

Revelation 2:1-7

Good Morning church. I am so happy to be here with you all this morning.

We are going to continue our study of the Book of Revelation.

In the first chapter of this book, we dealt with the Introduction, and the Greeting, and last week we read John's vision of the Glorified Christ.

The first chapter dealt with the first section in the Inspired outline given to us in **Revelation 1:19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.**

So now that we have learned of the things that John saw, in the revealing of Jesus Christ, we move to the next section in the Book of Revelation, the letters to the seven churches.

Now remember the number seven is significant.

And even though there were hundreds of cities within the Ancient Province of Asia, for which many had churches within, only seven churches are singled out.

However, we will see within these seven churches a complete view of the church, or a whole picture.

We will take notice to 4 views of understanding within each address to each church.

The first view will be toward the literal churches in the Province of Asia, or modern day Turkey.

The second view will be a prophetic view and timeline of church history, as each church in the order given will represent a distinct period in the timeline of Grace.

The third view will be a message to the local church, that is whatever church, in any time period that read through Revelation they would find instruction, correction, and warning.

I as the pastor here, can look at these letters, and assess our church according to what Jesus wants to see in a church.

These letters are a guide to a Christ Centered Church.

The forth view will be viewed as these letters pertain to us individually.

You see each church is made up of individuals, and Jesus will end each address to the specific churches by addressing the individual believers within it.

So we will see in this complete picture of the church the Holy Spirit will be speaking to us today corporately as well as individually.

It will be up to each one of us to respond according to the message in each letter.

Now, the first church that Jesus will instruct was a church that was within the beautiful, thriving city of Ephesus.

Ephesus was a prominent city in the province of Asia Minor.

It had a chief port, and was a commercial center for the entire area, it was crucial for commerce between Europe and Asia.

There were huge market places, and grand buildings.

There was a great amphitheater that sat over one hundred thousand men. McGee

There were times this economically prosperous city had as many as two million people caught up in the rat race of life within its borders and about its streets.

Ephesus also was a pagan religious center, and notorious for its sensual worship of the goddess Diana also known by the Greeks Artemis.

The third temple that was built for Diana, when Alexander the Great ruled, became one of the great wonders of the ancient world.

It actually was the largest Greek temple ever constructed.

The temple even served as a bank of Asia and held large sums of money.

The temple and the worship for Diana gave the people of the city a sense of pride and purpose.

You remember the encounter Paul had in Ephesus in Acts with Demetrius the silversmith that profited off the shrines he made for the worship of Diana.

He was worried about the spread of Christianity within the city, and his profits were being effected, so he riled the whole city up against Paul.

He manipulated the crowds, and gathered their support by using the pride they had in the goddess Diana.

Acts 19:25-29 "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. 26 Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. 27 So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship." 28 Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

The worship around this goddess involved some of the most perverse forms of immorality.

Temple prostitutes were used in the worship of this false goddess.

She was the goddess of fertility and her worship included orgies and degenerate religious rites.

Something that added to the debased condition of the city was the fact that criminals found sanctuary within a bowshot in every direction of the temple. Jay McCarl

So you can imagine the insanity that took place around this goddess of perversion.

And in the midst of this flourishing city of trade, and religion of immorality a church was birthed.

The church in Ephesus, started out in the midst of great opposition, and yet through the trials became a prominent church in the apostolic era of church history.

The church in Ephesus had a rich heritage of some prominent pastors, the well-known couple Aquila and Priscilla were used to lay the foundations there, even Apollos was instructed in his ministry there in Ephesus.

The Apostle Paul led the church there, as well as Timothy, and eventually the Apostle John pastored the church in Ephesus.

They had a rich heritage and history within the church.

The Elders in the church in Ephesus was instructed by the Apostle Paul in a final word to them before he departed to Jerusalem, in an emotional goodbye.

Acts 20:28-31

28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 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.

This will be crucial in Jesus' exhortation to the church in Ephesus, we will see that even though they were a generation or so from the days of the Apostle Paul's warning, they had passed down this warning, and took it very serious.

So let us read the whole portion of the letter in Revelation 2:1-7, and we will go back through and glean all we can.

The Loveless Church

2:1 "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: 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. 4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 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. 6 But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

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."

Let us pray...

So, to this church in the midst of blatant materialism, fleshly motivated false worship, and carnality, Jesus speaks.

2:1 "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:

Now, in each of the letters to the seven churches, Jesus will address who the letter is to, and who it is from, then give the subject.

This letter is to the angel, or messenger of Ephesus.

We learned last week, that that word angel should be pastor or elder of the church.

So this is addressed to the leadership there in Ephesus.

