

# Has Our First Love Withered?

by David Wilkerson

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*Jesus warns us that losing our first love for him is a sin that grieves him most, and encourages us to examine our hearts and regain our affection for him.*

**Scripture:** Ephesians 1:1, Revelation 2:4

**Topics:** "First Love", "Affection for Christ"

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## Description

David Wilkerson addresses the church of Ephesus, emphasizing that they have 'lost their first love' for Christ, which signifies a shift in their hearts where other priorities have taken His place. He highlights that despite their strong foundation in the gospel and exceptional teaching from Paul, their affection for Jesus has diminished, which is the first sin that grieves Him. Wilkerson warns that this message is relevant for all Christians today, urging them to examine their hearts and rekindle their love for Christ, as mere diligence and moral living are insufficient without a growing affection for Him.

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## Transcript

Jesus told the Christians at the church of Ephesus -- a church founded on the godly teaching of the apostle Paul -- that they had "lost their first love" (see Revelation 2:4).

When Jesus uses the words "first love" here, he is not speaking of the immature love we experience when we are first saved. Rather, he is talking about exclusive love. He is saying, "I once occupied first place in your heart but now you have allowed other things to take my place."

It is significant to note that of all the sins Jesus points out in the seven New Testament churches in Asia, the first sin he names is the one that grieves him most: a loss of affection for him.

The Christians at Ephesus had received exceptional teaching from Paul; in fact, as I read through Paul's letters to the Ephesians, I am amazed at the gospel these people heard and lived. They walked closely with the Lord and Paul compliments them at length in Ephesians 1:1-5.

These Christians had been "made alive together with Christ ... and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (see Ephesians 2:5-6). What a description of a blessed, holy people! It is evident that the Ephesians were not just a bunch of novices or lukewarm saints. Jesus was examining the hearts of a people who were well-grounded in the truth of the gospel. Yet he pointed out that something was deeply wrong: "Somehow in all your labors, you have allowed your first love to

wither."

I believe this warning to the Ephesians is intended for every Christian living in these last days. Simply put, the Lord is telling us, "It is not enough for you to be a caring, giving, diligent servant who upholds moral standards. If in the process your affection for me does not increase, then you have lost your first love."

I encourage you to examine your heart today and go back to your first love. Ask God for grace and strength to begin again to guard your affection for Christ.

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