



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: The Motive for Ministry

Date: January 11, 2026

Scripture Text: Revelation 2:1-7

Notes:

The Bible states that the way we show our love for Jesus is to obey Him ([John 14:23-24](#)). Today's sermon asks the question "Do you love Jesus?". We can do good works for Him without love, but we cannot love Him without good works. Our good works should be motivated by our love for Jesus. Our motivation to love Jesus should come from the love He has shown us ([John 3:16](#)). The issue of the church's love for Jesus is not a new problem. Today we will look at a letter written to the church at Ephesus back in the first century. As Jesus addresses their motives and a lack of love, this will be an opportunity to consider our love for Jesus.

I. Jesus Commends ([Rev. 2:2-3, 6](#))

Jesus commends the Ephesian church for their Duty (details are not given, but they were busy doing good works), Doctrine (discernment in identifying evil people, and false apostles), and Determination (endurance despite intense persecution).

- Duty: How do you (how could you) invest in the body?
 - What are examples of good works?
- Doctrine: How are you equipped to know what is true vs. what is false?
 - How would you rank your time in Bible reading, prayer, and Christian fellowship (all great equippers to know the truth!)
 - Why is it important for a church to maintain sound doctrine?
- Determination: How motivated are you to see your Christian brothers and sisters succeed?
 - What can you do to encourage another this week?
- If Jesus were to write you a letter, what would He say about your actions in these three areas?
- What are the risks for Christians when they compromise their beliefs because of cultural influences?
- How can you protect yourself from getting caught up in the priorities of the culture?

II. Jesus Confronts ([Rev. 2:4](#))

Jesus recognized the work they had done for Him, but He knew their heart and knew their work for Him was empty when it was not done in love. It doesn't mean He can't use loveless works, but those who perform them are not blessed. The motivation to serve Christ should be in response to His love for us and in turn our love for Him.



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- What did Jesus mean when He told the Ephesian Christians they have ‘left their first love’?
 - Who was their first love?
- Describe a situation in an interpersonal relationship (husband/wife, best friends, etc.) when the relationship becomes an obligation instead of motivated by love.
- Describe characteristics of a similar relationship with Jesus. What are signs a relationship with Jesus has grown into an obligation.
- Describe elements of the excitement a new Christian experiences.
- How is your relationship with Jesus? Is your love for Him growing each day or are you more motivated because of obligation?
- What are things that may cause us to leave our first love?

III. Jesus Corrects ([Rev. 2:5, 7](#))

Jesus told the Ephesian Christians they needed to get ‘back that loving feeling’! To do so, they needed to remember the walk they experienced when they were first saved. Then repent (turn back to Christ) from making activities and other items priority over their love for Christ. And finally, to repeat the process, as a result growing more in their love for Christ.

- What are elements of your early Christian walk that could encourage you in rekindling your love for Christ?
- How can the following items help you maintain, and even grow in, your love for Christ:
 - Daily Bible study
 - Regular worship
 - Christian fellowship
 - What else can help you grow in your love for Christ?
- How can we encourage other Christian brothers and sisters who have lost ‘that loving feeling’ to rekindle the Christ flame?

“As we reflect on this scripture, let's take a moment to cultivate our love for Christ, returning to that passionate devotion that once ignited our spirits. Let's commit to not just perform good works but to allow love to overflow in all we do. In recognizing our need for revival in our hearts, we step closer to experiencing the fullness of life God desires for us. Let us not only possess the truth but also embody and share it through the transformative love that comes from knowing Him.”