Jesus in all the letters uses a specific reference of Himself from the vision John gave in Chapter 1.

And to the church of Ephesus He explains that He is the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, and walks in the midst of the seven churches.

According to Revelation 1 verse 20 the seven stars are the pastors, the lampstands are the churches.

Again, this speaks of the control over the churches; Jesus protects, and holds up the church leadership.

Also with His fiery eyes of judgement, and brazen feet, and turbulent voice, He looks to the church first in His perfect judgments.

Understand Jesus is in the midst of the church.

He says in **Matt 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."**

Now that is a humbling thought, Jesus is here in our midst, with those flaming all seeing eyes, He knows the motives and ambitions of our hearts.

He assesses us in truth and weighs us on just scales.

And He sees the church in Ephesus here, clearly, and will judge them fairly.

As we look at Jesus' assessment, understand too He is looking into your heart this morning, and He has encouragement and correction for us all.

Verse 2 Jesus reveals...

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.

Jesus is so gracious here; He starts out His address with words of commendation.

Jesus sees and knows their works, and labor and patience.

James' exhortation in **James 2:26** that... **faith without works is dead...**

Did not need to make its rounds to the church in Ephesus, they were busy.

Their morning announcements would go on and on, as they probably had activities happening every day of the week.

This church would have been a well-oiled machine; their works were commended by Jesus.

Jesus also mentions their Labor, which would have a meaning of weariness to it.

They labored through the trials; even though they were persecuted and mistreated, they labored on in the Lord.

They had a sense of duty about them.

When they got home from church they were tired and exhausted by the effort they put into the ministry, and serving the Lord.

The 3rd thing Jesus recognizes is their patience through it all.

The great trials the Ephesian Christians were enduring through were producing in them patience and in their patience they remained steadfast and even wise when it came to sin within the church.

Jesus commends them for standing against evil.

The fifth thing Jesus notices is their commitment to truth, and they have tested those who call themselves apostles and sifted out the liars.

As a man would come through their region claiming to be an apostle, the elders within the church would sit the man down and really check his theology.

If the man were there for selfish gain, or to take advantage of the church's generosity, or manipulate the church somehow, the elders would know and protect the sheep from any greedy actor.

If these apostles did not stand up to the series of questions that would qualify them as an apostle, such as if they had seen the risen Christ?

Then the Elders would ask them to leave town.

And Jesus commended them for testing such men.

The scriptures are clear that we as Christians are **1 Thess. 5:21-22 Test all things; hold fast what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil.**

Also we are told in...

1 John 4:1 do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

The church in Ephesus heeded the Apostle Paul's final warnings that savage wolves would come into the flock, and others would rise up to draw men away, and here they are many years from that moment still heeding that warning.

Now, it is not unloving, but very healthy for the leadership of the church to watch closely those who might lead people astray.

If there are those among us who are wolves, it is right for the Elders of the church to ask them to leave.

False doctrine if left alone, and permitted to spread within the church, it will poison many hearts and create schisms and splits.

However, the church of Ephesus will stand for all eternity as a church that knew where it stood on truth.

And we as a church in today's hostile environment would be wise to follow suit.

As Jesus walks in the midst of our fellowship here may He find men and women who will not compromise on His truths, may we continually test every messenger and message that is brought to us, and never compromise to the evils of this world.

A healthy church will even ask people to leave if they stand in opposition to this truth, or if a wolf rises up to lead others away.

Your Elders are who God has called to this protection from these false messengers.

Understand these men are here for you, if you are confused on doctrine, or if you are hearing a message

you are not sure about go to the elders for clarification.

If you do not know our Elders, check out our elders page on the website, be sure to pray for them, they have one of the most difficult, yet crucial callings within the body of Christ.

Jesus in verse 3 commends the church in Ephesus again for the perseverance and patience in their labor for the Lord.

Jesus as He is assessing them against truth, He sees that even though it has been difficult they have not grown weary.

The ministry has continued on even in the midst of fierce opposition.

So we see these 7 words of commendation to the church in Ephesus, the things that they were getting right.

These words of commendation also apply to the period of church we call the Apostolic Age; the church of

Ephesus represents the church from Pentecost to the death of the last Apostle John around 100 A.D.

In the early days of the church, they were fervent and diligent in their work to spread the message of a risen Savior.

They stood heroically against fierce opposition, they were unwavering in their faith, and were willing to sacrifice even unto their own death.

They gave all, sold everything, and came together as one body.

They found strength unity, and they found power in simplicity of ministry.

They were known by their uncomplicated program.

Acts 2:42-45 As... they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their

possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

They could not keep up with the Holy Spirit, who was pushing them across the world with this message of Grace.

