

# *Christ's Message to His Church*

## Revelation 2:1-29

Big Idea: Christ walks among His churches with penetrating knowledge—He sees our faithfulness and our failings. The question for us: Are we motivated by love for Him, or just going through the motions? Everything else hangs on loving God first. Keep your first love burning bright.

### Main Points

1. Christ's Intimate Knowledge - Jesus is present with His churches and knows everything about them.
2. The Priority of Love - Love for God (and then others) must drive all ministry.
3. The Call to Perseverance - Christ's people are called to endure suffering and remain faithful.
4. The Danger of Compromise - False teaching and sin must be confronted.

### Scriptures:

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Acts 4:12          | <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 44:6    |
| <input type="radio"/> Acts 5             | <input type="radio"/> Job 19:25      |
| <input type="radio"/> Philippians 2:9-11 | <input type="radio"/> Daniel 10:6    |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 Timothy          | <input type="radio"/> 2 Timothy 2:12 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 John 4:4         | <input type="radio"/> John 1:1       |

### Opening Question:

If someone who didn't know anything about our church watched us for a month, what do you think they'd say we love most?

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### Discussion Questions:

The Church of Ephesus - Read Revelation 2:1-7 together

What does it look like for a church today to "test those who claim to be apostles"? How can we discern false teaching?

What do you think it means to lose your first love for Christ? Can you think of a time when your service became more about duty than love? What happened?

Mark asked, "What motivates us when we work at church?" Take a moment of silence for personal reflection: What truly motivates your service? Share (if comfortable): Are you serving from love, duty, recognition, or something else?

Section 2: The Church of Smyrna - Read Revelation 2:8-11 together

Why is the gospel message particularly important for those facing suffering? How does Christ's resurrection give us hope in our trials?

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Are there areas where you're tempted to compromise your faith to make life easier? What would faithfulness look like in those situations?

The Church of Pergamum - Read Revelation 2:12-17 together

What are the "thrones of Satan" in our culture today? How do we remain faithful while living in a hostile spiritual environment?

Why is it dangerous to mix "a little bit" of false teaching with truth? What are some common ways Christians today compromise biblical truth?

How can we maintain biblical fidelity without becoming isolated from the world we're called to reach?

The Church of Thyatira - Read Revelation 2:18-29 together

How can a church be growing in some areas while declining in others? What's the difference between showing grace to struggling believers and tolerating false teaching?

Why does God take false teaching so seriously? How can we lovingly confront error in our church community?

To those who overcome, Christ promises authority and the morning star. What does it mean to "hold on to what you have until I come"?

#### Practical Applications:

1. Love Check: Schedule daily time to simply worship and express love to God without any agenda or requests.
2. Doctrine Check: Read or listen to a resource that helps you identify false teaching (ask your pastor for recommendations).
3. Perseverance Check: Identify one area where you're tempted to give up or compromise. Share it with an accountability partner.
4. Service Check: Evaluate your current service. Is it motivated by love for Christ, or has it become mechanical? Make adjustments as needed.

#### Closing Thought/Prayer:

Lord, show us where we've grown busy but loveless, and by your Spirit restore in us our first love for Christ so that everything we do as a church shines as a true lampstand in this dark world.