

“Where’s The Love?”
Revelation 2:1-7

~ LET’S PRAY ~

WE’LL... I’VE TITLED TODAY’S MESSAGE:

- “Where’s The Love?”

TURN TO REVELATION 2...

- And follow along as I read (vv.1-7) NLT

~ INTRO ~

TODAY...

- We see the first church Jesus speaks to...
 - The Church of Ephesus!

POINT #1 – THE HISTORY:

EPHESUS WAS A CHURCH...

- That had been faithful for 35+ years ([Ephesians to Revelation](#)).

AND NOW... JESUS IS...

- Speaking to this church personally...
 - By telling the pastors what to say to the congregation.

EPHESUS...

- Was a city...
 - Known for banking, trade, & religion.
 - With a population of 250,000 people.

EPHESUS...

- Held one of the seven wonders of the ancient world...
 - “*The Temple of Diana*” – (fertility goddess).
- The temple was beautiful display of marble-construction.

POINT IS:

- Ephesus was a culturally rich city...
 - And the church refused to compromise in it!
- However, the Christians lost their *FIRE*...
 - As they drifted from a love for Christ.

~ STUDY ~

(v.1)

AS JESUS SPEAKS...

- He addresses 5-areas in the seven churches:

- 1) He addresses the **Church & name of the City**.
- 2) He **reveals a certain aspect about Himself...**
 - **As it relates to that local church:** *“these things says...”*
- 3) He first **shares a commendation where He can.**
 - (In two churches God can’t find anything good to say)
Sardis & Laodicea
- 4) He **points out the sin.**
 - (Two churches receive NO criticism... only good.)
Smyrna & Philadelphia
- 5) He **Admonishes & gives a promise.**

NOW THESE SEVEN LETTERS...

- Can be applied in four ways:

- 1) **Locally:**
 - The actual churches John wrote to in Asia.
- 2) **Ecclesiastically:**
 - Revealing the conditions in the church of any age.
- 3) **Personally:**
 - *“He who has an ear let him hear...” (v.7)*
- 4) **Prophetically:**
 - Church history as it has unfolded over time.

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CHURCH HISTORY:

Ephesus (AD 30-100) = Apostolic Era

Smyrna (AD 100-313) = Martyr Era

Pergamos (AD 314-590) = Compromised Era

Thyatira (AD 590-1517) = Roman Catholic Era

Sardis (AD 1517-1700) = Reformation Era

Philadelphia (AD 1700-1900) = Revival Era

Laodicea (AD 1900- present) = Worldly Era

AGAIN (v.1)...

WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND...

- That Jesus is intimately familiar with all that’s happening...
 - In HIS church!

POINT #2 – THE HEART PROBLEM:

(vv.2-3)

- Works:
 - They were a church on the move!
- Labor: = They toiled to the point of exhaustion!

Labor can be a mark of good health.

- God calls men that are active.
 - Think about **David** tending sheep...
 - Or the **disciples** that were at work fishing.
- God uses **active people**!

BUT GOD DOESN’T WANT PEOPLE...

- Serving out of the wrong motivation.
 - Out of religious burdens working for favor (Gal. 3:3)
 - Out of obligation (2 Cor. 9:5)
 - Out of selfish ambitions (3rd John 9-10)

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AND THIS WAS THE PROBLEM...

- The church was struggling with!
 - It was action for God, BUT missing a love of God!

HOWEVER...

- They were getting some things right.

(v.2b) “... *that you cannot bear those who are evil.*”

THEY UNDERSTOOD...

- The three “R’s”...
 - Reject a divisive (heretical) man (Titus 3:10)
 - Restore those who have fallen into sin (Gal. 6:1)
 - Reconcile men to God (Eph. 2:16)

(v.4)

NOW WE GET TO THE PROBLEM...

- They had lost their intimacy with Christ!
 - BUT everything still looked good on the outside.

(v.4)

“*left your first love*”

- This is a verse that is **often misquoted**...
 - By saying, “you have **LOST** your first love”

Left: This describes a motion moving from higher to lower condition...

- In three steps:

- 1) Neglect = Forgetting the habit / pattern / discipline.
- 2) Abandon = You’re no longer trying... it’s a lost priority.
- 3) Desert = Stepping away because there’s no longer an interest.

SO WHAT’S THE REMEDY?

POINT #3 – THE HEALING:

(v.5a)

Remember – (Thought) Consider how you once followed God!?!

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(Excuses are NOT allowed: Yea, but I’m older now!)

Repent – Change of attitude & change of conduct.

- Bad attitudes show up when God’s work becomes a burden
 - And we stop following with total commitment.

(Ps. 37:3) “*Trust in the Lord and do good...*”

- Which summarizes the idea of attitudes & actions.

Redo – We go back to the basics!

The first things we did when we got saved:

- Prayer
- Reading the Bible
- Passionate worshipping
- Connecting & sharing life with newer / younger believers.

LISTEN...

- “*If you return to your first work you will find your first love!*”

(v.5b)

HOWEVER...

- If repentance didn’t happen...
 - Removal would.

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAS GOD REMOVED...

- For the health of His church?
 - I don’t know... BUT this is scary for sure!!!

Nicolaitans =

- 1) Irenaeus (late 2nd century) said, this group led lives of unrestrained indulgence.
- 2) Hippolytus (3rd century) said this group was associated with the Gnostics... who denied Christ preeminence.

~ IN CLOSING ~

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ARE YOU DENYING CHRIST!?!

ARE YOU LIVING A LIFE...

- That’s reflective of the Grace of God!?!

YOUR SIN’S TODAY...

- May not be what you’ve done...

➤ But what you’re NOT doing!

YOU MAY HAVE EXTERNAL AGREEMENT WITH TRUTH...

- But there’s NO internal obedience!

THESE BELIEVERS LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE...

SO TOO... YOU MAY HAVE ALL THE RIGHT FACTS...

- But you’ve stop living by faith!

YET... THE QUESTION IS...

- In light of what God sees...

➤ Will you acknowledge it...

○ And change directions!?!

(v.5b)

If repentance didn’t happen...

- Removal would.

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