

LETTERS FROM JESUS

PART 2: LOST LOVE

REVELATION 2:1-7



Sermon Overview

Jesus commends the church in Ephesus for what it does well before rebuking them for allowing their works to overshadow their love for Him. Finally, He gives them a three-step plan of recovery.

PART TWO

In some cases, the love for Christ in the church, the bride of Christ, cools, overwhelmed by other loves. Such was the case in the church in Ephesus.

¹ "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands:

² I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.

³ You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

⁴ Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.

⁵ Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

⁶ But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

REVELATION 2:1-7

THE IMPORTANCE OF EPHESUS

Ephesus was a city of great strategic importance in spreading the Gospel, the Apostle Paul spending more time there than any other single city. It was a capital city, free and self-governing with no Roman soldiers in it. It was the home of an iconic temple dedicated to Artemis, and also the church that John the Apostle lead as pastor after Timothy.

¹ "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands:

REVELATION 2:1

Jesus begins by affirming His place as sovereign over all creation (the seven stars), as well as His place moving among believers (the seven golden lampstands).

He does not overlook the church's virtues, but commends them for the good they are doing, before moving into a critique and offering steps to recovery:

THREE PRAISES

² I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.

³ You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

REVELATION 2:1-7

Jesus praises the church for being hardworking, discerning of evil, and perseverant in suffering.

Jesus had one thing against them: they had lost their first love.

HEARTFELT DISAPPOINTMENT

The church in Ephesus had allowed for their works to overshadow their love for Jesus. A Christian must never allow for their serving and ministry to replace intimacy with Jesus.

Jesus shows us His love in a multitude of different ways each day, and wants to be loved in return. Whenever spending time with Jesus becomes a drudgery due to a sense of duty versus an unspeakable joy, Christians must return to their first love.

THREE STEPS TO RECOVERY

Jesus gives cold believers a recovery program to return to their love of Jesus.

⁵ Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

REVELATION 2:5

1. RECALL

Recall: the times when you were overwhelmed by the love of Jesus, His forgiveness of sins, and the gift of eternal life. Be it a sin, a person, a blessing, or a trial, what stole your devotion?

2. REVERSE

The place of failure is a place of recovery. Repent, and reverse course.

3. RECAPTURE

Recapture that time when the love for Jesus occupied your thoughts, desires, and longings.

Jesus warns that persisting in this condition will result in the removal of your lampstand, which is the extinguishing of the light of Christ from your life and the life of the church.