

“Remember, Repent, Return”
Revelation 2:1-7
7/12/26
Message 4

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Remember, Repent, Return”

- **Illustration - Austrian Composer - Joseph Haydn**

- Joseph Haydn –
 - Was known as a Cheerful Man
 - Despite the fact that his was married was a huge mess
 - Out Of Anger and Spite his Wife
 - Would take the only existing copies of his music from his Desk & Destroy it!!!
 - Haydn spent much of his Career traveling
 - Around Europe Partly because his talents were in such demand
 - But also because it gave him time away from his wife
 - During one of his extended visits to England an acquaintance visited Haydn in his Hotel room
 - He noticed a large stack of unopened letters
 - So he asked the great composer - why he didn't open his mail?
 - Haydn responded - "All these letters are from my wife we write each other every other week –

- BUT I do not open her letters & I am quite sure that she does not open mine...
- It would seem
 - They both left their first love...
- **Sadly - many Christians DON'T want to read Jesus' Letters in Chapters 2-3**
 - We TOO have a stack of Letters from Jesus
 - That Have been largely ignored by the Church...
 - Many Believers like to skip Chapters 2 & 3 to get to the "More Juicy Parts."
 - The action-packed
 - Blood, Thunder, Prophecy, LAMBO sections of Revelation
 - To do so is a Big Mistake
 - These 7 Letters are Powerful –
 - They Reveal our Lord's Heart for the Church
 - They are Timely & Vital today as when they were first Written
 - The church today would not be in the mess it's in
 - If the church would simply read Jesus letters and be obey them
 - *Walvoord; "Many of the evils and shortcomings which exist in the church today are a direct outgrowth of neglect of the solemn instruction given to these seven churches."*

- These Letters are extremely important!!!
 - We would do well to LISTEN

• **Review – Running Start**

○ **1. Chapter 1**

- Revelation is the **ONLY** book with a Divine Outline in it

Revelation 1:19 (NKJV)

19 *Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.*

- 3 Sections
 - 1. Chapter 1 –
 - *Which you have seen - Presents*
 - We see the Glorified Christ
 - The Book of Revelation is ALL about JESUS
 - 2. Chapters 2-3
 - *The things which are*
 - The Churches
 - THE CHURCH AGE - Focus is on The Lord's People
 - **Show Timeline**
 - 3. Chapters 4-22
 - *And the things which will take place after this.*
 - There we discover the Lord's Program

- Prophecy what will come to pass

- **2. Now to Chapter 2**

- We come to the SECOND Section of the book

- **The Lord's Message to HIS Churches**

- Now Before we jump into the first church lets note a few things
 - Theses 7 Letters to the 7 churches have many applications

- **1. PAST – (HISTORICALLY)**

- 7 Original Churches in 7 real cities in Asia
 - Given in Order of ancient Roman postal route

- **Show Map x 2**

- **2. PRACTICALLY**

- They teach us a lot about Church life
- Admonishment from Jesus –
 - To all churches in all time as tests by which they may discern their true spiritual state in the sight of God
 - Almost Every problem, difficulty & the Challenges facing the Church are addressed in these 7 letters

- **3. PERSONALLY**

- The Letters apply to US as Believers

- That is why each one ends with the same Exhortation

▪ *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

▪ 4. PROPHETICALLY

- 7 is # of COMPLETENESS
 - What we have is a picture of the Complete Church Age

• Show Timeline

- Now Many Believe
 - Each church represents a certain stage in Church History
 - Starting with **Ephesus** the first church
 - The Ending Churches
 - **Philadelphia**
 - **Laodicea**
- **Ephesus: 33-100 A.D.**
 - The church of the first century was generally praiseworthy but it had already left its first love.
- **Smyrna: 100-312 A.D.**
 - From the 1st to the 4th century
 - The church suffered persecution under the Roman emperors.

- **Pergamos: 312-606 A.D.**

- During the 4th and 5th centuries
- Christianity was recognized as an official religion through Constantine's backing!

