

## 4th Week of November

### Restoring the First Love

- **Text:** Revelation 2:4~5 (November 20 text)
- **Bottom line:** Our faith begins with love for God.

#### 1. Praise

때로는 너의 앞에

#### 2. Prayer

Thank you, God, for guiding us to your unfailing love. We worship you with all our heart. May we listen to Your words of truth.

#### 3. The Word

Read Revelation 2:4~5 together (read the verse 3 times).

\* Reading the Word over and over again in different translations will help you to deepen your understanding of the material.

<ESV>

<sup>4</sup> But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. <sup>5</sup> 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.

<NASB>

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.

## Understanding Text

The church in Ephesus was both praised and rebuked. The church in Ephesus persevered and tried to keep their faith, but they lost the most important thing: love.

### Understanding the text for leaders

This is what Jesus said to the church in Ephesus, one of the seven churches in Asia Minor. Ephesus is the place where Paul preached the gospel for about two years during his third preaching tour (Acts 19:8~10). After Paul, Timothy became a pastor and served the church in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). The church in Ephesus had a great influence by preaching the gospel to the Ephesus area, which was a big city at the time. Also, the church in Ephesus was a church with a lot of faith economy. God knew that they had worked hard and persevered to keep their faith, and He also knew that they had exposed the false apostles' faults, and He commended them (verses 2~3). It was commendable that they endured and diligently carried out their mission. But the church in Ephesus lost their first love, and God rebuked them. It can seem plausible without love for God. But a church that doesn't love God won't last long. God sternly warned them that if they repented and didn't turn up, He would remove the candlesticks. A church that loses its love for God loses its identity as a church. God tells us to restore our first love. A church that has lost its love for God cannot love one another. Remember God's warning that a church without love is no longer a church.

## 4. Sharing

1) Why was the church in Ephesus rebuked? When the Lord saw the condition of the church in Ephesus, what was His diagnosis? (v. 4)

### Upper Grades

What was wrong that the church in Ephesus needed to fix? (verse 4).

### Lower Grades

What was the church in Ephesus rebuked for? (verse 4).

### Question Guide

The church in Ephesus received both praise and rebuke. God commended them for what they had done well. However, God rebuked them for one important thing they had missed in their life of faith, and that was that they had lost their "first love" for God.

### Comments for Leaders

There were many praiseworthy aspects of the church in Ephesus (verses 2~3). God knew their deeds, their hard work, and their patience, and He commended them. He also commended us for being judicious in defending the truth and not being lazy in our faith. But they didn't have enough love. The "first love" that the Ephesian church lost refers to the fervent love they had when they first believed in God. Since love for the saints comes from a heart of love for God, the church in Ephesus probably lost its love for the saints. Without love, the things of faith that we have done with fervent love disappear and only formalities and habits remain. God rebuked the church in Ephesus and gave them a stern warning that they needed to restore their first love. If they didn't repent, he said they would move the candlesticks. The "candlestick" symbolizes the church (1:20). Moving the candlesticks is a dire warning that disqualifies the church.

2) Reflect on yourself in worship, Bible study, service and service. If I truly love the Lord, how will it change me?

■ **Upper Grades**

If we worship God with a heart of love, how should we change ourselves?

■ **Lower Grades**

Pray a prayer that promises to worship God with a lot of love for Him.

□ **Question Guide**

If you worship, serve, and treat others with a heart full of love for God, share what you think will be different from who you are now.

□ **Comments for Leaders**

The church in Ephesus seemed to be living an exemplary life of faith, but they were rebuked by God because they did not have love in their hearts. In order to defend the truth, they exposed the falsehoods of the false apostles and struggled to keep their faith in the midst of all kinds of persecution, but before they knew it, their love for God was waning. Love for God should be the motivation for all my actions. As our love for God waned, our love for the saints and our neighbors must have weakened. Reflect on whether the church in Ephesus is not what we are. The church in Ephesus, which lost the love of God because of its focus on formality and appearance, was rebuked by the church I hope you swallow.

≡ **5. Be grateful**

Thank God for giving me a heart that loves Him.

≡ **6. Prayer**

God, we confess that our hearts lacked love for you. We want to be a person whose inner love is greater than the outward zeal. May we love the Lord of salvation fervently, and with that love we worship, serve, and love our neighbors.

- End the family worship service with the "Lord's Prayer"