

Title: Keeping Your First Love  
Scripture: Revelation 2:1-7  
Speaker: Vic Redding  
Event: Sunday Evening Service  
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**Revelation 2:1-7** *“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”*

People have stopped trying to imitate Christ. We bring things into our lives that hurt the image of Christ. We might not mean to, but we do it. When people look at us they should be able to see the life of Christ in us. Ephesians 5:1 *“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;”* We desperately need for God to make a change in us. We need revival. Revival means “the act of bringing back to spiritual life and zeal. To become useful again.” We have a certain view of what we think revival does – we think it will:

1. People will become more faithful in attendance
2. More zeal in our preachers and teachers
3. Better preaching, teaching, singing, instrument playing, etc., but it’s more.

Revival will produce two genuine things:

1. Our love for the Lord will deepen to the point where we are striving daily for our life to be like his. We are the only Bible some people will read.
2. It produces a deep burden, zeal, and vision to see others saved.

*“Our altars are dry from tears because our hearts are dry from God.”*

Three things that wasn’t wrong with the church at Ephesus:

1. They weren’t grossly filled with sin and immoral
2. They weren’t financially greedy
3. They didn’t give into false doctrines and teachings

...so what was wrong with the church at Ephesus?

They had taken their eyes off of Christ. Someone once said “In laboring in the harvest of the Lord, we must not get so busy that we neglect the Lord of the harvest.” We are neglecting the things that the Lord puts in our lives to help us. We neglect his word because we are afraid to see ourselves for who we really are. We fail to pray, and most importantly – we fail to worship. We are worried about getting out of church on time.

Things that will help us keep our first love:

1. **Remember where God brought you from:** Revelation 2:5 *“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”* We must always remember where we were without Christ. Psalm 40:2 *“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”* David remembered what God had done for him and continued to praise the Lord. God wants to put a new song in our hearts too. In Ephesians 2, Paul describes where God brought us from. We were dead in sin, fulfilling the lusts of

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our flesh, and children of wrath. Ephesians 2:5 *“Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”* Paul was constantly making a reference to his past life when he spoke to others. We do not remember our past to depress us or discourage us. We remember our past to see how good God has been to us. The church at Ephesus needed to remember where they were when the gospel came to them.

2. **Remember the cost of our salvation:** Romans 5:8 *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* Someone died so that we could have salvation. Christ **proved** his love for us when he died on the cross for our eternal salvation. The saints of Ephesus realized the cost that Christ paid for them. When they did this, they burned all of their books about witchcraft and all of their idols. This act of love that Christ performed caused a moment of separation from his father. He hungered, he was tired, and he was thirsty. Salvation is not free – it costs something. I Peter 1:18-20 *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,”* The word redeemed means “bought”. Our lives were not bought with silver and gold [which we as humans value more than anything], but we were bought with the precious blood of Christ. God knew before the world was formed that Adam and Eve would fall in sin but he created them anyway. He loved us enough that he sent his own son to die for our sins.
3. **Remember what we should be doing:** Revelation 2:3 *“And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”* Christ commended the church at Ephesus for their labor, however they were rebuked because their work was done for the wrong reasons. Proverbs 25:25 *“As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.”* I Peter 2:9 *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”* We are to spread the good news. We are to share the change that Christ has made in our lives. We need to remember that Christ can do the same for others as he did for us but we need to talk to them and let them know. Never stop witnessing or sharing your testimony with others. We get burdened for those around us and we don't need to give up just because we don't see immediate results.

Would Jesus commend this church today for good intentions but rebuke us for not doing the work? There are people who had every intention to get right with the Lord but end up in hell because they put off too long. Keep your first love.