- **Thyatira: 606-1517 A.D.**

- From the 6th to the 15th century,
- The Roman Catholic Church largely held sway in Western Christendom until rocked by the Reformation.

- **Sardis: 1517-1750 A.D.**

- The 6th and 17th centuries
- Were the Post-Reformation period!
- The light of the Reformation soon became dim

- **Philadelphia: 1750-Rapture**

- During the 17th - 19th centuries
- There were mighty revivals and great missionary movements.

- **Laodicea: 1099-Tribulation**

- The church of the last days is pictured as lukewarm and apostate.
- It is the church of Liberalism and Ecumenism

- I believe it may be a little of all these

- **3. NOTE: Each Letter has a Similar outline**

▪ **1. There is a Divine Revelation of Jesus**

- Each of these 7 messages begins With JESUS
 - A personal description or title of Jesus Christ
 - Taken from the vision of Christ given in Revelation 1
- Example
 - Who Walk in the Midst...
 - Says The First and the Last...

▪ **2. Positive AFFIRMATION**

- Told what they are doing good
 - The areas that blessed the Lord

▪ **3. Corrective EXHORTATION**

- Told what is wrong & what they need to do to Change
- ONLY - Smyrna and Philadelphia
 - Are the only ones not to receive correction
 - They are the persecuted church and the church with little strength

▪ **4. Eternal MOTIVATION**

- How they respond is going to have some ETERNAL RAMIFICATIONS

• **Now let's dig into Remember, Repent, Return - Revelation 2:1-7**

- **We will look at 3 main points**

- The Explanation of Jesus v. 1
- The Evaluation Jesus Gives vv. 2-4 & 6
- The Exhortation Jesus Gave to Them vv. 5 & 7

The Explanation of Jesus v. 1

• 1. Context v. 1a-1b

○ 1. To The Angel Of The Church v. 1a

Revelation 2:1 (NKJV)

1 *"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:*

- Who is "The Angel" of the Church?
 - Now what does this mean?!
 - Does each church have an angel over it?...
 - There are 2 major Viewpoints:
 - **1. The "Angel" is the Pastor of the church.**
 - The idea here centers on the broad meaning of the word angel as "a messenger"
 - According to this view, John was addressing the pastor of each church in order to impress upon them the message that Jesus Christ would have them deliver to the congregation
 - **2. The "Angel" is an Angel**
 - Simply a supernatural being, one of the seven angels mentioned throughout Revelation...
 - Allows to interrupt the text literally

- I will give this to you for you to study more

- **2. Church of Ephesus v. 1b**

Revelation 2:1 (NKJV)

1 *"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:*

- **Historical Background of Ephesus**

- **Show Pics – of Ephesus**

- Ephesus

- Was "the metropolis of Asia"

- The center of trade and business
- The capital of the Province of Asia Minor and its largest city
- It was a big city with up to 500,000 people

- It was a seaport

- At the Time

- It was a cultural center

- A place where one could find people from all over the world, representing every occupation, language, and belief
- The Roman amphitheater seated 25,000 people with an acoustical design that eliminated the need for microphones

- **Show Pic Amphitheater**

- It was a pagan city

- With idolatry and immorality dominating its religious and social life
- One of the seven wonders of the ancient world was in Ephesus...
- The temple of Artemis (Diana)
- The Greeks called it Artemis – The Romans Called Diana
- **Show Pics – Temple – Diana**
- After your offering was given you were expected to consummate it with a prostitute

▪ **The Gospel in Ephesus**

- Church Began
 - With Alexandrian Jew named Apollos
 - He was a convert of John the Baptist
 - Who later came under the tutelage of Aquila and Priscilla, friends of the apostle Paul
 - After Apollos had gone to Corinth
- Paul came to Ephesus
 - On his 2nd missionary Journey than on his 3rd
 - Spending 2-4 years there
 - Created an Environment of PEACE AND LOVE
 - (Acts 19)... ha-ha
 - Actually – Paul Created a HUGE uproar

- Demetrius –
 - Silversmith was going out of business because of the Gospels Changed lives
- Paul was seen as an enemy
- Than Later
 - John himself
 - Than Timothy

