



“P & V”
Revelation 2:1-7

“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. ²I 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. ³You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. ⁴Yet I hold this against you: you have forsaken the love you had at first. ⁵Consider 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. ⁶But you have this in your favour: you hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷Whoever 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.”

My go to prayer request for many years is that I would have a greater **passion** and a greater **vision** for God.

I believe it is such an important thing to have and maintain in our Christian life which impacts every aspect of life. I believe it is something worth fighting for. Without passion and vision Christianity becomes just a monotonous ritualistic life.

When we think of John’s spectacular vision, we should remember where John was: imprisoned on Patmos. Jesus is often known most intimately in the midst of suffering and trials. Both John and Stephen ([Acts 7:54-60](#)) saw Jesus most clearly and gloriously in the context of suffering for the cause of Jesus.

“The wrath of the wicked does but bring saints the nearer to the choice favours of God.”
(Seiss)

III. Charlie Kirk

• THE POSITIVE

Patience, hard work, endured hardships, perseverance, boldness

Patience is the great ancient Greek word *hupomone*, which means “steadfast endurance.” In this sense, the church in Ephesus was rock-solid.

By all outward appearances, this was a solid church that worked hard, had great outreach, and protected the integrity of the gospel.

• THE PROBLEM

They once had a love that they don't have anymore. This can be described as “a definite and sad departure.” (Robertson)

“A church has no reason for being a church when she has no love within her heart, or when that love grows cold. Lose love, lose all.” (Spurgeon)

ἀφίημι aphíēmi, af-ee'-ay-mee; from (to send; to go); to send forth, in various applications (as follow):—cry, forgive, forsake, lay aside, leave, let (alone, be, go, have), omit, put (send) away, remit, suffer, yield up.

What would you do if you left your cell phone

behind? **Ill.** Left the house with Ronnie in his crib

Did they know they were in that state? Did they care? Was everyone in that state?

You do not have to settle for less.

Focus on yourself Depressed
Focus on others Discouraged

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Focus on circumstances Defeated
Focus on Christ Delighted

A principle for every aspect of life:

Your marriage

Your family

Your job

Your church

What causes a person to leave their first love?

- ✓Lack of intimacy
- ✓Comparing to others and having dissatisfaction
- ✓Ritual or routine
- ✓Cynicism
- ✓Deception- something better in life

No one suddenly wakes up one morning and says, “I don’t love Jesus anymore. I’m tired of Jesus and I’m finished with all this Christianity stuff.” It doesn’t happen like that. It happens over the years—after hardship, questions you can’t get answered, trials that don’t seem to have reason, loss of health, loss of hope, loss of a loved one. In the midst of the Ephesians’ hard work and endurance for Jesus, their love for Him began to wane.

Some 40 years earlier Paul had described their **love** in his letter writing "For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and **your love for all the saints.**" ([Eph. 1:15+](#)) And then he added multiple references to **love** in his letter to the church at Ephesus (Love is mentioned 20x) Contrast the letter to the Colossians which has a number of parallels with the letter to the Ephesians but not when it comes to the subject of love! Colossians has only 4 mentions of **love** compared to 20 mentions of **love** in Ephesians! What is the [upshot](#)? The Ephesians could not claim ignorance of this vital topic of **LOVE**!

LOVE in the Letter to the Ephesians - [Eph. 1:4](#); [Eph. 1:15](#); [Eph. 2:4](#); [Eph. 3:17](#); [Eph. 3:19](#); [Eph. 4:2](#); [Eph. 4:15](#); [Eph. 4:16](#); [Eph. 5:2](#); [Eph. 5:25](#); [Eph. 5:28](#); [Eph. 5:33](#); [Eph. 6:23](#); [Eph. 6:24](#).

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Jeremiah 2:2-5

➤ **MAKE THE MAIN THING THE MAIN**

THING! • THE PRESCRIPTION

REMEMBER

μνημονεύω mnēmoneúō, mnay-mon-yoo'-o; from a derivative of [G3420](#); to exercise memory, i.e. recollect; by implication, to punish; also to rehearse:—make mention; be mindful, remember.

How do we know if we have left our first love?

1. Delighting more in someone or something other than the Lord. We tend to crowd the Lord out of our lives, get sidetracked or distracted and get our priorities out of whack.

[Mark 12:30](#)—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.'

2. Losing the desire and longing in my soul for times of close

fellowship with the Lord in the Word and prayer.

