



Implosion Prevention—The Churches 21st Century Challenge
Remember Repent Repeat (Part 1)

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Objective Sentence: You can overcome all tendencies towards a self destructive lifestyle by embracing three principles that John gave to the Church at Ephesus.

Read Rev. 2:1-7 (NKJV) These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ²“I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. ⁴Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

Introduction: *Warren W. Wiersbe; Be Victorious:* First love can be restored if we follow the three instructions Christ gave: First, we must remember (literally keep remembering) what we have lost and cultivate a desire to regain that close communion once again. Then we must repent—change our minds—and confess our sins to the Lord. Third, we must repeat the first works, which suggests restoring the original fellowship that was broken by our sin and neglect. For the believer, this means prayer, Bible reading and meditation, obedient service, and worship.

I. Remember (*Rev.2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen ...*)

A. William Barclay; Revelation of John: In Ephesus something had gone wrong. The earnest toil was there; the gallant endurance was there; the unimpeachable orthodoxy was there; but the love was gone.

1. Works (*Matt. 16:18, 21-23* And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. ²¹ From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You. ²³ But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan!)

- a. *Pastor Dan:* One of our big problems is that we attempt to move God in our direction instead of allowing Him to move us in His direction for us.
- b. *Pastor Dan:* The Ephesians had been idolators, serving their various gods through works so it was easy for them to fall into the trap of attempting to please God through works and neglecting His need for love. Works and right living came easy to the Ephesians—they struggled with love and their sensitivity to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- c. *Francois Fenelon:* There is only way to love God, that is not to take one step without Him and to follow with a brave heart wherever He leads.
- d. *Ro. 8:5, 14-16* For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.
For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God
- e. *Ps. 91:1* He or she who dwells in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the almighty.
- f. *Ps. 37:4* Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.
- g. *Mark 14:6* Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy. While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard. She broke open the jar and poured the perfume over his head. Some of those at the table were indignant. "Why waste such expensive perfume?" they asked. But Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. Why criticize her for doing such a good thing to me?"

II. Repent (*Rev. 2:5* Remember therefore from where you have fallen and repent)

A. William Booth, Founder of Salvation Army: I consider that the chief dangers which confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell.

1. First Place (*Jn. 15:14-16* You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to

you. ¹⁶ *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.)*

- a. *Pastor Dan; Just A Thought (May 18):* When the crowd of thousands heard these words spoken by the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost; they were overwhelmed and broken, crying out in grief saying, “What should we do!” Peter exclaimed (**Acts 2:38**), “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ ...!” The Greek word the New Testament used here for the word “repent” is unique. It means to change one’s mind and purpose as a result of knowledge; to grieve with a godly sorrow that results in a change of purpose, a change of life, a change of heart. According to Peter, true repentance is a life transforming heart changing experience with God
- b. **Ps. 51:10-12** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit (and make me willing to obey you).
- c. *M. Scott Peck:* When we love something, it is of value to us, and when something is of value to us, we spend time with it, time enjoying it and taking care of it.
- d. *Oswald Chambers:* If what we call love doesn’t take us beyond ourselves, it is not really love.
- e. *In-Turpin-tation of Revelation:* The exhortation or correction of Jesus to the Ephesians was very simple. He tells them to remember from where they had fallen; to repent, and focus on the passion they possessed in the beginning of their walk with Christ. God desires first love and first place. The consequence for not receiving the instruction that Jesus gave them was very severe. He said that if they failed to listen then He would remove their candlestick out of its place. The word remove is the word used to describe the effects of an earthquake.
- f. **2 Tim. 3:1-5** You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. ² For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. ³ They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. ⁴ They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. ⁵ They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that.

III. Repeat (**Rev. 5:31** *Do your first works ...*).

A. *Brother Lawrence; Practicing His Presence: “How shall we keep our “first love” for the Lord? By constantly knowing Him better! Then how shall we know the Lord? We must often turn to Him, think of Him, behold Him.” Love is what connects us to God and what connects God to us.*

1. **Love God** (**Mark 12:30** *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment.*)
 - a. *Victor Frankl:* Love is the...highest goal to which [we]...can aspire.

- b. *Pastor Dan:* The reason the Bible says that we are to love God with all our heart is because He has a need to receive love from us and we are created in such a way that we have a need of love for Him.
- c. *Pastor Dan's In-Turpin-tation* (Mark 12:30) Since we are commanded to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength so if we withhold just a portion of ourselves from God we have violated the first and greatest commandment of all.
- d. *Charles Galloway:* The need to love and be loved is the simplest of all human wants. People need love like they need the sun and the rain. They perish without it. Humanities basic longing is to be the object of love and to be able to give love. No other need is quite so significant to the human nature.”
- e. **Jn 14:21 (NKJV)** They who have my commandments and keep them; they are the ones who love me; and they that love me shall be loved of my Father and I will love them and manifest myself to them.
- f. **Pro. 29:18** Without a revelation [vision] of God from God; the people cast off restraint. *Pastor Dan:* We are empowered to love the Lord through the revelation that He gives.
- g. *Pastor Dan:* The power to keep every command is provided by the one who gave us every command to keep.

Closing and Invitation: Watchman Nee: The Book of Revelation is the unveiling (the apokalupsis) of Jesus Christ. It draws aside the curtain to reveal Him. Its object is not primarily to enlighten us regarding coming events: the antichrist, the supposed revival of the Roman Empire, the rapture of the saints, the millennial kingdom or the final downfall of Satan. John's remedy for our ills is not a matter of so many seals and trumpets and bowls. It is not in fact designed to satisfy our intellectual curiosity at all, but to meet our spiritual need by revealing Christ Jesus Himself in fullness, that we may know Him. For Christ is the answer to all our questions. Get clear about Him, and we shall know all we need to know about “things to come”. He is the risen and victorious King of kings. All the events that follow are the outcome of His being that.