

The Church that Lost Its Love

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Revelation 1:19-2:7.

B. Revelation unveils an invisible war in which the church is at the frontline.

II. The church is God's instrument to affect the history of the world.

A. It is given tremendous influence in world affairs.

B. We must ask ourselves to live in light of this.

C. Every church can be classified as one of the seven presented in Revelation in some point in its history.

D. These churches represent stages of church history as well.

E. These churches are light bearers.

F. Each message is addressed to the angels of the church.

II. The church at Ephesus.

A. The Lord wanted to communicate that He was Lord of all the churches.

B. The Lord's appraisal: they were hard workers, their doctrine was orthodox, and they persisted in their work despite hardship.

C. Their problem: they had abandoned their first love.

1. The Lord warned that their lamp stand would be removed--they would lose their ability to shed the truth.

2. They would become a church with no impact.

3. First love is the love one felt for Jesus when he first came to know Him.

4. Signs of this: worship becomes dull, love for others begins to fail, and perspective of self is lost.

D. How the believer recovers.

1. Remember the love that one first had for Jesus.

2. Repent--change your mind.

3. Return.

E. They retained their first love in that they hated the Nicolaitans who blended illicit sexual activity with the Christian faith.

F. The over-comer will have the right to eat of the tree of life. The believer gains strength by feeding upon the life of Jesus.

Application questions:

1. Why is the threat that faced the church at Ephesus such a subtle threat? Does today's church suffer from the same thing?

2. What is the solution to losing the first love one had for Jesus? How would you counsel someone wanting to reignite his or her passion for Christ?

3. How would you assess your own church today? What are some of the things for which Jesus would commend it? What are some of the things Jesus would have against it?
