



**“Restoring the Greatest Thing.”**

**May 11, 2025**

**David Hinkle**

**2** “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

**2** “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. **3** I know you are enduring patiently and bearing

up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. **4** But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. **5** Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. **6** Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. **7** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

Revelation 2:1-7

## **SUMMARY**

In the letters to the churches in Rev 2-3, Christ corrects and commends churches. These real churches also represent what is true of churches in every generation. In this first letter, the Ephesians church was commended for faithful service and defending the faith, but Jesus confronted the Church for having lost the greatest thing: keeping Him as their greatest love.

## **Passage Outline**

The Commendation - Rev 2:1-3

The Complaint - Rev 2:4-5

The Comfort - Rev 2:6-7

## **Passage Principle**

Loving God above all else is the greatest mark of the church.

## **The Last Verse of Ephesians**

24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

Ephesians 6:24 ESV

1 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 ESV

## **Who Conquers/Overcomes?**

4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 John 5:4-5 ESV

## **How Can We Restore the Greatest Love?**

Remember the Love You Had at First.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:7-11 ESV

## **How Can We Restore the Greatest Love?**

Remember the Love You Had at First.

Repent from What You Have Loved More.

16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;  
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.  
Psalm 51:16-17 ESV

**How Can We Restore the Greatest Love?  
Remember the Love You Had at First.  
Repent from What You Have Loved More.  
Re-do what You Did at First.**

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19 ESV

**How Can We Restore the Greatest Love?  
Remember the Love You Had at First.  
Repent from What You Have Loved More.  
Re-do what You Did at First.**

16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

1 John 4:16 ESV

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was your “first love” in elementary school?
2. What do you know about the church at Ephesus (see Acts 19)?
3. What good things characterize this church?
4. How might its strengths have been the cause of its failure?
5. What do you think their Sunday worship might have been like?
6. What is repentance? Why is that necessary for the Ephesian church?
7. Of the positive qualities mentioned about this group, which best describes you? Why?
8. In what ways have you lost your first love for Christ?
9. What has helped you to keep that love alive?
10. What is your take away from this week’s passage?

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*\*Discussion Questions adapted from The Serendipity Bible.*