

## Returning To Your First Love

Rev. 2:1-7

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 people, 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 the love you had at first.

5 Consider how far 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 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Can a person be too busy doing God's work that they are too busy for God?

First... He knew their works, this was a dynamic, active church!

The Greek word "ergon", from which we get energy, is used for "works".

Second... This is what most would call a dedicated church!

The word, "persevered" is used, referring to burdens and troubles which this church had suffered, but they were dedicated to continuing on.

Third... This was a determined church!

The word, "endured" is used here with the idea of pressing through whatever obstacles were before them.

Fourth... They were commended for being a disciplined church!

Last... Christ commended them for being a discerning church!

Vs. 4 - "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first."

HIS LOVE REMAINS CONSTANT AND PURE!

I. CONSIDER HOW FAR YOU HAVE FALLEN!

(KJV) - Remember from where you have fallen!

2 Pet 1:13 – I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body,

(KJV) - "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;"

He uses the Greek word "diegeiro" (di-eg-ei-ro) which means to agitate, to arouse, to awaken or stir.

Luke 15:17 - "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

II. REPENT.

1 Cor. 13:1-3

1 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I GAIN NOTHING.

Charles Finney once preached a message called "The Backslidden In Heart".

1) Losing their consecration to God

2) Leaving their first love

3) Withdrawing themselves from that state of entire and total surrender to God and coming again under the control of a self-pleasing spirit.

III. DO THE THINGS YOU DID AT FIRST!

Acts 19:1-20 tells us what the first love requires:

1. There is an emphasis on being filled with the Spirit!

Eph. 5:18 - Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit

The Greek would render the words, "be filled" to mean "continually filled" with the Spirit.

2. There is an emphasis on the Kingdom of God!

Acts 19:8 -And he went into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Matt 6:33 - But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matt 6:31-32

31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

3. There is an emphasis on divine intervention in the life of the church!

Acts 19:11-12

11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul,

12 so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

Authority was being used over the devil and demonic spirits were cast out!

4. There is an emphasis placed on fearing the Lord and honoring Him!

Acts 19:17 - When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor.

Psalms 96:4 - For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.

"I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place."