

LEAVING ONE'S FIRST LOVE (JESUS)

Revelation 2:4

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Leaving one's "first" love is not an unheard of thing nor is it so uncommon in today's time. Divorces happen all the time and over half of all marriages usually end up in divorce sooner or later. The text is something Jesus said about some Christians. It seems that appearance is not all there is to being a faithful, devoted, loyal, true Christian.

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S FIRST LOVE IS BEST KNOWN BY ACTUAL, PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

1. Anybody who is brought from great darkness into God's brilliant light, from being condemned into being given eternal life, joy and peace in God cannot but know what his/her FIRST love is and that FIRST love is the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Loving Jesus above all others and above all things makes one's religious activities delightful and one's heart is filled with joy all day long.

II. WHEN JESUS IS FIRST, IT IS NATURAL TO DO WHAT PLEASES GOD

1. Prayer is as natural to one who loves Jesus as living without prayer is to one who is unsaved.
2. When Jesus is one's first love, he/she is free from any sense of guilt or condemnation, he/she has great peace of mind.
3. When Jesus is first in one's life, nothing that God asks or requires is too hard or grievous.
4. When Jesus is first in one's life, the difficulties and labors of everyday life do not weaken one's interest in doing what God wants.

III. SIGNS OF ONE HAVING LEFT HIS/HER FIRST LOVE, JESUS ARE OBVIOUS

1. Doing things for the Lord become burdensome and tiring.
2. There develops a sense of "having" to do things for God, obedience is not automatic anymore.
3. One doesn't remember how things once were when Jesus was first in his/her life.

IV. WHEN JESUS IS NOT FIRST IN ONE'S LIFE HE/SHE FALLS INTO A SAD STATE

1. When Jesus is not first, one has begun to live in a state of hypocrisy - pretense, a form of "godliness" but without any power.
2. Living in a hypocritical state is dishonoring of God, professing to love God, but in actions and thoughts one does not follow through all in just words and show.
3. When Jesus is not first, one is living in a state of delusion, thinking that he/she is still accepted of God and that all is well.
- Prayer makes no impression anymore, nothing seems to touch the heart.
4. Living a hypocritical life is very bad on unbelievers and such a life only furthers the unbeliever's thoughts that "religion" has nothing to it.
5. Living a life without Jesus being first is very injurious to young/new converts for they see that "Christian" living a very different lifestyle than the one he/she professes to have.

6. When Jesus is not first in a person's life, it is very painful to the Lord Jesus Christ for that person was once very close to Him but has drifted away and has lost his/her love for Him.
 - What disappoints one so that he/she leaves Jesus?
 - What has Jesus done to cause one to lose interest in Him?
7. When a Christian "backslides," when Jesus is no longer one's first love, it is most dishonorable to the Lord Jesus.
8. Those who lose their first love are uneasy and unhappy in their hearts.
9. Those who lose their first love are not prepared to die for they have fallen into a state of impenitence.
10. Those who lose their first love are not prepared to live a life influencing others for the Lord Jesus.
11. Jesus said that the only way one can remedy his/her condition of leaving his/her first love is to
"...Repent and do your first works...."

CONCLUSION:

1. Sadly, many keep just enough of what they call "religion" to feel comfortable, therefore deluding themselves into false thinking.
2. Many sing the backslider's hymns and pray the backslider's prayer, just enough to feed their delusion that all is well between them and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Many pick out weaknesses in the lives of Christians with whom Jesus Christ is indeed still first, in order to make themselves feel better.
4. So, what is YOUR condition right now? Is Jesus Christ FIRST in your life in all things, in every area of your life? OR is there something, somebody that is FIRST and Jesus is somewhere behind that or them?
5. If Jesus is not first in YOUR life, then this scripture applies to YOU.