It was an exhilarating time period, as the rush and excitement of the Book of Acts was lived out.

And even though there was so much zeal, and enthusiasm within the early church, we see next, something began to come up missing.

And toward the end of that time period, they were losing their focus, and passion.

The main ingredient to this whole Christian life was missing, and they were beginning to lose the heartbeat of ministry.

The one thing that began to lack in Ephesus and also toward the end of the early church age was the one thing that mattered most.

Let us read verse 4...

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

The church in Ephesus had a lot going on, ministry was happening all over the place.

New ministries beginning, outreaches, mission trips, committed crowds coming to Bible Study, an undeniable commitment to orthodoxy and right doctrine, and they were generous in their giving..

They loved the Word of God, and defended it intellectually.

Yet in all of this activity, they were leaving the very love that drew them into this commitment.

They were leaving their best love, their personal commitment to Jesus.

They had lost they reality that Jesus was in their midst, and working in them and among them.

Their work became routine, mundane, and almost like a duty they had to fulfill.

Maybe some of them even dreaded coming to church, their hearts sank as the realization they had to teach children's ministry again that week.

They lost the joy they had in the beginning.

The allure of the Great City of Ephesus perhaps began to draw them away into empty pursuits.

Other things in their social life seemed more exciting to them, they rather go to the amphitheater to watch their child compete in the games being played.

They perhaps grew tired from all the business the culture of Ephesus put on them.

They first signed their kids up for Hellenistic dance class as a method to reach the lost moms in that group.

But now the schedule and practices demanded more of their time, and now fellowship with believers became second to the business of the culture.

"It happened so quick, and so fast how did the God, who saved me from the fiery damnation of hell

become second to all the other business in life?” They must have asked.

But Jesus was fully aware here what was lacking in this church, it had wealth, it had life, it had so much going on, but the Holy Spirit, life changing power that once energized the believers in Ephesus was about to leave, and with the machine of ministry going full speed, perhaps nobody would have even noticed.

Paul to the church of Corinth explains...

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

This love that was lacking in Ephesus wasn't brotherly love, it wasn't Phileo that was lacking, it was Agape Love, a godly love, a self-sacrificing love, a love that denies all other loves.

A love that is Christ centered a love that makes every decision you make, take into account the effects it will have on that first love.

This is the church that Paul wrote the words, **Eph. 5:31-32 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church**

This church received the revelation that today we are the Bride of Jesus Christ.

Our hearts are to be burning with anticipation and love for our groom as on a wedding day, the Ephesian church had this understanding first.

Yet they were leaving this love, and begun the machine of ministry.

Where things became mechanical.

But notice, they did not lose their first love, they left it.

When you leave something, you know where to find it again, if it is lost, you have no idea where to find it.

So how does Jesus instruct the church in Ephesus to find its way back to the right path?

Let us read as Jesus gives the steps toward healing...

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.

Jesus gives the church a 3-step solution here...

1. Remember
2. Repent
3. Repeat

Jesus tells them to remember where they have fallen.

Remember they were placed in a prominent place as the Apostle Paul explained to them... **Eph. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who**

has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...

They were seated in the heavenly places when they started out, their love and passion was unstoppable.

They somehow, have left that heavenly mindset, and the things of this world have brought them down to earthly thinking.

Ministry has become very natural, and even man-made programs perhaps are leading the way in Ephesus.

Jesus tells them to remember when He was all they needed, they were saved, lifted up, filled with the Spirit of the Living God.

They had joy in their service, He tells them to remember the first works, and the sacrifices they made for the Savior of their own souls.

They were freed from their sins, you couldn't keep the early Ephesian convert from church, nothing in his life even came close on the scale of comparison that would come close to being as important as Jesus, and the work and labor of love they had.

They would share with anyone the good news of their new life in Jesus, and they would give anyone the opportunity to respond to the gospel of Grace.

Jesus tells them to remember even when opposition came their way, even when their own families abandoned them; they remained committed in their love to Christ.

Notice Jesus tells them next to repent, to turn from the loveless work they are doing, and do the first works.

You see Agape love, this Christ centered love is hard work, it is sacrifice, and it is full of passion and zeal.

Jesus is not concerned for their love for their fellow man, He wants their love back on Him. They were doing great in the work for others.

They were instructed to return to those motives of the early days of their salvation.

To repeat those earlier works...

When church and Bible study were priority, when devotion and times of meditation were upon the Lord.

The church in Ephesus, had to find their way back to the Love of Christ, where He was the motivation to everything they did.

Now, the early church, was the only church in history to show this kind of commitment, they all left everything else behind, in a somewhat of a blind love for Jesus.

