

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of June 25-July 1, 2023
"EPHESUS: THE LOVELESS CHURCH"

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

Do you believe in love at first sight? Why or why not?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Revelations 2:1-7

1. What are some commendable qualities of the church in Ephesus mentioned in Revelation 2:1-7, and how can we apply those qualities to our own churches today?
2. Jesus commends the church in Ephesus for their hard work, perseverance, and rejection of evil and yet he also confronts them for leaving their first love. In what ways might the Ephesian church have abandoned their first love? How can we avoid making the same mistake?
3. Reflect on the challenges and temptations faced by the church in Ephesus. In what ways do these challenges mirror the ones we encounter in our own churches and personal lives, and how can we navigate them faithfully?
4. How does the act of remembering God influence our perspective on life, purpose, and meaning? Reflect on moments in your life when you felt distant from God. How did remembering his presence and promises bring you back to a place of connection and trust?
5. What does repentance mean to you? How can we cultivate a heart posture of ongoing repentance, not just as a one-time event but as a continual practice in our journey of faith?
6. Jesus warns the church in Ephesus that if they do not repent and return to their first love, he will remove their lampstand, symbolizing the removal of their influence and presence. How does this warning apply to us today as individuals and as a church? What does it teach us about the importance of keeping our love for Christ alive and vibrant?

7. *Application.* How can we cultivate a balance between serving and working for Christ while also maintaining a deep and intimate relationship with him? Share real, practical ways that you have done this or are doing this.

8. NEXT STEPS

The best way to love Jesus is to love Jesus best.

- I will remember my first love.
- I repent of my complacency and lack of devotion for Christ.
- I will go back and rekindle the passion I have for Jesus.

Don't forget to:

- Go through the devotionals every day this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God's Word.

CLOSING THE SESSION

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for a renewed passion for God, remembering your first love for him.
- Pray for wisdom to make wise financial choices that is aligned with God's will.
- Pray for relationships to grow with other Christ-followers, that you will encourage and care for one another.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends, and loved ones.
- Pray for protection, provision, healing and comfort for everyone who's going through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual pain.

BIBLE READING GUIDE

June 26 Revelations 1
June 27 Revelations 2:1-7
June 28 Psalms 122
June 29 Matthew 5:13-16
June 30 Psalms 103
July 1 Luke 22:14-23
July 2 Revelations 2:8-11