

The Book of Revelation: “The Letter to Ephesus”
Revelation 2:1-7

Keep up the Good Work and...

- Jesus is the Lord of His church. (v. 1)
 - Jesus is sovereign over all, but He has a particular interest in the well-being of His church.
 - We should care deeply about the health of our own congregation.
- Jesus commended the Ephesian church for their perseverance. (vv. 2-3)
 - Following Jesus is very often difficult.
 - Jesus notices all our works, including the good works of trusting and obeying Him.
- Jesus commended the Ephesian church for their biblical convictions. (vv. 2-3, 6)
 - The Ephesian church was not swayed by false teachers (v. 2) or faddish teachings (v. 6).
 - They were on the side of Jesus! (v. 6b)
 - Jesus contradicts our ungodly appetites and behaviors.
 - When Jesus contradicts us, it’s not a matter of hate but love.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)
 - One of our primary missions as a church is to bear witness to the good truth of God.

...if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)

Don’t forget the Great Work

- The Ephesian church had lost their first love.
 - This love could be love for God, or it could be love for others.

And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37-39)
 - In the end, the point is simply the tragic and critical loss of love.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

- As a church, we should...

- Beware of loving truth more than the true and living God.

"I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown." (Jeremiah 2:2)

Restore to me the joy of your salvation. (Psalm 51:12)

- Love for the Christ who loves us should mark our lives.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

- Love of God should be evident in how we worship and how we witness.

- Beware of loving truth more than your true family.

I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸ For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. (Romans 16:17-18)

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:35)

- Beware of loving truth more than people who need truth.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:39)

- The remedy to a lack of love is to...

- Remember our former state.

It is profitable for Christians to be often calling to mind the very beginnings of grace within their souls. (John Bunyan)

- Repent of our present idolatry.

- Repeat our initial works.

Thus says the LORD: "What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless? ⁶ They did not say, 'Where is the LORD who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that none passes through, where no man dwells?'" (Jeremiah 2:5-6)

- The reward for overcoming and following Jesus?

- His presence among us now. (v. 5b)

- Our presence with Him forever. (v. 7)