

Growth Group Discussion Questions—Sept. 20-26

1. If you could live in any foreign country for six months, where would you live and why? Share your dream location with your new growth group pals.
2. Dave reminded us that Jesus is always present, watching, and noticing everything about each one of us and our church. Ps. 139:1-3 reinforces this thought. How does the truth that “Someone’s always watching you” make you feel? How does it make the Psalmist feel? (See Ps. 139:6).
3. Read the sermon passage Rev. 2:1-7 out loud in your growth group. Then read the following imaginary dialogue.

Officer: License, registration, and proof of insurance, please.

Driver: Why'd ya' pull me over? I'm wearing my seatbelt, used my turn signal, did a head-check before switching lanes, and passed on the left. What could possibly be the problem?

Officer: You were going 120 mph.

How was the church at Ephesus like this driver?

4. Have one person in your growth group read 1 Cor. 13:1-3 out loud. What do these verses teach about the absolute necessity of love in the lifestyle of a Christ-follower?
5. Find 1 Cor. 8:1 in your Bible. In the second part of the verse, the Apostle Paul makes a short, punchy statement about “knowledge” in comparison with “love.” What does he say?
6. What is something important to you that you carry around every day? What safeguards do you take to keep from losing it? Now, switch to the spiritual realm. How can you guard your “first love” – again, that gut-level care and concern that Christians should have for people who don’t know Jesus as their Savior? How can you keep that love from going bye, bye, baby?
7. SCBC has a long and strong history of love. But still we can learn from the church at Ephesus. If our church family as a whole were to “repent and do the things [we] did at first,” what actions would we take to fan our love for others in the community into a blazing five-alarm fire? Dream a little.

Eight Warnings from the Book of Revelation You've Lost that Loving Feeling

Background

A . The City

B. The Temple and the Worship of Artemis

C. The Imperial Cult

D. Black Magic and Sorcery

E. A Spiritual Center

F. The Church of Ephesus

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands.”

Revelation 2:1

The Angel = MESSENGER

Words of Him = JESUS HIMSELF

The Seven Stars = THE SEVEN LEADERS OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES

The Seven Lampstands = THE SEVEN LAMPSTANDS ARE the seven churches

The One Who Walks Among = CHRIST HIMSELF

I. The Commendation

"I know the deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary."

Revelation 2:2-3

I know = TO KNOW SOMETHING ABSOLUTELY.

- A. Jesus Commends Them For Their SERVING HEART.**
- B. Jesus Commends Them For Their SUFFERING SPIRIT.**
- C. Jesus Commends Them For Their SCRIPTURAL INTEGRITY.**
- D. Jesus Commends Them For Their STEADFAST ENDURANCE.**

II. The Correction

A. REALIZE That You've Lost That Loving Feeling.

"Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love."

Revelation 2:4

Forsaken = ABANDON, LEAVE BEHIND.

Jesus prophesied, "...The love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm till the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations..."

Matthew 24:12-14

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophesy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

B. REMEMBER How Far You Have Fallen.

"Remember the height from which you have fallen!"

Revelation 2:5

Remember = LIT. "KEEP ON REMEMBERING."

C. REPENT And Do The Things You Did At First.

Revelation 2:5

Repent = CHANGE OF MIND AND CHANGE OF DIRECTION.

III. The Consequence

"If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place."

Revelation 2:5

IV. The Commitment

"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

Revelation 2:7

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