



Lent 2020: Coming back to Jesus

Week 1: To the Church in Ephesus

Welcome and worship

What things are you most enjoying doing at the moment? Is there anything that you used to like doing in the past but don't manage to do so much now?

"To the angel 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. 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. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. 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. But you have this in your favour: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

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.

There is a big challenge in this passage which we will get to in a moment, but first, where do you notice Jesus commending the church in Ephesus?

Where do you think he would commend our church?

What might he say to commend the friends you are sitting with?

Coming back to Jesus, our first love

The story of the church in Ephesus

- Paul in Ephesus in Acts 19
- Paul writing to the Ephesians
- Revelation 2

What about us? Let's think back to that tremendous list of all the great things that God is doing amongst us. Aren't they brilliant? But let's ask ourselves, have we fallen away from our first love? Do we love Jesus like we did at first? Are we full of the Holy Spirit?

Why don't you talk to one another and think about how things are going for you at the moment? Have a think about some evidence that you are doing the things you did at first, and some signs that you might not be. Are there particular areas of life which do not feel like they are in tune with Jesus? Are there situations where you feel that you need God's Holy Spirit to really work? Is there a sense of needing to repent, to turn around, as Jesus suggests? Remember there is a warning...

Some space for notes here as you reflect on what God is saying to you: