

2013 Grace Community Church Retreat

*Renewing a Passion
for Jesus Christ*

**First
Love**

*Christ's Call for
Personal Revival*



Friday-Sunday, Nov. 1-3, Nags Head, NC

*Renewing a Passion
for Jesus Christ*

First Love

*Christ's Call for
Personal Revival*

WRITTEN & COMPILED BY
PASTOR STEPHEN HILDEBRANDT
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DEDICATED TO THE
MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH
IN CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA
ATTENDING THE NOVEMBER
2013 RETREAT.

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First Love

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

Matthew 22:37

"God desires to be loved by His redeemed children. He values our love. He speaks to us as His children, and with paternal tenderness asks, 'My son, give me your heart!' How amazing, how astonishing is this! The High and Lofty One, who inhabits eternity asks for my heart -- my poor, depraved, polluted heart! O, my God, take it, purify it, inhabit it, and use it for Your own glory and praise!"¹

James Smith, 1853

•C·O·N·T·E·N·T·S•

1

Letter to the Church at Ephesus. (Revelation 2:1-7)

Pages

1-14

The apostle Paul planted the church at Ephesus at the end of his second missionary journey around 51 AD, and when he wrote his epistles to the Ephesian Church in 60 AD it was a thriving community of believers. But just 35 years later, Christ said that they had left their first love.

2

Love, The Greatest Commandment. (Matthew 22:34-40)

Pages

15-26

Jesus said that loving the Lord with all of your heart, soul and mind is the greatest commandment, and by loving God we will also love our neighbor and fulfill all of God's commandments. Christ jealously desires this whole-hearted love and affection from His bride, the church.

3

Last Days Global Cooling. (Matthew 24:6-14)

Pages

27-42

Jesus said that in the last days the love of most people will grow cold (Mt. 24:12), so that even some in the church will be lovers of self, lovers of money, and lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:1-5). Many will appear outwardly religious but will be inwardly cold-hearted.

4

Love, The Fruit of a Revived Heart. (Psalm 51:1-17)

Pages

43-58

The result of true revival is unconditional love for God. Though the winds of revival blow according to the sovereign direction of God, there are many things that a church or Christian can do to make ready their sails to catch the wind from Heaven when God chooses to blow upon His people.

REVELATION 2:1-7

Eo the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place - unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'"

LETTER TO THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

Revelation 2:1-7

LESSON 1

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A THE CITY OF EPHESUS.

1 Large Population . 

Ephesus was a big city with all of the big city perks and problems. In the first century, Ephesus was the fourth largest city in the world, with over 250,000 free inhabitants.

2 Seat of Political Power . 

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia from 27 BC to 297 AD.

3 Center of Pagan Religion . 

The temple of the Greek goddess Atremis (Roman goddess: Diana) was completed around 550 BC and stood for nearly 1000 years. It was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world and it was the largest Greek temple ever built. Measuring 418 by 240 feet, the temple was adorned with gold, marble, and precious stones. Inside the temple was the statue of the fertility goddess Artemis which was believed to have fallen from heaven (cf. Acts 19:35). A large number of temple prostitutes were connected with the temple rituals.

P1

4 Material Prosperity . 

In the Temple of Artemis, behind her shrine, was the Bank of Asia, which was the repository of vast sums of money and an art gallery displaying many masterpieces. Ephesus was the richest city in all of Asia in the first century.

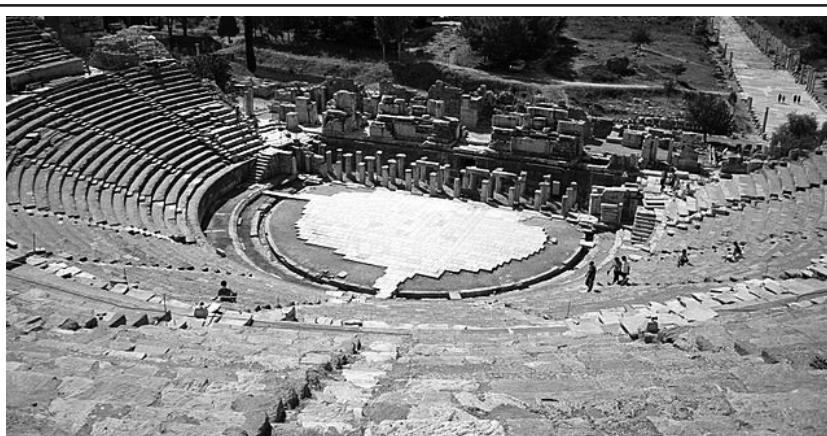
P2

5 Cultural Pluralism . 

In New Testament times, Ephesus had a great harbor which could accommodate the largest ships of that time. In addition, the city was located at the intersection of several major roads that connected Rome to the west with Asia to the east. It was a hub for commerce and cultural exchange which led to a diversity of world-views, culture and religion.



Temple of Artemis (Diana) in Ephesus
One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World
550 BC to 401 AD



The 25,000 seat amphitheater in Ephesus was the largest in Asia Minor. It was built by Lysimachus (361-281 BC), king of Thrace, and refurbished by the Romans between 41-117 AD. During one riot, an angry mob dragged Paul's traveling companions Gaius and Aristarchus to the amphitheater (Acts 19:23-41), and Paul may have "fought with wild beasts" in this arena while in Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32).

B THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS.

1 Paul Planted the seeds .  51 AD

At the end of his second missionary journey, the apostle Paul came to Ephesus and shared the gospel with the Jews in the synagogue. When they asked him to stay longer, he said he would return if God allowed (Acts 18:19-21).

