

First Love Lost – Revelation 2:1-7

1) What are some ways churches evaluate themselves or measure success?

Revelation 2:1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2 “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. 3 I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary. 4 But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. 6 Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

Jesus presents himself as the one with the right and ability to assess His church. Unlike other organizations, we don't get to set our own mission and measures of success. They are given to us by Him.

- 2) We see here part of what it means for Jesus to be the head of the church – how should this shape the way we think about our church?**
- 3) Do your desires for the church align with those of Jesus? What expectations do we have for her that are not aligned with his that we can acknowledge and repent of?**

Jesus commends the church in Ephesus for their theological orthodoxy, their moral lack of compromise, and their endurance through suffering and persecution.

- 4) How do we feel or see the pressures to move away from these important things we ought to be guarding?**
- 5) What has God equipped us, his church, with to hold this important ground?**

For all of these good things, something vital had slipped: their love. Jesus said that love for God and neighbor sums up the whole law, and 1 Corinthians 13 shows us that many great things lose their value when done without love.

- 6) What can cause our love to grow cold?**
- 7) We know from scripture that our love is not self-generated – it flows out of the way we have been loved by God in Christ. Given that, how do we grow in love?**
- 8) What hope do we fall back on when our love does fail and fall short?**

PRAY

- Pray for our church, that God would keep us pursuing the right things and increase our love for each other and the world around us.
- Pray for each other: thanking God for His provision, giving our cares to Him and each other, and falling on His mercy and grace for our sin and failure.