

WHEN DOES ONE LEAVE HIS/HER FIRST LOVE?

Revelation 2:4

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: When a person decides to leave his/her "love" he/she has several options - face to face, leave a note, file papers with an attorney or just move out. Jesus, in speaking to the Church at Ephesus brags on them for a bit and then says that there's a problem and it is that they have left their first love. In other words He is not their first love anymore. This has happened ever since the Church of Ephesus started it and today there are a lot of Christians with whom Jesus is not their first love anymore. How does that happen? Is it all at once? Is it slowly? How does one know if he/she no longer loves Jesus first?

I. WHEN IS IT TRUE THAT CHRISTIANS HAVE LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE?

1. When Jesus is first in one's life, he/she will not and cannot neglect God nor neglect worship.
2. When Jesus is NOT first in one's life, then he/she neglects God, worship and prayer.
 - When this is seen, either in one's own self or in others, his/her first love is gone.
3. One who has left his/her first love will neglect God's Word
 - Many other media will be read, watched, etc. instead of God's Word.
4. Whenever one needs to be preached to earnestly, sternly in order to bring him/her to reluctantly attending a worship service, his/her first love is gone.
5. When one has left his/her first love, there is no automatic, spontaneous avoidance of sinful habits.
6. When one has left his/her first love, he/she is worldly minded, no longer Godly minded.
7. When one has left his/her first love, there is no real concern for the lost.
8. When one has left his/her first love, the spirit of universal forgiveness is gone - "I want proof before I forgive him/her...."
9. When one has left his/her first love, he/she becomes irritable, uncharitable, and bickers over little things.
10. When one has left his/her first love, he/she will always want to be vindicated, apologized to.
11. When one has left his/her first love, he/she has no sympathies.

II. HOW DO CHRISTIANS LOSE THEIR FIRST LOVE?

1. They don't know how it happens and are in a state of confusion.
2. Satan seduces God's people so artfully that NO Christian escapes his assault.
 - Eve was tempted by Satan in several ways until he found her weakness and she yielded.
3. Satan tempts Christians by the seductions of the flesh.
 - He will find every person's weakness.

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF LOSING ONE'S FIRST LOVE

1. Those who have taken the first step (Satan's temptation) become aware of it.
 - Their conscience tells them and shame is felt at first.
 - Comfort is gone.
2. Leaving one's first love brings thoughts of doubt to his/her standing with God as being shaken.
3. There is a spirit of self-condemnation for a while.
4. One's heart doesn't now pray, just words, but no emotion, deep care.
5. God's Word loses its hold upon one's heart and the thrill of God's Words are lost.

CONCLUSION:

1. Where does all this find you? Have you ever had this FIRST love?
2. Do YOU have the same spirit now as when you first met the Lord Jesus Christ?
3. Are YOU still making the profession of loving the Lord Jesus Christ YET your first love is gone?
4. Have you thought about returning to the Lord Jesus Christ, but NOT with a proud heart, but with a repentant heart?
5. IF YOU have left your first love, for what reason did you have for doing so? Why have you allowed something or someone else to take the Lord Jesus' place in your life?
 - Has the Lord Jesus Christ deceived you?
 - Has the Lord Jesus Christ been unfaithful to you?
 - Has the Lord Jesus Christ mistreated you and hurt your feelings?
 - What has the Lord Jesus Christ done that you should lose your first love to HIM?
6. IF Jesus is not your first love then why?