2 Paul Preached 2 + years .  53-55 AD

During his third missionary journey, Paul preached for three months in the synagogue at Ephesus, but some of the Jews became hostile. Paul preached for the next two years at the school of Tyrannus, "so that all who lived in Asia heard the word" (Acts 19:8-10)

3 Paul Prayed for their love .  60 AD

Paul wrote his epistle to the church at Ephesus from prison in Rome, commanding them for their "*love* for all the saints" (Eph. 1:15-16). Paul prayed that they be "rooted and grounded in *love*" and fully comprehend "the *love* of Christ" (Eph. 3:14-19).

4 Timothy Pastored the church .  63 AD

After being released from prison in Rome, Paul visited Ephesus again and left Timothy behind to pastor the church, instructing Timothy that "the goal of our instruction is *love* from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:3-5).

5 Paul's Parting Words. .  68 AD

Shortly before his martyrdom, Paul wrote to Timothy, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2).

6 John's Primary residence. .  < 70 AD

Some time before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the apostle John, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, moved to Ephesus, where he wrote the Gospel of John as well as First, Second and Third John, between 90-95 AD (Irenaeus).

7 Jesus Pinpointed a problem .  95 AD

While the John was in exile on the island of Patmos, Jesus appeared to him and told John to write to the church at Ephesus and tell them, "I have this against you, that *you have left your first love*" (Rev. 2:4).

New Testament Writers

Name	Books	Percent of Text
Paul	13 or 14	28%
Luke	2	28%
John	5	19%
Matthew	1	13%
Mark	1	8%
Peter	2	2%
James	1	1%
Jude	1	1%
Eight Writers	27 Books	100%

Paul & John: 47% NT Text & 14/27 or 70% NT Books

STOP & THINK

 What advantage did the church at Ephesus enjoy perhaps more than most churches?



First-hand teaching & leadership

of the apostles Paul & John.

(two of the most prolific authors of

the New Testament)

C COMMENDATION OF CHRIST.

"I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary ... Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." - Revelation 2:1-3, 6

1

Plenty of projects

"deeds" (Greek: *erga*) - any action, task, or service.

2

Painstaking effort

"toil" (Greek: *kopos*) - to labor to the point of weariness.

3

Perseverance

Revelation 2:3 - "and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary."

"perseverance" (Greek: *hupomone*) - the ability to endure under pressure or pain, over the long haul.

Q1**4**

Praised for their intolerance?

Revelation 2:2b - "you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false"

5

Purity

Revelation 2:6 - "Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

Nicolaitans - Gnostic antinomian sect that "lead lives of unrestrained indulgence" (Irenaeus, 2nd Cent.).

Q2**S&T**

D CHASTISEMENT OF CHRIST.

"But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first ..." - Revelation 2:4-5a

*"Christ says, 'I know your perseverance.' Now there are some that labor, and they do it well. But what does hinder them? They only labor for a little season, and then they cease to work and begin to faint. But this church had labored on for many years; it had thrown out all its energies – not in some spasmodic effort, but in a continual strain."*²

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



STOP & THINK

❖ The Christians in Ephesus were hard working, but Christ was still not satisfied with them. Why is purely outward performance not enough?

God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7).

e.g. Pharisees looked good outwardly,

but inwardly not so much (Mt. 23:27)

*"I believe when they read this in Ephesus it probably hit them like a thunder bolt, it probably shocked them ... What had happened? This is one of the best churches, if not the best church...yet the clear penetrating spiritual laser vision of Christ found a fatal fault that probably nobody else saw."*³

John MacArthur (1939-Present)



E CAUSES OF THEIR LOVE LAPSE.

1

Poor Memory

Had they forgotten the enormous debt
that they had been forgiven?

READ Luke 7:36-47 - "he who is forgiven little, loves little"

Q1

2

Problem with Priorities

Were they so busy serving Christ
that they forgot how to enjoy Him?

READ Luke 10:38-42 - "you are worried about so many things"

Q2

3

Poor Hand-Off

Did they drop the baton in effectively
passing on their love for Jesus Christ?

READ Judges 2:6-10 - "another generation arose after them who
did not know the Lord, nor the work which He had done"

4

Perfunctory Prayer

Did daily communion with Jesus Christ
become a duty instead of a delight?

READ Matthew 15:8 - "This people honors Me with their lips,
but their heart is far from Me."

F CONSEQUENCE.

*"I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand
out of its place - unless you repent."* - Revelation 2:5b

S&T

1

Principle: Love Left = Light Lost



"The foundation of our love for the Lord lies in the recognition of His holiness, our sinfulness and His grace ... those who are forgiven much, love much."⁴

Sinclair Ferguson (1948-Present)



STOP & THINK

💡 Were the Ephesian Christians in danger of losing their salvation? If not, what did Christ mean when he said that He would remove their lampstand?



They were in danger of losing

the light of their testimony

in the community.

"The local church is espoused to Christ, but there is always the danger of that love growing cold. Like Martha, we can be so busy working for Christ that we have no time to love Him. Christ is more concerned about what we do with Him than for Him. Labor is no substitute for love. To the public, the Ephesian church was successful; to Christ, it had fallen."⁵

Warren Wiersbe (1929-Present)



ADDITIONAL NOTES

CLOSING PRAYER

From *Christian Meditations* by Thomas Reade, 1841

"Lord! I am sorely grieved, that I love You so little; that my affections move so slowly towards You. Stir up my languid desires. Inflame my cold affections. Set my whole soul on fire with holy love. How painful, that I should be so little affected by the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, of my suffering Redeemer. Why is not my soul all on fire, when I think of Your love? Why is it not melted into tears, when I think of my dying Savior? Am I harder than the rock in Horeb? Am I colder than the northern ice? Lord! smite my rocky heart with the rod of Your lovingkindness; dissolve my frozen affections, by the melting beams of Your grace. O! blessed Jesus! I praise You for such infinite love, such abounding grace to the chief of sinners!" ⁶

Selah. Pause & Meditate.