- **3. His Control / Centrality v. 1c**

- **1. These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand v. 1c**

Revelation 2:1 (NKJV)

1 *"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:*

- **The Seven Stars –**
 - These stars were symbolic of the seven “angels” or “leaders” of the seven churches (Rev. 1:16 & 20)
- **The Seven Golden Lampstands –**
 - These are the seven churches that Jesus is writing these letters to (Rev. 1:12 & 20)
- **Who walks in the midst**
 - Last week we talked about how
 - Jesus was dressed like a priest.
 - The Duty of the Priest

- In the Holy Place the priest would enter every day to clean, refill, and relight the lamps.
- We as the church are the “Lights of the world”.
 - Jesus is walking among the lampstands cleaning and helping His church to be bright lights
- **Again - This is a symbol of Power and Authority**
 - This shows us that Jesus is CHARGE

The Evaluation Jesus Gives vv. 2-4 & 6

• **1. His Comprehension v. 2**

- **1. I know your works... v. 2a**

Revelation 2:2 (NKJV)

2 ***“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;***

- **I know your works**
 - Nothing is hidden from His knowledge
 - He knows us better than we know ourselves

Hebrews 4:13 (NKJV)

13 *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

- **What Did Jesus KNOW about this Church**
 - Their Work and their Faithfulness
 - I see you guys working your fanny off...
 - I see the ministry efforts...

- Good stuff guys!!!

- **2. His Commendation To Them vv. 2b-3**

- **1. Their Dedication v. 2-3**

Revelation 2:2–3 (NKJV)

2 “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;*
3 *and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.*

- **1. Your Labor**

- Represents an intense effort, to the point of exhaustion
 - They were tireless in their efforts to serve the Lord
- Laboring for the Lord
 - To the Point of Exhaustion is a GREAT feeling

- **2. Patience**

- Patience - Greek – “Hupomone”
 - Means “steadfast endurance.”
- Speaks of endurance, bearing up under a load
 - Worked hard – Very Patient Believers
 - Hung in there – Did not bail

- **3. Cannot bear those who are evil**

- They had a hatred of Evil
 - They did not allow Evil in their church service

- **4. Tested those who say they are apostles**

- The term apostles here
 - Is used in the wide sense of our term emissaries
 - Rather than the restricted sense of the Twelve or those set apart to receive direct revelation from God that would become a part of the Bible
- It was not uncommon in the beginning for people to claim the authority of apostles or emissaries of the churches
 - It was important that churches investigate such claims before granting approval and support
 - They had discernment

- **5. All their Efforts**

- Labored for My name's sake v. 3
 - They had a wonderful testimony!
 - Again Worked Hard
- Have not become weary.
 - These believers were not quitters
 - In spite of the pressures of ministry and the heaviness of their responsibilities, they remained faithful at the work
 - They hung there

- **Application – No BURN OUT**

- **With what we see so far!**

- **We need more people like that in today's churches**
- Sadly - I have seen so many quit the ministry because it is too hard for them
 - The blame it on everything else
 - But the reality is, if "anything" gets you to quit the ministry it is an excuse
- **2. Their Discernment vv. 2b & 6**

Revelation 2:2 (NKJV)

2 *"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;***

Revelation 2:6 (NKJV)

6 *But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

- **3 Things characterized their Doctrinal Purity**
- **1. You cannot bear those who are evil v. 2a**

- Paul warned the Ephesians in Acts 20:29-31

Acts 20:29–31 (NKJV)

29 *For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.*

30 *Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.*

31 *Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*

- It Appears they Listen!!!
 - From this commendation of Jesus, we know that the Ephesians took Paul's warning seriously

- APPLICATION - We are to Hate what is EVIL

Romans 12:9 (NKJV)

9 *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*

- **Show Pic**

- *"First we overlook evil. Then we permit evil. Then we legalize evil. Then we promote evil. Then we celebrate evil. Then we persecute those who still call it evil."*

Proverbs 8:13 (NKJV)

13 *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way
And the perverse mouth I hate.*

