

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

SERIES INFO

Revelation Series Overview:

The Revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ drafted by the apostle John, to whom Jesus gave this message through an angel, is a “peeling back” of what is to take place at the end of the biblical story so that it might be a source of hope for Christians amid trouble and suffering. Apocalyptic literature draws much symbolism from the Old Testament narrative, such as the books of Daniel and Ezekiel. There is a great deal of figurative and symbolic language throughout. Correct interpretation is very important in understanding clearly who Jesus is and what is to take place. While some things are left to mystery, much of what is in the book of Revelation can adequately and carefully be understood with accurate interpretation. This is not a book of mysteries. While the text is complex, it is full of truths that every disciple of Jesus should learn and practice. Let’s take courage and find new hope in our faith in Christ as we face a world of trouble and suffering.

PERSONAL FUN FACTS

What is one thing you were once incredibly passionate about—but over time drifted away from? (hobby, sport, activity, a vacation spot, etc.)

TAKEAWAYS

What were the greatest “takeaways” you had from the message this week related to Revelation 2 and the church in Ephesus?

DISCUSSION

1. The Jesus Who Walks Among the Churches

Scripture: Revelation 2:1-3

We learned this past week that the “lampstands” we see in Revelation are symbolic for the churches. Christ is present among them. He is not disconnected from their lives. When we think about the fact that Christ is walking among us, it is both very comforting and, if we were to be honest, very sobering. It is comforting to know that He is with us and that His presence is very real. It is sobering because nothing escapes His attention. We can look impressive on the outside, but like the church in Ephesus, Jesus sees deeper than what appears on the outside. The truth is you can be doctrinally correct and spiritually cold at the same time.

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DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- 1) Explain why it is encouraging to know the fact that Jesus walks among His churches?

- 2) Why would knowing that Jesus walks among His churches give us pause, or make us feel a little uncomfortable?

- 3) What are ways you can see a church drift from Jesus?

2. Forsaking Your First Love **Scripture: Revelation 2:4**

The thoughts of your Lord telling you that you have forsaken “your first love” is something that is just simply heart-wrenching. This verse hits us like a “ton of bricks,” because we know, to some degree, it is true. Jesus is telling the church that something essential is missing, and that something is love. Their affection for Him and, most likely, for each other had faded. They were doing all the right things, but they lost their passion.

- 1) What are the signs that someone may be spiritually active but relationally distant from Jesus?

- 2) Have you ever gone through a time when your faith became more of an obligation than a relationship?

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DISCUSSION CONTINUED

3. Remember, Repent, Return

Scripture: Revelation 2:5-7

Jesus gives the church in Ephesus three commands: to remember the joy and the hunger they had for God, to repent of their sins, and to return to the things they once were doing when passionate for Him. Notice that Jesus does not condemn them, but He takes the initiative to call them back into His grace. The entire biblical story and the heart of Jesus Himself is all about restoration. He calls the church to rediscover what has been lost.

1) How does one go about rekindling genuine love for Jesus when that fire and passion have drifted off?

2) If Jesus were to write you a letter to your spiritual life right now, what would He commend? What might He confront?

3) Why do you think Jesus threatens to remove the lampstand rather than simply saying, "Try harder?"

APPLICATION

- What would change in your daily life if loving Jesus became your highest priority again?
- What is one practical step you can take this week to rekindle your "first love?"
- **This week, spend at least 10 minutes of uninterrupted moments each day to simply talk with Jesus without rushing. Ask Him, "Lord, where has my love grown cold?"**

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PRAYER

Jesus, forgive us for the times we have substituted activity for intimacy. Rekindle in us a genuine love for You. Restore the joy where there has been dryness. Restore wonder and awe where there has been routine and obligation. Help us to not merely work for You but walk with You ... hand in hand ... together as one. Amen.