~ Individual or Small Group Bible Study ~



- ① From what you learned about the city of Ephesus on pages 3-4, discuss some of the challenges that a Christian might have living in Ephesus in the first century.

1. Worldly temptations.
2. Religious persecution.
3. Competing philosophical ideas.

- ② Discuss the differences between ministry done when Christ is one's first love and ministry done when He is not, i.e. what would be the difference in the inward motivation, the outward appearance, the results, etc?

No Love = mechanical, uncompassionate service; becomes goal-oriented, not people-oriented; burn-out, frustration.

- ③ What were Christ's motives for rebuking / disciplining the church at Ephesus? (Read Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:5-11)

1. Because He loved them:
Rev. 2:1-7 is actually a love letter.
2. Because He did not want them to lose eternal rewards. (1 Cor. 3:11-15)
3. Because He wanted them to grow in godliness / holiness (Heb. 12:10-11)
4. Because He was concerned for His reputation.

Private Devotions

Rev. 2:4 - You have left your first love.

Review the four possible causes for the Ephesian's lapse in love for Jesus Christ listed on page 9 (E.1-4). Do any of these apply to you? If so, which one(s)?

- I don't usually think about how much I've been forgiven.
- Busyness often crowds out my time with Christ.
- I haven't effectively passed on my love for Jesus Christ.
- Prayer has become a duty instead of a delight.
- Other: _____

Rev. 2:5 - Remember, Repent & Redo.

Write a short prayer about the strengths and weaknesses of your own love and light (testimony) for Jesus Christ.

MATTHEW 22:34-40

But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

LOVE, THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Matthew 22:34-40

LESSON 2

- A. CHARACTER OF GOD 17
- B. COMMANDMENT TO LOVE 19
- C. CHRIST'S JEALOUSY..... 21

A THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

- 1 With myriads of angels (Rev. 5:11-12) and multitudes of the redeemed (Rev. 7:9-12) who already worship and adore God in heaven, Jesus' concern for the failing love of one tiny church on earth may seem a little Perplexing. 

"Why should He love so much and I so little? Why should He love so truly, so constantly, so warmly and I return Him nothing but fickleness and insincerity and coldness? Why should He be so concerned about my love, and I so careless about His? Is my love so precious and His so worthless? Where but in His own infinitely loving and loveable nature can I find a reason for a difference so strange? How marvelous, and how affecting, to hear Him mourn over the 'changed affection' of one of the least of His saints on earth, and to hear Him say, 'I have this against you, that you have left your first love?' What should move Him to desire my love and to grieve when it is withheld, or when given for a time and then withdrawn? Has He not love enough in heaven? That one pulse in the universe should beat more feebly, what should that be to the infinite heart above? ... Why, then, should He who is King of kings and Lord of lords care so much about the waning love of Ephesus, the loss of the one half of a human heart? Yes! Why should He? Why but because He is love." ⁷ - Horatius Bonar S&T

- 2 Love is one of the Primary intrinsic  attributes of God.

Intrinsic - God's internal nature; Q1
who He is, not just what He does. 

1 John 4:7-8 - "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

- 3 The multidimensional love of God Passes  the limits of human understanding.

Ephesians 3:14-19 - The apostle Paul prayed, "that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge" (cf. Psa. 103:11, 17). Q2

"God is love" (1 John 4:8). It is not simply that God 'loves,' but that He is Love itself. Love is not merely one of His attributes, but His very nature."⁸

Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)



STOP & THINK

❖ What does Christ's concern for the failing love of one tiny little house church in Ephesus teach us about Christ?



Christ is concerned for
His relationship with each
individual Christian, not just
the church as a whole.

"As fire grows by the addition of fuel, so does our love to Christ increase by renewed and enlarged discoveries of his love to us."⁹

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)



B

THE COMMANDMENT TO LOVE.

1

Matthew 22:37 - "You shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, and with ALL your soul, and with ALL your mind."

- This commandment places a Prohibition  against partial love for God.

2

Matthew 22:38 - "This is the great and FOREMOST commandment."

- Loving God is our Prime directive .
- Westminister Catechism (1647) - "Man's chief end is to glorify God and [LOVE] Him forever"? (chief end=chief commandment?) **Q1**

3

Matthew 22:39 - "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

- This is the Practical application  of the commandment to love God.
- 1 John 2:20-21 - "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also."
- Matthew 25:40 - "to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me."

4

Matthew 22:40 - "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

- Whole-hearted love is the Principal intent  of all God's commandments.
- Romans 13:10 - "love is the fulfillment of the law"
- John 14:15 - "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." **Q2** **S&T**

"God created you for the first and greatest commandment, to be a lover of God."¹⁰

Sam Storms (1951-Present)



STOP & THINK

Since whole-hearted love for God is the greatest commandment, what is not loving the Lord whole-heartedly?



Could it be the greatest sin?

"Nothing is of greater importance than loving God! If we fail to take this seriously, we may find at the end of our lives that all of our works counted for nothing ... He wants us to BE before we DO. Love first!"¹¹

R. Kent Hughes (1942-Present)



C CHRIST, THE JEALOUS HUSBAND.

① Jealousy, like anger, is not inherently evil, but often mutates into something ugly in human beings, because of our _____ **Pride** _____.

- Ephesians 4:26 - "Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger"
- James 1:19-20 - "But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."

② Jealousy is part of God's _____ **Perfect** _____ character; and, in God, is always holy and just.

