

REVELATION

A Message to God's Church

Week 3: Revelation 2:1 – 7

“...in her keenness for the truth, the church at Ephesus has lost her love, ‘the one quality without which all others are worthless’. – Michael Wilcock

1. Read through Revelation 2:1 – 7 aloud together as a group. In your initial reading, what pops out at you? Discuss. Why is this significant to you?
2. What commendations did Christ have for the church at Ephesus? What was their sin?
3. Read Mark 12:29 – 31

*Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And **you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.**’ The second is this: ‘**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29–31 (ESV)*

How does an individual accomplish this two part command?

4. Jesus rebukes the church of Ephesus. This rebuke that the church in Ephesus cuts to the heart. They had lost their first love. This rebuke contrasts with what Paul wrote the Ephesians 35 years earlier, that he never stopped giving thanks for them because of their faith in Christ and their love for the saints (Ephesians 1:15-16).
5. Many Christians, if they are honest, will admit that they have abandoned the love they had at first. The honeymoon is over and they are just maintaining. The beautiful thing is that Jesus has given us a way to bring back the fire of our first love!
 - a. First, we must *remember* (literally “keep on remembering”) what we have lost and cultivate a desire to regain that close communion once again.

Take a moment and briefly share with your group what your life with Christ looked like when it was fresh and new?

- b. Then we must *repent*—change our minds—and confess our sins to the Lord (1 John 1:9).

What has caused you to lose sight of Christ? What has impeded your love for Christ? What do you need to repent of doing or not doing?

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- c. Third, we must *repeat the things we used to do*, which suggests restoring the original fellowship that was broken by our sin and neglect.

For the believer, what are those things that you must do again?

6. The Church was commended for their theological orthodoxy and their discerning mind and they were rebuked for their lovelessness. Hearing Jesus' evaluation, one could imagine that it would be easy for the church to swing to the other extreme of just focusing on loving, however that isn't what Jesus wants. It isn't about balance or an either/or situation. It is an and/both situation. He wants His church to be 100% theologically orthodox and 100% loving.

How does our church protect itself from becoming a swinging pendulum or a church of either/or?

7. If Jesus were to commission one of His apostles to write a letter to Missio Dei Church, what sort of things would He commend us for? Rebuke us for? Why?