- *Schaeffer; Accommodation, accommodation. How the mindset of accommodation grows and expands. The last sixty years have given birth to a moral disaster, and what have we done? Sadly we must say that the evangelical world has been part of the disaster. More than this, the evangelical response itself has been a disaster. Where is the clear voice speaking to the crucial issues of the day with distinctively biblical, Christian answers? With tears we must say that largely it is not there and that a large segment of the evangelical world has become seduced by the world spirit of this present age. And more than this, we can expect the future to be a further disaster if the evangelical world does not take a stand for biblical truth and morality in the full spectrum of life. For the evangelical accommodation to the world of our age represents the removal of the last barrier against the breakdown of our culture. And with the final removal of this barrier will come social chaos and the rise of authoritarianism in some form to restore social order." "The Great Evangelical Disaster" by Francis A. Schaeffer 1984*

▪ **2. You have tested**

- As we already spoke about
- APPLICATION - We MUST TEST

Acts 17:11 (NKJV)

11 *These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*

- Illustration
 - There was a freshman who won first prize at his Science Fair.
 - In his project he urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical “dihydrogen (“die”hydrogen) monoxide” because:
 - 1. It can cause excessive sweating and vomiting
 - 2. It is a major component in acid rain
 - 3. It can cause severe burns in its gaseous state
 - 4. Accidental inhalation can kill you
 - 5. It contributes to erosion
 - 6. It decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes
 - 7. It has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients
 - He asked 50 people if they supported a ban of the chemical.

- Forty-three said yes, six were undecided, and only one knew that the chemical was - Water!
 - The title of his prize winning project was, "How Gullible Are We?"
- Christians DON'T BE Gullible
 - TEST ALL THINGS
- **3. HATED the Deeds Of the Nicolaitans**
 - **1. They hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."**
 - They Hated what the Lord Hated
 - Seems like a very unkind statement...
 - We are TO HATE what is EVIL
 - WHY?! – because it can destroy a SOUL
- **Show Pic**
 - *J.C Ryle "He That Is Not Zealous Against Error Is Not Likely To Be Zealous For The Truth."*
- **2. What are the deeds of the Nicolaitans**
 - **1. Believer Who Were Turned away to Heresy**
 - Early church leaders refer to them as followers of one of the deacons set up in the book of Acts...
 - That he strayed from God's Word and turned to heresy

- **2. Sexual Immorality**

- In verses 14-15 its mentioned again and linked with immorality

Revelation 2:14–15 (NKJV)

14 *But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

15 *Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

- The Nicolaitans, followers of Nicolas
- Were involved in immorality and assaulted the church with sensual temptations.
- Clement of Alexander says,
 - *“They abandoned themselves to pleasure like goats, leading a life of self-indulgence.” Their teaching perverted grace and replaced liberty with license*

- **3. The word which means "To Conquer The People"**

- "Nicos" meaning "conquest"
- "Laity" meaning "People of the Church,"
- The Nicolaitans were evidently those who came on the scene, saying,
 - I will tell you who to marry
 - Where to live, and what to do because I am your spiritual leader."

- Came between man and their God
- A Catholic priest if you will

2 Corinthians 1:24 (NKJV)

24 *Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.*

- You don't need me to have a relation with God!!! You go straight to Him
- Walvoord; "Whatever the precise nature of this sect, it is noteworthy that a true love for God involves a fervent hate of that which counterfeits and distorts the purity of biblical truth"

• 3. His Concern For Them v. 4

Revelation 2:4 (NKJV)

4 *Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

○ 1. You have left your First LOVE

- Though they are commended highly for their efforts and loyalties
 - It's serious when Jesus says;
 - "I have this against you"
 - They had left their first love
- NOTE - Left NOT LOST
 - Left
 - Greek: phiemi –
 - Means: to send away; of a husband divorcing his wife; to leave