- Exodus 34:14 - "You shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God"

③ God jealously desires to be the only object of man's worship and _____ **Praise** _____.

- Isaiah 42:8 - "I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images."

④ Christ is jealous for His _____ **People** _____, the church, which is His bride.

- 2 Corinthians 11:2-3 - "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."

Q1
S&T
Q2

*"The Lord Jesus Christ is very jealous of your love, O believer. ... He loves you so much that He cannot endure that anything should stand between your heart's love and Him. Be careful Christians, you that are married to Christ; remember, you are married to a jealous husband."*¹²

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



STOP & THINK

One day a wife said to her husband of fifteen years, "I don't love you anymore." Though her husband was devastated, he was not completely surprised, for things in their marriage had been growing cold for several years. She went on to explain, "For the sake of the children, I am not going to leave, and so, nothing will change. I'll still help cook and clean, take care of the house, and help with the children. We can still sit together in public and sleep in the same room at home. I just don't love you anymore." Sadly, this is the condition of many Christians' relationship with Jesus Christ. They may not say it out loud, but they know in their heart, "Jesus, I don't love You like I once did." They think to themselves, "I'll still come and sit in church when it is convenient, and I'll still serve if I have to, but I just don't feel passion for Christ, the Church, or Christian ministry anymore."

Is Jesus Christ the jilted husband in your Christian relationship?

*"God burns with jealousy for the undivided allegiance and affection of His people ... At the very core of His being, in the center of His personality is an inextinguishable blaze of immeasurable love called jealousy."*¹³

Sam Storms (1951-Present)



ADDITIONAL NOTES

CLOSING PRAYER

From *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers*

"O Lover of the loveless, it is Thy will that I should love Thee with heart, soul, mind, strength, and my neighbor as myself. But I am not sufficient for these things. There is by nature no pure love in my soul; every affection in me is turned from Thee; I am bound, as a slave to lust, I cannot love Thee, lovely as Thou art, until thou dost set me free. By grace I am Thy freeman and would serve Thee, for I believe Thou art my God [and] in Jesus, I am redeemed, and my sins are forgiven. With this freedom I would always obey Thee, but I cannot walk in liberty, any more than I could first attain it, of myself. May Thy Spirit draw me nearer to Thee and Thy ways. ... May I grow in Thy love and manifest it to mankind. Spirit of love, make me like the loving Jesus; give me His benevolent temper, His beneficent actions, that I may shine before men to Thy glory."¹⁴

Selah. Pause & Meditate.

~ Individual or Small Group Bible Study ~



- ① How can regular meditation on God's love for me help drive me from my sin and love God more? (Romans 2:4)

It makes me feel ashamed of my sin which is rebellion against the One who loves me so greatly and eternally
(Psalm 103:11, 17).

- ② Jesus said that loving God is the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-38). How can one commandment be greater than another? How is loving God the greatest commandment?

If we love God we will automatically do all of the other commandments.

- ③ Mankind's jealousy is almost always sinful and ugly (cf. Gen. 37:11; Acts 5:17), so why is God's jealousy always a virtue? (Exodus 34:14).

God jealously desires all worship & praise (Isaiah 42:8), because He alone is God.

God jealously desires His people's love, because they are His bride (2 Cor. 11:2-3).

If God were not jealous about these things He would not be: [1] the only God; [2] holy; [3] loving.

Private Devotions

Matt. 22:37 - Love With All Your Heart.

What does it mean to love the Lord with all of your heart, soul and mind?

- To love God with my mind, will and emotions, i.e. with my whole being.
- To love God in plenty & in want, sickness & health, forsaking all others.
- Loving God above anything/anyone else.

1 Cor. 10:31 - All to the Glory of God.

What changes can you make in your own life to love the Lord the way you described above?

MATTHEW 24:6-14

Mou will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs ... At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."

LAST DAYS GLOBAL COOLING

Matthew 24:6-14

LESSON 3

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A**COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 24.**

"At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come." - Matthew 24:10-14

Q1**1**

Matthew 24:12 - "MOST people's love will grow cold."

This will be the Prevailing attitude 
even among religious / church-going people.

2

Matthew 24:12 - "MOST people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."

"Most" means not all Professing Christians 
will be affected. (See Piper quote, bottom page, p. 30)

**Q2
S&T****3**

Matthew 24:12 - "most people's love will GROW cold."

This will be a Progressive cooling 
in religious affections toward God and people.

4

Matthew 24:12 - "most people's love will grow COLD."

Revelation 3:15-16 - "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot ... So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

"Cold" agape makes God Puke / vomit. 

"Today is a day of lawlessness ... Since God Himself is no longer feared by the majority, many no longer respect the God-ordained authority of governments, parents, church leaders, and educators. Because of abounding iniquity on every hand, the love of many professing Christians for their God and His Law has grown cold" ¹⁵

Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)



STOP & THINK

¶ How can the global cooling of religious affections in the last days be a great opportunity?

The more	The warmer
cold-hearted	= even a little Christian
the world	love feels
Greater	The greater even a
darkness	little light appears

"Therefore, what I see in verses 9-14 of Matthew 24 is that, as the end of the age draws near, there are going to be people who are getting ice cold and there are going to be people who are white-hot enough to lay down their lives for Jesus among all the peoples of the world." ¹⁶

John Piper (1946-Present)



B CLIMATE IN THE CHURCHES.

"But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power ..." - 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Q1
S&T

- 1 2 Timothy 3:1 - "in the last days difficult times will come."

