old sinful nature takes over the control of our souls.