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Valley Church

September 28 & October 1, 2023
Week 3 – The Letter to Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)

Introduction / Review:

The Divine Outline (Revelation 1:19)

- Write down what you have seen (chapter 1)
- Write down what is now (chapters 2-3)
- Write down what will take place in the future (chapters 4-22)

Revelation 2:1-4

1 John 4:19

Ephesians 3:17-19

Reigniting Our Experience of God's Love (Revelation 2:5)

1. _____ how far you have fallen!

Greek verb “consider” = “stop and reflect, think about, evaluate”

2. _____ your thinking!

Greek verb “repent” = “change your mind/perspective”

3. _____ the way you started!

Galatians 3 “You foolish Galatians...after beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to finish the race by human effort?”

Colossians 2 “...just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him...”

Revelation 2:6-7

Revelation 22:14

The Big Idea: Returning to our first love means refusing to allow our relationship with God to be reduced to mechanical ritualism. We love because He first loved us! When we serve only from a dry well of robotic religiosity, we are in danger of burn out. Jesus loves His Church too much to let us live that way unchecked!

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS AND PERSONAL REFLECTION

Personal Life:

1. Various parts of the letters to the seven churches have been used to promote legalistic scare-tactics and unbiblical motivations for serving the Lord faithfully. Have you ever had the Bible used this way by someone in your life? What were the affects it had on you? Discuss...

Ponderings:

2. The first thing Jesus says to the Ephesian Church is that He walks in their midst and holds their leaders in His right hand. How important is it to walk in this confident reassurance as a member of a local church like Valley and why? How important is it for the leaders of a church like Valley to walk in this reassurance and why? Discuss...
3. Every believer goes through seasons where energy is low, stress is high, and the passion in our relationship with God feels weak or non-existent. Have you ever felt like you've "forgotten your first love" as it was described in the weekend message? What is the difference between normal levels of stress and exhaustion verses real burn-out? Discuss...
4. Jesus affirms the Ephesian Church as one that works hard, teaches sound doctrine and perseveres. Many would say these are qualities of Valley Church. And yet, the Ephesians were becoming mechanistic and ritualistic as a result of forgetting their first love. How can a church like Valley protect herself from the same path?

Promptings

5. Over the next several months, Valley will be asking members to consider serving in some much-needed ways. How does the old adage, "Many hands make light work" apply to the functions of a local church?

In the world, people talk about the 10/90 rule (i.e. 10% do 90% of the work). How would the local church flourish if 100% shared 100% of the work, and how would this protect us all from exhaustion? Discuss...