- It's not a coincidence that Jesus uses a word that can be used for divorce.
 - The Bible tells us that our relationship with Jesus is like the marriage between a husband and wife.
- **2. The Ephesians - Forgot The REASON Why**
 - Now The church in Ephesus was...
 - A super busy church
 - Had all the programs
 - The facilities had all the bells and whistles
 - Staff to take care of everything
 - BUT guess what?
 - They forgot WHO is in Charge and the reason WHY they did ministry
 - The message to the church in Ephesus
 - REMEMBER Who is in charge
 - REMEMBER Your Love for Jesus
 - REMEMBER the H.S
- **3. APPLICATION**
 - **1. IN The Church - A BIG problem in the church of America**
 - We get so busy DOING the work for the Lord
 - BUT we FORGET the LORD

- We got all the programs
 - We got administration down
 - We look good BUT...
- We NEED Jesus
 - We MUST always Do what we Do because of OUR great LOVE FOR HIM
 - We MUST always LOOK to God
 - *Tozer; "If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference."*
- **2. As Believers - This should be a Wake-Up call People in the church**
 - **1. It's possible for a person to act Christian but in truth, not be close to Christ**

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV)

21 *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

22 *Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'*

23 *And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*

- **2. SADLY - It is Possible to Serve Jesus in OUR own Strength BUT in Reality – I have left Him**
 - They are doing all this ministry in their own power and strength

- *Wiersbe: "Just think of it: it is possible to serve, sacrifice, and suffer "for My name's sake" and yet not really love Jesus Christ! The Ephesian believers were so busy maintaining their separation that they were neglecting adoration. Labor is no substitute for love; neither is purity a substitute for passion. The church must have both if it is to please Him."*
- Listen...our efforts cannot be a Substitute for Love to the Lord
- EVERYTHING WE DO WE MUST DO FROM FOR LOVE for Jesus
- DON'T get So busy THAT we leave our First LOVE

▪ **3. We Must Keep Jesus First**

- Remember the Priest at the Tabernacle
 - They Minister to God First – Keeping First LOVE
- The People get ministered to by the overflow of the service to Our Lord
 - We Must NEVER mix this up

○ **4. What does it look like to leave your first love**

▪ In General

- Your focus on the Temporal instead of the Eternal
- Your focused on the External rather than the Internal

▪ More Detailed

- 1st You don't have a strong desire to Spend time with God

- 2nd You don't have a strong hunger for the Word
- 3rd Your worship is formal, dry, lifeless, merely going through the motions.
- 4th Your heart toward Christ is cold and indifferent
- 5th You are more concerned about physical
- 6th You crave human companionship more than a relationship with Christ.
- 7th You measure spirituality (yours/others') by performance rather than the condition of the heart.
- 8th Christianity is defined more what by what you "do" than who you "are" ("doing" vs. "being").
- 9th Your obedience and service are motivated and fueled by expectations of others or a desire to impress others, more than by passion for Christ.
- 10th Your service for Christ and others is motivated by a sense of duty or obligation.
- 11th You find yourself becoming resentful over the hardships and demands of serving Christ and others.
- 12th You Struggle to Talk about the things of God
- 13th You enjoy secular songs, movies, and books more than songs or reading material that point you to Christ.
- 14th You prefer the company of people who don't love Christ, to the company and fellowship of those who do.
- 15th You are more interested in recreation, entertainment, and having "fun" than in cultivating

intimacy with Christ through worship, prayer, the Word, and Christian fellowship.

- 16th You justify "small" areas of disobedience or compromise.
- 17th You have been drawn back into sin habits that you put off when you were a young believer.
- 18th "Little" things that used to disturb your conscience, no longer do.
- 19th You are slow to respond to conviction over sin-or you ignore it altogether.
- 20th You are not grieved by sin-it's no big deal to you.
- 21st You are self-righteous-more concerned about sin in others' lives than in your own.
- 22nd You tend to hold tightly to money and things, rather than being quick to give to meet the needs of others.
- 23rd You rarely give sacrificially to the Lord's work.
- 24th Accumulating and maintaining material "things" consumes more time and effort on your part than seeking after and cultivating spiritual riches.
- 25th You have broken relationships with other believers that you are unwilling or have not attempted to reconcile.