The Christian life is compared to a marathon and in the last days Christians will have to

Pick up the pace

(Hebrews 12:1; Jeremiah 12:5)



- 2 2 Timothy 3:2 - "men will be lovers of self, lovers of money" Q2

Many people will suppose religion is for their

Personal promotion & financial gain



(Luke 16:13-14; 1 Timothy 6:3-10)

- 3 2 Timothy 3:2-3 - "disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips"

Family relationships, personal friendships and Christian fellowship will be Precarious



- 4 2 Timothy 3:4 - "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"

Many people will seek to find Pleasure, in the things of this world rather than in God.



- 5 2 Timothy 3:5 - "holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power"

Many will have an outward shell of religion, disconnected from God's Power.



"Not only does one find these people [in 2 Timothy 3:1-5] outside of the church, they have infiltrated the church ... they will still pretend to be eminent Christians. They are described as having the appearance of piety"¹⁷

William Hendriksen (1900-1982)



STOP & THINK

❖ When did the "last days" begin?

- Almost 2000 years ago!
 - Peter quoted Joel 2 about "last days,"
and applied it to Pentecost in 30 AD.
(Acts 2:14-21)
-
-
-

"There's no command in Scripture to love yourself ... The Bible constantly warns on the other hand against pride and self-love and calls self-love a sin. The Bible doesn't teach us to love ourselves, it assumes that that is a part of our fallenness"¹⁸

John MacArthur (1939-Present)



C "CHILLING" SIGNS.

1 2 Timothy 3:2 - "men will be lovers of self"

Psychology of self-esteem : 

Discovering your own self-worthiness.

- "Self-esteemism is based on an unbiblical perspective. It is diametrically opposed to the truth of human depravity. Moreover, while Scripture commends self-control as a fruit of the Spirit, the Bible has nothing positive to say about self-esteem, self-love, or any other variety of self-centeredness." ¹⁹ - John MacArthur
- "According to the spirit of this age, the ultimate sin is no longer the failure to honor and thank God but the failure to esteem oneself. Self-abasement, not God-abasement, is the evil. And the cry of deliverance is not "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me?" but "O worthy man that I am, would that I could only see it better!" ²⁰ - John Piper
- "A preoccupation with psychological theory has in many cases eroded confidence in the Scriptures. When the essence of the human predicament is redefined in terms of lack of self-esteem, it is almost inevitable that people will be directed toward a couch but not a cross, a psychologist but not a Savior." ²¹ - Alistair Begg

Verses: Matt. 16:24; 1 Cor. 15:31; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-12 Q1

2 2 Timothy 3:2, 4 - "lovers of money ... lovers of pleasure"

Prosperity teaching : 

By faith you can be healthy a wealthy.

- "Despite the obvious emphasis of Scripture (in regard to suffering), we are bombarded by suggestions that the 'successful' Christian living takes place in the realm of constant victory, health, wholeness, and financial prosperity. ... Such notions are the product of empty heads and closed Bibles." ²² - Alistair Begg

Verses: Eccl. 5:10, 7:14; Matt. 6:1-20, 24; 1 Tim. 6:3-10 Q2

S&T

*"The higher a man is in grace,
the lower he will be in his own esteem."*²³

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



STOP & THINK

❖ How does God use financial need
and even sickness in the life of the Christian?
(Read Psalm 119:67, 71, 75; Hebrews 12:6-11)



To teach us:

- obedience
- discipline
- holiness / righteousness.

*"It is appropriate that a prosperity gospel be born in the hedonistic, self-centered, get-rich-quick milieu of modern American society."*²⁴

Michael Horton (1964-Present)



3

2 Timothy 3:2, 4 - "lovers of self ... rather than lovers of God"

Pluralism & political correctness :

All religions are equally valid and all roads lead to Heaven (AKA Universalism).

Q1

- "We are not simply a society in which we recognize the existence of, and the differences between, a variety of religious beliefs, but one in which we declare all such beliefs are to be equally valid. From that perspective there is only one kind of heresy, namely, to claim that one view is ultimately right, where others are wrong. In granting plausibility to everything, we may grant certainty to nothing. Tolerance has been embraced at the expense of truth ... To allow that everyone and everything is right is to destroy the notion of truth itself." ²⁵ - Alistair Begg
- "(Philosophical pluralism) is the ideology that refuses to allow any single religion or world view to claim an exclusive hold on the truth. It denies that there are any absolutes. It insists that all religions and world views must be seen as equally valid ... To suggest otherwise is to be arrogant and intolerant. No religion can claim to be superior to any other. You may practice your faith as long as you realize it is only one of many true faiths. If what you believe is true at all, it is only relatively true...[But] at the same time that philosophical pluralism denies other religions the right to lay claim to the truth, it presents its own world view as the absolute truth ... In the end philosophical pluralism's dismissal of dogma turns out to be just another dogma." ²⁶ - Philip Graham Ryken

Q2

Examples of Pluralism:

- "If in coming face to face with God we accept Him in our lives, then we are converting. We become a better Hindu, a better Muslim, a better Catholic, a better whatever we are. ... What God is in your mind you must accept." ²⁷ - Mother Teresa
- "We have no specific doctrines to which members are expected to subscribe ... Since individual freedom of belief is one of our basic principles, it follows that there will be differing beliefs among us. ... We do not believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, performed miracles and was resurrected from death." ²⁸ - Unitarian Universalist Website.

Verses: Isaiah 43:11; John 10:9, 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5 **S&T**

*"As it is practiced more and more in America, pluralism tends to require that you not only leave room for your neighbor to believe what he believes, but that you also refrain from disagreeing with it."*²⁹

Joel Belz (1941-Present)



STOP & THINK

❖ What did Jesus say that refutes the idea that all roads lead to heaven? (John 14:6). What did Peter say? (Acts 4:12). What did Paul say? (1 Tim. 2:5).



