

The Church at Ephesus

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining a deep love for Christ amidst faithful service, as exemplified by the Church at Ephesus.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:1

Topics: "First Love", "Spiritual Diligence"

Description

David Wilkerson reflects on the church at Ephesus, praising their close walk with the Lord and the commendations from Paul and Jesus for their faithfulness and good works. However, he emphasizes a critical issue: despite their diligence and righteousness, they have lost their first love for Christ. This serious warning from Jesus serves as a wake-up call for believers to examine their hearts and rekindle their affection for Him. Wilkerson challenges listeners to consider whether they, too, have allowed their love for Jesus to diminish amidst their labor for Him.

Transcript

The Christians at Ephesus walked closely with the Lord. As I read through Paul's letter to the Ephesians, I am amazed at the gospel these people heard and lived. In fact, Paul compliments them at length. He addresses them as, "The faithful in Christ Jesus . . . blessed . . . with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ . . . chosen . . . before the foundation of the world . . . predestinated . . . unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:1-5).

What a description of a blessed, holy people! Jesus also compliments the Ephesian Christians in the book of Revelation: "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience" (Revelation 2:2). In other words: "I know all the good things going on in your lives. You patiently labor for Me without complaining and you will do anything for others. You're diligent in your good works and that is very commendable."

Jesus points out something else in the hearts of these Ephesians, something He notes is deeply wrong. He says, "I see all your works--your hatred for sin, your love for truth, your righteous courage. And yet somehow in all your labors, you've allowed your first love to wither. Your affection for Me is dying."

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (verse 4). Beloved, I have read and reread this verse and have concluded that its seriousness cannot be overlooked. The word somewhat here--indicating something that might be taken lightly--does not appear in the original Greek text. Instead, the original phrase is translated, literally, "I have something against you!"

I would like to think I am an Ephesian-type Christian, a faithful laborer. I want to believe that my suffering is for Jesus' sake, that my good works glorify Him, that I practice righteous living, that I am seated with Him in heavenly places. But when I read of Jesus walking among such well-taught believers as the Ephesians and telling them, "I have something against you," it grips my soul. I have to ask my Lord, "Jesus, do You have something against me? Have I also lost my affection for You?"

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