3. Giving in to those things which I know displease the Lord.

[John 15:10](#)—If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

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4. When I will not willingly and cheerfully give to God's work or to the needs of others, I'll lose my first love.

[1 John 3:17](#)— But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

5. When I cease to treat every Christian as I would the Lord. Rudeness, hatefulness, arguing, selfishness, etc., will rob you of your spiritual enthusiasm, zeal, and closeness with the Lord.

[John 13:34](#)—"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

6. I will lose my first love if I inwardly strive for fame, popularity, and the acclaim of this world rather than the approval of Jesus Christ. Ask yourself, "Who is more important? Whose opinion and favor do I value the most... the crowd or Christ?"

[1 John 2:15](#)—Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

7. Becoming complacent and apathetic to sinful conditions around me or in my life.

[Matthew 24:12](#)—And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

8. I will lose my first love if I am unwilling to forgive another who has hurt or offended me.

[1 John 4:20](#)—If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

Jesus puts this command remember in the present tense which indicates that our heart is prone to wander and will always need to recall when we by grace through faith first fell in love with Jesus and our passion for Him was at a fever pitch, red hot. Remember is also in the active voice which means we each individually must choose to make a definite decision of our will to remember Jesus, our first love. I would submit that such a continual obedience to Christ's command

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REPENT

This is *not* a command to feel sorry, or really to *feel* anything. It means to change your direction, to go a different way. It is an “urgent appeal for instant change of attitude and conduct, before it is too late.” (Robertson)

Repent ([metanoeo](#)) is a command in the [aorist imperative](#) (JUST DO IT! DO NOT DELAY! DO NOT PROCRASTINATE!)

"Repentance (*metanoia*, 'change of mind') involves a turning with contrition from sin to God; the repentant sinner is in the proper condition to accept the divine forgiveness." (F. F. Bruce. *The Acts of the Apostles* [Greek Text Commentary], London: Tyndale, 1952, p. 97.)

μετανοέω metanoéō, met-an-o-eh'-o; from [G3326](#) and [G3539](#); to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction):—repent.

What does repentance mean in today's culture? In order to come to Christ involves the act of repentance. Sin is the issue. The world has clouded the meaning of sin and it is totally contrary to the Word of God!

Sex outside of God's will is wrong.

Pornography is wrong.

Drunkenness is wrong.

Murder is wrong.

Anger is wrong.

Lieing is wrong.

Repentance involves recognizing that you have thought wrongly in the past and determining to think rightly in the future. The repentant person has “second thoughts” about the mindset he formerly embraced. There is a change of disposition and a new way of thinking about God, about sin, about holiness, and about doing God’s will. True repentance is prompted by “godly sorrow,” and it “leads to salvation” ([2 Corinthians 7:10](#)).

Salvation sets us free from the bondage of sin! Forgiven! Washed! Sanctified! Justified!

Believers are still called to repent of present sin!

2 Corinthians 12:21; Revelation 3:19; 2 Timothy 2:25; 2 Corinthians 7

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RESPOND

This (DOING) is not a call to “Christian service” or “renewed activity.”

1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:1; 2 Peter 1:8

III. A life long meeting with counselors- always the same, nothing ever

changed! What are **the first works**?

- Remember how you used to spend time in His Word?
- Remember how you used to pray?
- Remember the joy in getting together with other Christians?

I love the thrill that I feel when I get together with God’s wonderful

people! • Remember how excited you were about telling others about

Jesus?

THE PENALTY

Irenaeus (writing in the late second century) described what he knew of the Nicolaitans: “The Nicolaitanes are the followers of that Nicolas who was one of the

seven first ordained to the diaconate by the apostles. They lead lives of unrestrained indulgence. The character of these men is plainly pointed out in the Apocalypse of John, as teaching that it is a matter of indifference to practice adultery, and to eat things sacrifice to idols." (Against Heresies, book 1, chapter 26. From the Ante Nicene Fathers Volume 1, page 352)

Hippolytus, a student of Irenaeus (writing in the early third century) associated the Nicolaitans with the Gnostics: "There are, however, among the Gnostics diversities of opinion... But Nicolaus has been a cause of the wide-spread combination of these wicked men. [He] departed from correct doctrine, and was in the habit of inculcating indifference of both life and food." (Refutation of all Heresies, book 7, chapter 24; ANF volume 5, page 115)

The church that loses its love will soon lose its light, no matter how doctrinally sound it may be! --- Warren Wiersbe

Today's take-away.