

## BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....” John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

## PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

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## MISSIONARY OF THE WEEK

Phil and Vala Long | Madagascar



### PRAISE

- The church that was started in 2023 with 45 people in June, had over 245 people at Christmas including an 10 teenagers who have accepted Christ.
- Praise God for people who are hungry to learn, we recently started a take-home Bible study course and we ran out of booklets.
- Praise God for a successful school supplies outreach which resulted in people coming to Church and accepting Christ.

### PRAY

- Pray for the the 1st round of baptisms, specifically for a location and for understanding.
- Pray for the Long’s visas. So far they have had short-term visas. Please pray that they are able to get a long-term visa.

# SE7EN

CHURCHES OF REVELATION

Handout: 08/11/24

Study Date: 08/18/24

## Ephesus: Growing In Love

Revelation 2:1-7 contains Jesus’ message to the church in Ephesus, the first of seven exhortations to various churches in the Roman Empire. Ephesus had some unique challenges for a Christ-follower in that it was home to the Emperor’s cult and the worship of the Greek goddess Artemis (Acts 19:23-40). Because of these influences, the Ephesian believers had developed great discernment when it came to false teachers and heresy. Christ commended them for this discernment, but He faulted them for having lost their “first love.”

The first love which characterized the Ephesians was the zeal and ardor with which they embraced their salvation as they realized they loved Christ because He first loved them (1 John 4:19) and that it was, in fact, His love for them that had made them “alive together with Christ.” So overwhelmed were they by the joy that came from understanding their former state—dead in trespasses and sins—and their new life in Christ, that they exhibited the fruit of that joy (Ephesians 2:1-5). Because of God’s great love for the Ephesians, they were “made alive in Christ” and that new life was exhibited in the passion of gratitude. That passion for the Savior spilled over onto one another and out to those in the culture they inhabited, corrupt as it was.

Jesus commends the Ephesians for their many good works and hard work. They tested teachers to see whether their professions were real; they endured hardship and persevered without growing weary. But they had lost their warmth and zeal for Christ, and when that happened, they began to “go through the motions” of good works, motivated not by the love of and for Christ, but by the works themselves. What was once a love relationship cooled into mere religion. Their passion for Him became little more than cold orthodoxy.

Surrounded by paganism and false teachers, the Ephesian church would have had ample opportunity to correct false doctrine and confront heretical teachers. If they did so for any reason other than love for Christ and a passion for His truth, however, they would have lost their way. Instead of pursuing Christ with the devotion they once showed, much like a bride who follows her groom “through the desert” (Jeremiah 2:2), the Ephesians were in danger of falling away from Christ completely. This is why He warns those who have “ears to hear” to prove the reality of their salvation by returning to Him and rekindling the love that had begun to cool. No doubt there were among the Ephesians those whose profession was false and whose hearing had become dulled. He warns the rest not to follow them, but to repent and return to Him with the passion they once had for Him.

Resource: Gotquestions.org

## KEY VERSE

Revelation 2:4 (NKJV)

*“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.”*

## WEEKLY READINGS

**Monday: Revelation 2:1,4; Deuteronomy 6:3; John 10:27**

### Listen To Jesus

1. Jesus commends the Ephesians in previous verses, but then states to them in Revelation 2:4 *“you have left your first love.”* What love did He mean?
2. In Deuteronomy 6:3 Jesus makes the statement; *“Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it.”* What is Jesus telling them in this verse?

**Tuesday: Revelation 2:2-3,6; Luke 10:38-42**

### Don't Prioritize Activity Over Intimacy

3. How are the Ephesians defined in Revelation 2:2-3 by Jesus? What were their traits and behaviors? What was “missing” from their walk?
4. What lesson do we learn from Luke 10:38-42? What can we learn from both Mary and Martha about how to “prioritize” our worship towards Jesus?

**Wednesday: Revelation 2:4; Matthew 22:37-38; Philippians 3:8**

### Monitor Your Love For Jesus

5. How as believers can we practice “monitoring” our love for Jesus?
6. What are we called to in Philippians 3:8? It states *“I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish.”* How should this Impact OUR walk?

**Thursday: Revelation 2:5; Acts 3:19; James 4:7-10; Ephesians 1:7**

### Take Steps To Come Back To Your First Love For Christ

7. Revelation 2:5 reminds the Ephesians to *“remember therefore from where you have fallen.”* What did this statement call the Ephesians to reflect on?
8. Both Acts 3:19 and James 4:8-10 are clear “commands” to *“repent”*, and *“purify our hearts.”* How do we follow these commands every single day?
9. If we *“submit to God”* and *“resist the devil”* what will happen?

**Friday: Revelation 2:7; 2 John 1:8**

### Obey Now And Enjoy Future Reward

10. What does Jesus promise *“to him who overcomes”* in Revelation 2:7? What do those who choose to “obey” Him have to look forward to?
11. Jesus promises His followers that they will *“eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”* What paradise is He referring to?
12. Jesus tells the Ephesians to *“Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for.”* What is this verse telling us to “look out” for?