They sold their possessions; they forsook their plans, their future, for the sake of their love for Christ.

Jesus tells them to return to that love.

Notice Jesus raises no question of doctrine in all of this.

These believers were working without the heart of personal devotion to Christ, and that love was all that mattered to Christ.

He explains if they cannot find their way back through the 3 steps He laid out, to Remember, Repent, and Repeat, then their lampstand will be removed.

And today there is no church in Ephesus, the mighty thriving church there died out eventually, with the city.

It is only ruins to this day.

If the light of Christ's love was not visible through the church there in Ephesus, they had lost their purpose to even exist.

Christ did not need their orthodoxy, their religion, He did not need their service; He only desired their heart, their love, all the other things fall into place, if love is prominent.

Next... Jesus gives a final word of commendation after this heavy blow to their work there in Ephesus.

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

We do not know much about the Nicolaitans, but only that what we can see in their name.

The word comes from two Greek words "Nikao" and "Laos"

Nikao means to conquer and Laos means the people.

Together it means, "Establishing a priesthood over a laity or people." Chuck Smith.

We see here Jesus hates any idea of the priesthood; that a man would stand in between the people and God.

Jesus is the High Priest and Mediator between God and man, and any form of church hierarchy that exalts man as this mediator, Jesus hates it.

The church in Ephesus was applauded for their own hatred of that kind of evil system.

Many sects of Christianity have this type of priesthood, and they would be wise to know Jesus does not stand for it.

It puts in our minds that some men are closer to God than others are, and that is not a biblical idea.

God never intended for Himself to be unapproachable or far off, He sent His Son to die to bring mankind back into a relationship with Him.

Who is any man to stand in the way of that relationship that God sacrificed so much for?

They got it right in Ephesus...

Now, as each letter is addressed to a corporate church, they all conclude with an appeal to the individuals within the church.

And this is where we will find our personal application from these letters...

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."

Jesus speaks now to him who has an ear, this would apply to all of us here this morning.

We are given a promise through this warning to the church in Ephesus, if we overcome, and we maintain this first love in our life.

The life giving fruit of the tree of life will be our inheritance.

The very tree Adam and Eve were refused after they disobeyed God, will be ours to eat from in eternity.

We will deal with the tree of life later on in Revelation.

But we see a reward for our love.

We have an understanding this morning, that Jesus, is here in the midst of His church.

He is speaking to you who are listening, and for some of us, He is calling us back to our first love.

You know when Jess and I were young in our love, I would drive from Arizona to Phelan late at night, 3 and half hours, but it seemed only but a moment.

My love for her made the sacrifice seem as nothing when we would embrace and kiss.

Our early marriage, I worked all day framing houses in the heat of Lake Havasu, but I never thought twice about it, I wanted to provide for her, for my love.

Every day I looked forward to coming home, and coming through the door as she waited for me.

I loved her, at times I would have to travel for work, when I was away, my heart was heavy to return to her, I called every break, and we talked late into the night.

When I returned there was so much joy when I saw her.

Our first love was full of emotion and sacrifice.

But today, 14 years later, that love has not waivered one bit.

Still, I work here all day at the church, toward the end of the day, about four o'clock, I get this burst of joy, knowing I will be home with her soon.

Jess still waits anxiously for me at the door, she has timed it perfectly, if I am late even by a few minutes I hear about it.

She knows exactly what time I will come through the doors if I leave here at five.

But now that love is multiplied, because the excitement she gets for me to come home, has naturally spread to the kids, and when I come through the door, an eruption of excitement sounds through the house as they all run to me screaming, "Daddy is home."

If I am on a trip somewhere, missions trip or something like that and I am away for some time, my heart still yearns to be home toward the end of that trip, in fact the whole way home I am just talking about my family, how I am so excited to see them, telling stories about them.

Louie sat next to me last mission's trip, he will testify for you that this is the case.

I always feel bad for who ever sits next to me, because they are just going to hear about my wife and my family.

Now, it is only by the grace of God, that Jessica still loves me like that after 14 years, and I still love her with as much passion as those early days.

I can't remember one time, where I came home, and she was like "Oh hey." Or she was disappointed.

It would break my heart, if I came through the door, and I heard, "Oh it's just daddy"

If things had gotten so routine, and mundane there was no excitement to see each other.

What a sad state, when love has left, and there is no excitement.

When couples come in for marriage counseling after many years of marriage, and they are at that point where they are just laying into each other, “she does, and he says.”

And they just are miserable, this is where I like to take them, I try to get them to remember what was it like in the beginning?

“Oh, our first kiss pastor, I just knew she was the one.”

