

The Love You Had at First

Scripture Reading — Revelation 2:1-7

“You have forsaken the love you had at first. . . . Repent and do the things you did at first.” — Revelation 2:4-5

When believers endure hardship for Christ’s name, they can be a powerful force to reckon with. But it’s possible to lose the fervor of the love we had for the Lord at first. If that happens, the church becomes almost unnoticeable in the world. Let’s not ignore criticism from people who may say the church is just a social club. That may call for some soul-searching.

Today’s Bible passage describes part of a vision the apostle John received from Jesus, who told him to write these words to the church in Ephesus. That church had been started by Paul some 50 years earlier. They had been persecuted and had not caved in, and they had matured enough to resist false teachings.

But over the years, the church at Ephesus had lost the initial fervor of its love for Jesus. That was the height from which they had fallen. They needed to return to the love they had had for the Lord at first. All other commands flow from “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.” And this leads to the next great command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (See Mark 12:28-34.)

If we find ourselves criticizing the poor (in general) for laziness, immorality, or addictions—but doing nothing to help—that may be a sign that we are lacking compassion. Remember how Jesus saw the crowds and had compassion on them (Mark 6:34-44).

Prayer

Save us, O Lord, from losing the love we had for you when we were struck by your amazing grace. Let your love so burn in our hearts that it warms all our relationships. Amen.

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