Jesus is the ONLY WAY

to eternal life.

*"Pluralism is a half-hearted attempt at a compromise of convenience ... We won't say you are wrong, if you won't say that we are wrong. ... What a deal? And all it costs us is the central and first affirmation of our own faith: Jesus is Lord."*³⁰

R. C. Sproul (1939-Present)



42 Timothy 3:2-4 - "haters of good"Postmodernism**Q1****There are no absolute moral truths.**

- "Postmodernism (the thinking of our age) is fiercely antinomian (without law). It is admitted that people make mistakes, but the word 'sin' is seldom mentioned and the idea that we all sin against God is avoided. Right and wrong are judged according to human feelings. The idea that God has an unchangeable holy moral law by which he will judge every person is unpopular." ³¹ - Erroll Hulse

Verses: Psalm 119:160; John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.**5**2 Timothy 3:5 - "holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power"Pragmatism**Q2****Seeker-sensitive ministry: By the numbers.**

- "Today, the pressure to fill auditoriums and services has driven many pastors to place the felt needs, or tastes, of the people above their duty to Christ. On every hand we hear of the Gospel being molded into a non-confrontative message intended to meet felt needs and impress the sinful heart. And, by most standards, this new philosophy of church life is working, as more and more auditoriums are filled with people hungry for a message that will affirm that they are actually on fairly good terms with the Almighty. But the biblical message is the message of the cross. ... Unfortunately, while the modern "un-gospel" may fill seats, it is the true gospel of sin and grace that is "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16)." ³² - David Hegg
- "The error of pragmatism is that it regards methodologies that 'work' as more important and more viable than those that are biblical. A pragmatist is concerned primarily with whether a given practice is expedient, not necessarily with whether it is in harmony with Scripture." ³³ - John MacArthur

S&T**Example of Pragmatism:**

- "A church service must be non-threatening and comfortable to the seeker and unsaved visitor." ³⁴ - Rick Warren

Verses: Proverbs 14:12; Isaiah 55:8-9; Matt. 7:13-14; 16:24.

*"My biggest concern is the way in which the postmodern mentality is seducing the church ... truth itself is regarded as subjective rather than objective. Therefore, truth is whatever you want it to be. This is the most narcissistic generation in the history of the human race."*³⁵

R.C. Sproul (1939-Present)



STOP & THINK

aticon Summarize the goal of seeker-sensitive churches and the method of fulfilling that goal?

Goal: Build bigger congregation.

Method: Pick music / message that attracts unbelieving "seekers."

Examples: Osteen & Warren

*"Pragmatism is ... an attempt to achieve spiritual objectives by human methodology rather than supernatural power. Its primary criterion is external success. It will employ whatever method draws a crowd and stimulates the desired response."*³⁶

John MacArthur (1939-Present)



ADDITIONAL NOTES

CLOSING PRAYER

From *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers*

"O my Saviour, help me. I am so slow to learn, so prone to forget, so weak to climb; I am in the foothills when I should be on the heights; I am pained by my graceless heart, my prayerless days, my poverty of love, my sloth in the heavenly race, my sullied conscience, my wasted hours, my unspent opportunities. I am blind while light shines around me: take the scales from my eyes, grind to dust the evil heart of unbelief. Make it my chiefest joy to study Thee, meditate on Thee, gaze on Thee, sit like Mary at Thy feet, lean like John on Thy breast, ... Give me increase and progress in grace so that there may be more decision in my character, more vigor in my purposes, more elevation in my life, more fervor in my devotion, more constancy in my zeal."³⁷

Selah. Pause & Meditate.

~ Individual or Small Group Bible Study ~



- ① In your lifetime, what ways have you seen the cooling or watering down of Christianity in the American church?
 1. Plethora of church growth materials.
 2. Popularity of health & wealth teaching.
 3. Greed & immorality among church leaders and churchgoers.
- ② What specific steps can individuals and churches take to escape the freeze?
 1. Give God's Word first place. Expository Bible study - Let God's Word reprove, rebuke, correct and retrain (2 Tim 3:16).
 2. Renewed devotion to prayer. Make God's house a house of prayer.
- ③ Considering the goal of seeker-sensitive churches discussed in the middle of page 38, what are the fundamental errors with that type of Sunday morning service? (Read Romans 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:3-5)
 1. The message & music at a Christian worship service should be about pleasing GOD.
 2. The only message that can save unbelievers is the Gospel.

Private Devotions

2 Timothy 3:1-5 - Last Days Ministry.

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5 again. As a "last-days" Christian, can you see any affects of this spiritual global cooling in your own life? If so, what?

Romans 13:14 - Steps Toward Change.

As Christians we plan for special events, vacations, retirement, etc, but we seldom make plans for real spiritual change. With God's help, what specific steps can you take to change some of the items you listed above?

PSALM 51:1-17

B e gracious to me,
O God, according to
Your lovingkindness;
according to the greatness
of Your compassion blot out
my transgressions. Wash me
thoroughly from my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
... CREATE in me a clean
heart, O God, and RENEW
a right spirit within me.
... RESTORE unto me the
joy of Thy salvation and
GRANT me a willing spirit....
The sacrifices of God are a
broken spirit; a broken and
a contrite heart, O God,
You will not despise."

LOVE, THE FRUIT OF A REVIVED HEART

Psalm 51:1-17

LESSON 4

- A. CAUSE OF TRUE REVIVAL..... 45
- B. CONDITIONS FOR REVIVAL..... 45
- C. CHARACTER OF REVIVED LOVE.... 51
- D. CLOSING COMMENTS..... 53

A CAUSE OF TRUE REVIVAL.