And they start talking about that first love, sometimes their eyes just connect again, as they remember, and often times healing comes to their relationship.

That is the love Jesus wants from us this morning.

He wants the googly eyes back on Him, the passion for Him that you once had.

He wants you to remember those early days, and repent, and do those first works.

I remember when Jess and I were so radically saved in the beginning, that every time those church doors were open we were there.

Sundays, I was there early, getting everything ready for church.

We had so much excitement on Sundays.

I remember, we were just saved, and there was a mission trip to the Philippines.

We could barely pay our bills as it was, but pastor Ray made a deal with us, in the five months or so prior to the trip, if we put \$200 a week toward the trip, we could go.

Jess and I sacrificed so much just to go on that trip, we were tithing, and paying for this mission trip, and that almost took most of our paycheck every week.

But it was nothing for us, we loved Jesus so much, nothing else mattered for us.

And through that time, God provided miraculously over and over again for us.

Extra hours here, unexpected income there, people generously helped us.

That trip was so amazing as we got to serve this Jesus we loved so much.

Many of those Sundays in the early days, Jess and I would fill up our car with co-workers and neighbors on the way to church, I remember filling up whole rows of chairs with people.

We planned our whole lives around the church calendar; everything else came second to that.

Our first love, our first works were so thrilling, we saw God move in fascinating ways, we saw impossible become possible, we saw miracles, it was such a rush.

Now that is my gauge, when I read this portion of scripture, my first works, am I doing the mundane, or am I still excited to see God move on the Lord's Day?

I will tell you this, by the grace of God, Sundays are still Me and Jessica's favorite day.

It has even spread to our kids.

When Sofia asks me “what day is it tomorrow,” and I say “church day,” the 3 of them yell “yeah!!!”

I still love getting to church before everyone else, walking through this place, turning everything on, just wondering and praying about all that God will do this Lord’s Day.

When I see people responding for prayer, God’s people singing their praises to Him, when I see people coming to Jesus, the children running all over this place.

It is the high point of my life, every Sunday, and Wednesday Night, I just am so excited at what God is doing.

VBS last week, oh man, I was overwhelmed many times last week, by Jesus and all that He is doing here.

It was so thrilling, and yet exhausting, but so thrilling, the sacrifice seemed to be nothing.

When I lose that love in the work, which at times, it does wain, but I know my way back.

Remember, Repent, Repeat those first works.

Then everything comes back into perspective.

Now maybe this morning, you are in a rut in your Christian walk, you may serve, but it is more of a checklist service.

Well I did my duty this week.

Your worship is distracted; your giving is without sacrifice, perhaps you find yourself Saturday night, even debating if you will go to church.

You will miss church for silly reasons because you are tired, and rather nap.

Your devotion time with the Lord is non-existent, or you rush through your daily bible reading to check it off.

You rarely pray anymore, you fit Jesus in where you want Him, He no longer is your first passion.

The kids sport schedules and school programs are priority over the things of God.

If your commitments to God are halfhearted, and you have a “When I get around to it.” Mentality, well you have just heard what Jesus thinks about it.

He wants to be first, He wants to be priority, He wants your love.

Listen, if your kids see you put their sports and schooling before Jesus, this loveless Christianity, will be what they imitate when they enter into adult life.

But if they see your excitement, your whole hearted love and commitment to Jesus Christ, they will imitate that.

Jesus is here this morning, calling us back to our first love, He has revealed to us what He expects, what is important to Him.

Satan has Christians running at a fervent pace, we are so busy with things that matter so little to Jesus, yet they have the highest priority in our hearts and minds.

We are trying to keep up, we are stressed, overwhelmed, spent.

All the while, Jesus cares only for our love, for Him to be our passion in life.

It seems the message that Jesus is giving His church this morning, is to come back, fall in love with Him again.

Make Him first in your devotion, in your giving, in your sacrifice.

Come back to your first works... Your first love...

This does not mean to stop working, some people like to quit everything and claim they are returning to their first love, but Jesus told them to return to their first work, the love they had in the work.

Listen, we all find our self in this place at times, if Jesus has spoken to you this morning, and you have left your first love, I want to encourage you to come up for prayer.

The Pastors and Elders will be available during and after this last song, Jesus is calling you back to your first works, when you had that pure love and joy in your devotion to Him.

Come up and let these guys minister to you, and return to what matters in this life, a Christ centered life.

No one will judge you, this altar is a place of healing, a place where you can bring your burdens, a place where we can expect to meet with God each week.

Take advantage of the prayer time at the end of each service.

And anticipate each week, for God to answer your prayers.

Also, if you do not know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior this morning please, come up, and pray with one of these guys.

Amen?