

“Have You Lost Your First Love?”

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THE LORD'S FLOCK GROW DIGEST

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The title is a rhetorical question to reflect on our relationship with God. In our first encounter with God, we were enthusiastic, zealous, and passionate about our service. However, as time passes, our service to God and our community dwindles; this happened as well in the church of Ephesus (Rev. 2:2-6). Our relationship with God must be preserved and toiled gladly.

1. The Lord diagnosed the problem in the Church of Ephesus and He noted three observations (Rev.2:2-4):

1.1 Activity without intimacy. Jesus Christ commended the church's zeal in their service to God. However, He said that they had lost their first love. As Christians, we might be busy in our service and doing it excellently, but our busyness can be a source of disruption to our intimate time with God. Like marriages, we have different forms of “love languages;” and we must determine the ways to express our love for God. Moreover, like the story of Martha and Mary in the Gospel, Jesus Christ values our presence at His feet.

1.2 Faithfulness without fervency. Jesus praised the endurance of the church in terms of service, but it must be coupled with passion. As Christians, it is sometimes noted that our service might sometimes be half-hearted, full of complaints, and dis-satisfaction. While we can be faithful to our service, we must always remember that our main reason to do it is because of our love for Him.

1.3 Orthodoxy without love. Jesus Christ commended the church for standing firm against false teachings, especially against the Nicolaitans. As Christians, we must remember that despite the differences in our faith, we must continue to do it in love for God is love. Our doctrines should not hinder our love for God and our neighbor.

2. The Lord's assessment of the damage in the Church of Ephesus.

As the Lord sees that the church has lost its passion, He calls out the coldness and loss of its desire for Him. What are some of the causes of the loss of passion:

2.1 Neglect – Our relationship with God must not be neglected, no matter how busy we are. It must be kept on fire and we must fuel it often. Our passion for God must be ignited always (2 Tim. 1:6).

2.2 Distraction – We lose our passion for service when we look at the affairs of the world more than the affairs of God's kingdom. We must keep our priorities in order so that we don't neglect our intimate time with God.

2.3 Undealt Sins – We will lose our passion for service to God if we refuse to deal with our sinful life. Sin causes the distance between us and God. We might think and feel that God has distanced himself from us; but, in reality, our sins has removed us from Him. Nonetheless, God will draw near to us when we decide to come to him (James 4:8).

3. Jesus Christ gave three solutions to the problem:

3.1 Remember – We must recall our strong passion for God during our first encounter with Him, and the reasons why the passion died down.

3.2 Repent – We must repent for our sins and change our whole life to be reconciled with God.

3.3 Repeat – Do again the things that made you happy in your service to God.

Conclusion:

As God reminded us of our great relationship with Him, we must continually assess how close or far we are with him. Our service to God must be coupled with the intimacy of prayer with Him - a balanced language of love.

Reflection:

1. What distracts you from your service to God?
2. When do you intimately pray to Jesus Christ?
3. What are the ways to get intimate with Jesus Christ?

Prayer: “Father God, allow us to intimately draw ourselves to your Son. Help us to be always in love with Him and serve Him wholeheartedly. In Jesus' name. Amen.”