① The first cause of revival is the Providence  of God, who brings about revival according to the sovereign operation of His Holy Spirit.

- "Revival is not something that human hands or wills can produce; it is something that only God can provide, according to His own good pleasure." ³⁸ - John Sale
- John 3:8 - "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."



Q1

Q2

B CONDITIONS FOR REVIVAL.

① Uncensored Preaching of the Gospel , i.e. both the good and the bad news.

- Jonathan Edward's, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, preached in Enfield, Connecticut in 1741, was a catalyst to the revival in the American colonies called The Great Awakening.
- "While revival originates from God, the Holy Spirit has appointed certain means to be used for the advancement of His kingdom. The foremost of these is the preaching of the Word of God accompanied by earnest prayer. Yet, no amount of human endeavor can assure results. The same is true of revival: no measured amount of our activity will guarantee an equivalent blessing, for God's blessing is bestowed according to His good pleasure (Zech. 4:6)." ³⁹ - John Sale
- 2 Timothy 3:16 - "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness"

S&T

*"Real revival comes only from God. He alone is the fountainhead. A spiritual awakening cannot be scheduled, worked up, or humanly engineered."*⁴⁰

Lewis Drummond (1919-2004)



STOP & THINK

¶ If we take 2 Timothy 3:16 seriously, what must we be willing to let Scripture do in us, to set the stage for personal revival?

Teach us - Admit I have more to learn.

Reprove us - Admit when I am wrong.

Correct us - Admit when I am off course.

Train us - Admit my practice not perfect.

*"We cannot organize revival, but we can set our sails to catch the wind from Heaven when God chooses to blow upon His people once again."*⁴¹

G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945)



2 Recommitment to Private & Corporate Prayer.

- "Our seeking for revival always should be grounded in prayer, because in prayer we acknowledge that God is not only the source of revival, but He also is the sovereign God: He is the One who is in the heavens and does whatever He pleases (Psalm 115:3)." ⁴² - John Sale
- "The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. But Scripture and experience combine to teach that the united prayers of many righteous accomplish still more." ⁴³
- Oswald Sanders
- "The thermometer of a church is its prayer meeting" ⁴⁴ - Havner
- Acts 4:31 - "And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness." **Q1**
- Psalm 51:10, 12 - "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me ... Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation and grant me a willing spirit." (Prayer for Personal Revival)

3 Conviction of sin & sincere Penitence. **S&T**

- Psalm 51:17 - "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise."
- James 4:8 - "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."
- "Revival takes place when people stop seeing sin as an isolated act of disobedience and they begin to see it as an organic network of compulsive beliefs, behaviors and thoughts that issue out of their basic alienation from God." ⁴⁵ - Richard Lovelace
- "Revival is not a green valley getting greener, but a valley full of dry bones being made to live again and stand up an exceeding great army (Ezek. 37). It is not good Christians becoming better Christians - but rather Christians honestly confessing that their Christian life is a valley of dry bones and by that very confession qualifying for the grace that flows from the cross and makes all things new." ⁴⁶ - Roy Hession
- Revelation 2:5 - "Therefore REMEMBER from where you have fallen, and REPENT and [RE]DO the deeds you did at first" **Q2**

*"The beginning of a time of revival invariably has been marked by quickening of the ordinary prayer meetings, resulting in new vitality, more participation, more sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and more unction in intercession."*⁴⁷

Erroll Hulse (1931-Present)



STOP & THINK

Define the word "penitence"
(not to be confused with the Catholic idea of penance)



- **penitence = Deep remorse for having offended God, resulting in true repentance.**
- **penance = voluntary self-punishment.**

*"The sorrow of true repentance is ... sorrow for offense against a holy God, not simply regret over the personal consequences of our sin."*⁴⁸

John MacArthur (1939-Present)



④ Obedience to Biblical Precepts.

- "To pray for revival while ignoring the plain precepts laid down in Scripture is to waste a lot of words and get nothing for our trouble. Prayer will become effective when we stop using it as a substitute for obedience." ⁴⁹ - A.W. Tozer

Q1

- "Love" without Law = Liberalism.



- "Law" without Love = Legalism.



- "God's law as revealed in His Word prescribes our duty, but love provides the correct motive for obedience. We obey God's law, not to be loved, but because we are loved in Christ." ⁵⁰ - Jerry Bridges

S&T

⑤ Reorganizing our daily Priorities with schedules that give Christ first place.

- Matthew 6:31-33 - "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek FIRST His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."
- Colossians 1:18 - "He is also head of the body, the church ... so that He Himself will come to have FIRST place in everything."



⑥ Commitment to Consistent Christ-Centered Church fellowship that Promotes Passion



- Hebrews 10:24-25 - "Let us consider how to stimulate one another to LOVE and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the DAY drawing near."

Q2

- "There is a Christian failure to distinguish between socializing and fellowship. ... Socializing involves the sharing of human and earthly life. Christian fellowship, New Testament *koinonia*, involves the sharing of spiritual life." ⁵¹ - Donald Whitney

"Are we so much in love with Jesus, so utterly enthralled with the transcendent beauties of our Savior, so swallowed up in the adequacy of the Son of God in all things that nothing appears so sweet to us as obedience to His commands?"⁵²

Sam Storms (1951-Present)



STOP & THINK

❖ Is love without obedience true love for God?
Is obedience without love for God true obedience?



No, they are both dead,
man-made religion.

"If Jesus said that in the last Day the love of many would grow cold, and if he counsels us how to triumph over that coldness, namely, by not neglecting to meet together but rather meeting and encouraging each other and stirring each other up to love, then we should listen to him. We should follow his counsel."⁵³

John Piper (1946-Present)



C CHARACTER OF REVIVED LOVE.

