

## Small Group Study Guide: "Ephesus: The Unfaithful Church" - Revelation 2:1-7

### Open with Prayer Requests and Prayer

**Icebreaker: "Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing"** Ask the group:

- Have you ever been so focused on doing something right that you lost sight of why you were doing it in the first place?
- How did you realize your priorities had shifted?

(Transition: The Ephesian church had a great reputation for doing the right things, but Jesus saw that they had lost sight of their first love. Let's explore His message to them.)

**Scripture Focus:** Read Revelation 2:1-7 together as a group.

### Discussion Questions:

#### 1. Address to the Church:

- Who is the intended audience of this letter (verse 1)?
- Why is it important to recognize that these letters were written not just for the historical churches, but for churches throughout time?

#### 2. Description of Christ:

- Jesus describes Himself as the One who "holds the seven stars" and "walks among the seven golden lampstands" (verse 1). What does this tell us about His presence and authority in the church?
- How does this image of Jesus challenge or encourage you?

#### 3. Commendation (Praise):

- Jesus commends the Ephesian church for their hard work, perseverance, and commitment to sound doctrine (verses 2-3, 6). What does this reveal about their strengths?
- How do we see these qualities in churches today? How do they apply to your own walk with Christ?

#### 4. Criticism (Rebuke):

- In verse 4, Jesus says, "You have abandoned the love you had at first." What do you think He meant by this?
- How can a church (or individual) be doctrinally sound but lose its love for Christ and others?
- What are some warning signs that we may be drifting away from our first love?

#### 5. Exhortation (Warning or Instruction):

- Jesus commands the church to "Remember, repent, and do the works you did at first" (verse 5). What does each of these steps involve?
- What are some practical ways we can rekindle our love for Christ and for others?
- What is the consequence if the church does not repent (verse 5)?

#### 6. Promise to the Overcomer:

- Jesus promises that those who overcome will "eat of the tree of life" (verse 7). What does this symbolize?

- How does this promise give us hope and assurance in our walk with Christ?

### **Suggested Application:**

#### **1. Personal Reflection:**

- Take some time this week to assess your love for Jesus. Has it grown cold or distant? What might need to change to rekindle that love?

#### **2. Restoring Your First Love:**

- Identify one area in your spiritual life where you need to "remember, repent, and return." Make a plan to act on it this week.

#### **3. Loving Others Well:**

- Find one practical way to demonstrate Christ's love to a fellow believer this week.

#### **4. Reaching the Lost:**

- Consider someone in your life who does not know Jesus. Pray for them daily and look for opportunities to share the gospel or show them Christ's love.

**Closing Prayer:** Invite someone to close in prayer, asking for renewed love for Christ, compassion for others, and the courage to remain faithful in doctrine and love.

### **Optional Worship Song Suggestion:**

- "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" – A reminder of our need to return to our first love.