

Encounter Church
Sunday July 06, 2025

The Power of First Returning to Your First Love

INTRODUCTION: Today our main verses for this message will be coming from the Book of Revelation. A lot of people don't understand the Book of Revelation. There's been a lot of discussion and disagreement concerning the Book of Revelation!

HERE'S WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT THE BOOK OF REVELATION

An angel, sent by Jesus himself, communicates to John, one of Jesus disciples, the Book of Revelation.

John was exiled on the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for his testimony of Jesus! ***During this period there was extreme persecution against Christians.***

John witnessed the ministry of Jesus and more importantly witnessed the resurrection of Jesus!

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE ABOUT JOHN AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS!

John 13:23 (NLT)- "The disciple Jesus loved was sitting next to Jesus at the table."

It was John, the disciple that Jesus loved! "JESUS LOVES ME MORE!" You know they had conversations like that!

John 21:20-22 (NLT)- "Peter turned around and saw behind them the disciple Jesus loved—the one who had leaned over to Jesus during supper and asked, "Lord, who will betray you?" Peter asked Jesus, "What about him, Lord? Jesus replied, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? As for you, follow me."

Don't you know Peter's like, it's true, He does love John more!

BUT WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF JOHN? JOHN DID!!!!

(SL) JOHN KNEW THAT JESUS LOVED HIM AND I LOVE THAT!

That's what makes the Book of Revelation so much more significant!

In Revelation 1 Jesus appears to John and he gives him a message for seven different churches! For each church it's a different message!

After all Jesus had the authority to communicate to these churches!

Colossians 1:18 (NLT)- "Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. **So he is first in everything.**"

SO WHAT IS JESUS MESSAGE TO THE FIRST CHURCH HE POINTS OUT?

Revelation 2:1-5 (NKJV)- To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,
'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

(SL) Jesus who is love, communicating to John who knew His love, tell this FIRST church that they have left their FIRST LOVE!

(SL) FIRST- foremost, best, paramount, supreme, crowning, number one. Jesus is referring to exclusive love that has FIRST PLACE in our hearts ABOVE ALL ELSE!

Matthew 22:37-40 (NLT)- "Jesus replied, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

Deuteronomy 5:6-10 (NLT)- "I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. "You must not have any other god but me.
"You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind, or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those[a] who love me and obey my commands."

WHAT COMES BETWEEN US AND OUR LOVE FOR GOD?

1. Possessions

Mark 10:17-22 (NLT)- “As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked. “Only God is truly good. But to answer your question, you know the commandments: ‘You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.’ “Teacher,” the man replied, “I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was young.” Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. “There is still one thing you haven’t done,” he told him. “Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.”

Matthew 6:24 (NLT)- “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.”

WHAT COMES BETWEEN US AND OUR LOVE FOR GOD?

2. People

Luke 14:25-26 (NLT)- “A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.”

We should put Jesus above every other relationship. Jesus, the King of love is not saying to hate but to put aside every other relationship into second place.

Putting God first makes me a better husband, father, pastor!

WHAT COMES BETWEEN US AND OUR LOVE FOR GOD?

3. The Price

Luke 14:27,33 (NLT)- “And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.”

That sounds so heavy but look at what Jesus says in the following verse.

Matthew 10:39 (NLT)- “If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.”

CONCLUSION: WHAT COMES BETWEEN US AND OUR LOVE FOR GOD?

POSSESSIONS

PEOPLE

THE PRICE

Matthew 24:12-(TPT) “There will be such an increase of sin and lawlessness that those whose hearts once burned with passion for God and others will grow cold.”

WHAT IS YOUR LEVEL OF PASSION FOR GOD TODAY?

HERE’S ONE OF THE THINGS I REALLY LOVE ABOUT GOD! NO MATTER WHERE YOU’RE AT TODAY, HIS LOVE FOR YOU HAS NOT DIMINISHED ONE BIT!

THEREFORE HE SAYS, REPENT AND RETURN!!!

RETURN TO YOUR PASSION FOR ME THAT MOTIVATED YOU AT FIRST!

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this message?