- ① A renewed passion for a _____ **Person** _____, 
not just a set of biblical **Principles** _____. 

- "I am afraid that many Christians in our day, have lost sight of Christ. They talk ... more about salvation than about their only Savior, and more about redemption than the one true Redeemer, and more about Christ's work than Christ Himself! ... Cease to regard the Gospel as a mere set of abstract propositions and abstruse principles and rules. Look at it as the introduction to a glorious personal Friend. This is the kind of Gospel that the apostles preached." ⁵⁴ - J. C. Ryle

- ② Unconditional **Pleasure in God** 
without a mercenary spirit.

- "Love to God must be pure and genuine. He must be loved chiefly for Himself. We must love God, not only for His benefits--but for those intrinsic excellencies with which He is crowned. We must love God--not only for the good which flows from Him—but for the good which is in Him. True love is not mercenary; he who is deeply in love with God, needs not be hired with rewards, he cannot but love God for the beauty of His holiness. Though it is not unlawful to look for benefits, we must not love God for His benefits alone--for then it is not love of God, but self love." ⁵⁵ - Thomas Watson

Q1

Verses to Consider:

- Psalm 37:4 - "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart."
- Matthew 6:31-33 - "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

**S&T
Q2**

*"Many say they have a love for God, but their love is only pleasure in God as the giver of good gifts and pleasant circumstances. This type of love is really a love of self because God is not the supreme object of the appreciation. It is merely a love for God as a provider, a Santa Claus; it is not a biblical love."*⁵⁶

John D. Hannah (1942-Present)



STOP & THINK

With respect to Psalm 37:4 and Matthew 6:33 (P. 51, Bottom Left), what is the attitude of a truly revived love for God versus a mercenary attitude?

*Delight in God because He is truly
delightful, rather than feigned seeking
& delighting in God to get the desires of my
heart.*

*"When we pursue first things first [God's priorities – Mt. 6:33], the second things are thrown in; when we pursue second things first, we not only miss out on the first things, but we also miss the fullness of the second things [see 1 Kings 3:5-14]."*⁵⁷

Kenneth Boa (1945-Present)



D CLOSING COMMENTS.

① Prescription for Change.

*"Therefore REMEMBER from where you have fallen,
and REPENT and [RE]DO the deeds you did at first..."*

Q1

Revelation 2:5

Remember...

- When you use to memorize Scripture & hide it in your heart.
- When you use to take notes during the sermon.
- When you use to come early to church to fellowship.
- When you use to invite coworkers & neighbors to church.
- When you use to come to adult Sunday School.
- When you use to be active in the men's / women's ministry.
- When you use to regularly attend a home fellowship.
- When you use to talk to others about Jesus Christ.
- When you use to regularly invite people for dinner.
- When you use to meet with an accountability partner.
- When you use to serve in the church.
- When you use to come to church work days.
- When you use to read your Bible at home.
- When you use to take your Bible to work.
- When you use to listen mostly to Christian music.

Repent...

- Greek: *metanoia* - to turn around, turn away, i.e. from sin.

Redo...

② Price for Inaction.

*"... or else I am coming to you and will REMOVE
your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent."*

③ Pray for Revival.

- In your life.
- In your church.
- In our nation.

S&T
Q2

*"Spirit filled souls are ablaze for God.
They love with a love that glows. They serve
with a devotion that consumes. They hate sin
with fierceness that burns. They rejoice with
a joy that radiates."*⁵⁸

Samuel Chadwick (1840-1932)



STOP & THINK

✳ If we wish to see revival in our families, churches, community and nation where does it need to start ?



In Me! -- A revival of one.

For to Me To Live is Christ - TLC

*"As long as we are content
to live without revival, we will."*⁵⁹

Leonard Ravenhill (1907-1994)



ADDITIONAL NOTES

CLOSING PRAYER

From *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers*

"O God of grace, Thou hast imputed my sin to my Substitute, and hast imputed His righteousness to my soul, clothing me with a bridegroom's robe. But in my Christian walk I am still in rags; my best prayers are stained with sin; in my penitential tears are so much impurity; I need to repent of my repentance; I need my tears to be washed. I am always going into the far country, and always returning home as a prodigal, always saying, Father, forgive me, and Thou art always bringing forth the best robe. Every morning let me wear it, every evening return in it, go out to the day's work in it, be married in it, stand before the great white throne in it, enter heaven in it shining as the sun. Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, the exceeding wonder of grace."⁶⁰

Selah. Pause & Meditate.

~ Individual or Small Group Bible Study ~



- ① Read Hebrews 10:24-25 again. How can regular Christian fellowship stir up love for God and neighbor in another Christian?

1. Showing others how to love by your own love and sacrifice.
2. Personal encouragement, mentoring, discipleship & accountability.

- ② Read J. C. Ryle's statement at the top of page 51 again. What would be the internal and external differences in a church or an individual Christian with their focus on the Person of Christ, rather than just the works of Christ?

Relationship vs. religion.

- ③ How much of a mercenary spirit towards seeking God do you think affects the heart of the average twenty-first century American Christian? (e.g. If there were no earthly benefits to being a Christian, only heart-ache, suffering, persecution and death, by what percentage would church attendance decrease?)

Group discussion.

Private Devotions

Psa. 51:10 - Renew a Right Spirit in Me.

Review the six conditions for spiritual revival, B.1-6, on pages 45-49. List the top three that you most need to grow in with God's help.

Matthew 6:33 - Seek First His Kingdom.

What priorities need to change in your schedule to give Christ first place and make God your first love?

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with all your
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and with all your
Soul
and with all your
Mind**