

Remember— Repent and Do!



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Jesus says to the Ephesian church: Revelation 2:5 “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

We pray to the One who has Matthew 28:18 “All power is given unto [Him] in heaven and in earth.” He who created the world, parted the sea, and healed the sick is still in our midst to do what we ask in His Name. John 15:7 “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

Knowing that Jesus is our Judge and decides our fate is a sobering thought. As God, He sees the past, present, and future at the same time. Ecclesiastes 3:15 “Whatever exists today and whatever will exist in the future has already existed in the past. For God calls each event back in its turn.” Revelation was written—not to conceal but to reveal what will happen in the future—helping us live closer to Him in the present.

The revelation was written on a scroll and is as valid today as when it was written. The letters to the churches speak to the believer practically—they were real churches attended by real people who were facing real trials like everyone.

The letters speak prophetically as Jesus begins with an apostolic church Ephesus—saying it was leaving its first love; and ending with an apostate church Laodicea, that was lukewarm for the Truth, so Jesus said Revelation 3:16 “I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

Revelation 2:1 “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil.” This reminds us to not be too closely associated with those who do not love God’s Truth and show no desire to walk in obedience to New Testament teaching.

Revelation 1:20 “The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” The angels could mean ministers of the churches and each church represented as a lampstand—proclaiming the Truth with its service messages.

Jesus told us Matthew 5:15 “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” By remembering Scripture and how we may have not followed its instructions; then repenting and asking God through His Holy Spirit to help us do what He says, we shine a light of Truth for others.

Jesus says Revelation 2:2 we cannot tolerate “Them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted [nor become weary].” We then recall Galatians 6:9 “Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

Jesus then admonishes that changes are needed. Revelation 2:4 “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” It is so easy to talk about faith in God, but not so easy to be living that faith in God every day—and to keep trusting Him concerning the least to the greatest concern. We can know by a person’s conduct, speech, and decisions whether to keep or to cut close fellowship with them. Matthew 7:16 “Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

It is always time to Remember—Repent and Do! Revelation 2:5 “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

John 14:15 “If ye love me, keep my commandments”—keeping His commands is retaining our love for God; it is to keep trusting Him for daily supplies; it means to keep forgiving others if they have harmed us; and to keep placing every wrong done to us before God in prayer.

In human relationships, our first love can change over time—we are not so attentive or not so careful to please as we were; likewise, our first love for Christ can change from zealotry to forgetfulness regarding our relationship with God. The apostle reminds us to think about God’s mercy toward us—Romans 12:1 “That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Jesus knows everything about us—Revelation 2:2 “I know thy works,” because nothing is hidden from Him at any time concerning anything or any attitude we have. Hebrews 4:13 “Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”

Jesus walked in the midst of the 1st century churches, and He surely walks in our midst in this 21st century church, as the church is made up of

its people. Jesus knows all about our *life* and what is thought about in our *mind*. In correcting error, Jesus gives a good example—He begins with the *positive* before mentioning the *negative*.

He is saying Revelation 2:3 *"You have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary"*—but I did want to bring something to your attention. The Ephesian church had worked hard and put in the hours—to which Jesus says, *"I know."* He is totally aware of all we do. His eyes Revelation 1:14 *"Were as a flame of fire"*—meaning He does not miss a thing—that is why our life is to be Romans 12:1 *"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."*

Others may not notice or care when we go out of our way to be kind and help someone, but God knows and that is what matters. Matthew 6:3 *"When you give to someone, don't tell your left hand what your right hand is doing. 4 Give your gifts in secret, and your Father, who knows all secrets, will reward you."*

The Ephesian church was in the midst of a pagan city—known for idolatry, false teaching, and wrong beliefs. The temple of Diana was here so many came to worship false Roman gods. Ephesus was a believing church existing in the midst of an idolatrous city. Nevertheless, they were true believers serving the Lord and showing patience in a very difficult environment. Jesus says, *"I know."*

The church was surrounded by false doctrines, but their leaders had warned the people to be careful about what teaching they accepted—it is why Jesus said Revelation 2:2 *"You cannot bear those who are evil."*

When the apostle Paul made a final farewell to the Ephesian church, he prayed on the beach with other believers—and said Acts 20:29 *"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."*

30 *Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."*

The church had been warned—now they had to be careful about apathy or being careless with spiritual concerns. They needed to be *zealous* about living God's Truth and forgiving people. 31 *"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."*

The apostle John would remind later 1 John 4:1 *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world"*—and there are more false doctrines and wrong teaching today than ever, so we must *remember* the warning and *test* the teaching with the Word of God.

The Ephesian church had some good qualities, but something was lacking spiritually. Jesus had to bring this matter up after mentioning the good points. Revelation 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."* The members may not have *noticed* this change, but the Lord did.

People can say they *lost their love* for someone, but it is not a matter of *losing* love, as it is of *leaving* the love. If we *lose* something, we do not know where it is; but if we *leave* something, we walk away from it. We *know* where it is and can return if we choose. The Ephesians were so *busy* with things of the *world*, they were *neglecting* the things of the Lord—Galatians 5:22 *"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness."* They needed to *Remember—Repent and Do!*

Revelation 2:5 *"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent."*

They were backsliding and it may have been subtle, but it was definitely moving away from a position of faith and trust on God.

They were *not* being aware and *not* being careful to keep their trust on God. They *knew* the Gospel and were *living* in its light, but they allowed *disinterest* to *diminish* their enthusiasm. 2 Peter 3:17 *"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."* It is possible to fall away—it has happened all too often to all too many!

If we truly *love* God, we will want to walk in the light of His Truth all day. David wrote a psalm when he was in the wilderness of Judah. Psalm 63:1 *"O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water."*

When we love *God*, we love the things *God* loves—faithful trust, showing mercy, kindness, patience, and forgiving everyone. If we love *God*, we love His *Word*—we want to *hear* it; *read* it; *think* about it; and *live* by it—through the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

When we love *God*, we love *everyone* as He does. John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."* But 1 John 4:20 *"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen."*

Jesus writes to the *churches*, and He writes to *us* today! We need to *Remember—Repent and Do!* John 15:17 *"These things I command you, that ye love one another."*



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