The Exhortation Jesus Gave to Them vv. 5 & 7

• 1. Remember v. 5

- **1. The exhortation is to "remember"**

Revelation 2:5 (NKJV)

5 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.

- **Realizing that we have fallen from the place where He wants us to be**
 - Go Back to when things were RIGHT
 - Re-kindle that first LOVE
- **Warning – A lot of People live in Yesterday**
 - We were a part of CC in the TENT days – oh what a move of the Spirit
 - We belong to this church or that church and thing were really moving back then –
 - BUT now they are dead
 - You should look in the past to RE-Kindle the Present
 - Not LIVE THERE
 - Listen –
 - There are times when the Lord moves in a powerful way – but we have a tendency to want to stay there on NOT move forward
 - Always be moving forward with the Lord

• **2. Repent**

- **1. Repentance suggests the need for radical change**

Revelation 2:5 (NKJV)

5 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.

- It means a change of mind and conduct
- Turn from what we are doing and turn towards the LORD

○ **2. What does this Look like**

- We need to think differently about our priorities
- What are we doing that is keeping us from our first love
- Then start showing that difference in the way we think, speak, and do
- REPENT
- My eyes are dry
My faith is old
My heart is hard
My prayers are cold
And I know how
I ought to be
Alive to You
And dead to me
- Oh, what can be done
For an old heart like mine?
Soften it up
With oil and wine
The oil is You, Your Spirit of love
Please wash me anew
In the wine of Your blood

• **3. Redo - RETURN**

○ **1. Jesus says to "do the first works."**

Revelation 2:5 (NKJV)

5 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.

▪ **I suggest it's the basics...like**

- Prayer, Bible reading, meditating or thinking about the Lord and His Word, heartfelt worship
 - Efforts that flow from an intense love for God Himself

▪ **What were you doing when you were on fire for the Lord?**

- "I was going to church." GO AGAIN!
- "I was getting up early for morning devotions." DO IT AGAIN!
- "I sang praise to the Lord while I was driving." SING AGAIN!
- Remember how it used to be when you were amazed by the Lord's goodness-do again what you were doing then

• **4. Receive The WARNING**

- **1. A SERIOUS WARNING...that's why!**

Revelation 2:5 (NKJV)

5 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.

▪ **The churches are referred to as "lampstands"**

- They are to be lights to this dark world, drawing people to the light of Jesus Christ

▪ **According to our Lord,**

- The influence of a church will be diminished and even removed when the first love is neglected

- This obviously speaks of judgment
- Removing their testimony and influence...not being used

• **5. Reply By OBEYING - Listen!!! v. 7**

- **1. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**

Revelation 2:7 (NKJV)

7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." "

- This qualifies everyone - or at least everyone who will listen.
- This letter was not only written to the church at Ephesus in the Apostle John's day.
- It is written to us, and to all Christians throughout the centuries.
- We have 2 ears so lets use them
- **2. To him who overcomes:**
 - Jesus seems to speak of overcoming of their coldness of heart and lack of love marked by leaving their first love
 - Jesus promises eternal life to those who "overcome"

1 John 5:4–5 (NKJV)

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

- **3. I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."**

- There was a tree of life in the Garden of Eden
 - Adam sinned and we lost it.
- There was another tree at Calvary.
 - Jesus died for our sins and brought life back to us.
 - God's love for us was demonstrated there.
- It's a symbol of everlasting life

Closing

- More love to Thee, O Christ
More love to Thee
Hear thou the prayer I make
On bended knee
- This is my earnest plea
More love, O Christ, to Thee
More love to Thee, more love to Thee
More love to Thee, more love to Thee
- Once earthly joy I craved
Sought peace and rest
Now, thee, alone I see
Give what is best
- This all my prayer shall be
More love, O Christ, to Thee
More love to Thee, more love to Thee
More love to Thee, more love to Thee
- Then shall my latest breath
Whisper Thy praise
This be the parting cry
My heart shall raise

- Still all my prayer shall be
More love, O Christ, to Thee
More love to Thee, more love to Thee
More love to Thee, more love to Thee