



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: Revelation: he Love You Had at First**

**Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor**

**Scripture: Revelation 2:1-7**

"To the angel<sup>[a]</sup> of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. <sup>2</sup>I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. <sup>3</sup>You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. <sup>4</sup>Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. <sup>5</sup>Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. <sup>6</sup>But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. <sup>7</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

(NIV)

#### **Sermon Outline:**

Jesus offers words of consolation as well as confrontation in the book of Revelation.

The book of Revelation is the most misunderstood, misapplied, and dangerous book of the Bible. It is prophetic literature, telling us what the future holds and who holds the future. It is apocalyptic literature which unveils and reveals what is happening behind the scenes, and it is also a letter that was sent to different churches to encourage them.

Jesus wants to encourage confront and call us how he wants us to be. Jesus wants to point out and highlight the good things in us but also let us know where there are areas of correction that need to take place.

The book of Revelation is telling us what is happening behind the scenes. No matter what is happening in the world and in our society, or what we are seeing with our own eyes, Jesus is at work right now.

#### **The book of Revelation is from Jesus and about Jesus.**

The Jesus who shows up in the book of Revelation does not look like the Jesus that the disciples knew before he was crucified. The Jesus who shows up in this book is pure radiance, pure glory, pure power, and pure love.

John is letting us know that no matter what is going on in our lives, we are in relationship with the One who is pure glory, pure radiance and therefore have access to the power of the Almighty who is with us. It is this Jesus who speaks to the churches.

Jesus is walking among us this very moment.

When we gather together as the people of God, we open ourselves up to the way of Jesus that we can't when we are alone.

Our Lord sees our hard work, perseverance, good deeds and he works it out.

The people in Ephesus loved truth, sound theology and good doctrine which are all noble, but they are lacking love. How is this possible? They related to God they the way they wanted to relate to God, not the way God wanted them to relate to him.

We can do all the good deeds but not have love in our heart.

**Good deeds without great love equals a fallen life, one that does not include God.**

Consider how far you have fallen.

- Good deeds out of obligation: lead to resentment.
- Good deeds out of selfish gain, so the spotlight is on yourself.
- Good deed but paid no attention to their relationship with God.

Repent and do the things you did at first.

The Holy Spirit wants to pour this love into your heart. He wants to kindle the fire, the flame that was once in you.

You can experience the abundance of God's life at this very moment. May we be about Jesus and Jesus alone.

**Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday, Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor, begins a new sermon series in the book of Revelation. Today Pastor Rich explores Jesus' words to the church of Ephesus and how we desperately need to hear these words for our own lives today.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. The invitation for us is to turn around and do the things that we did before, recapturing the love we had a first. What were the things you did before and where has love emerged in your life? Journal your answers to these questions, maybe sharing them with a trusted friend.
3. It is so easy for us to go down the road of obligation. Can you ask the Holy Spirit to kindle love in you? A love for God and love for your neighbor?