



LIFEgroup Homework

Week of March 18, 2007

Increasing the Passion

(Turning up the heat with God)

This we learned about the Ephesian Church in Revelation 2 that had so much going for it, but it had one fatal flaw. They were hard working, devoted, faithful, doctrinally pure and energetic for the faith. But when Jesus put them under the microscope, it revealed a fatal flaw. It was a heart problem, a crisis of love.

Our God is pursuing us to enjoy a relationship based on devotion, not duty. We are learning that we can be doing all the right things, but if our motive, our passion for God is not in its rightful place then we fail the Divine test. God is seeking our hearts (devotion) more than our hands (duty). This week in your *LIFEgroup*, we'll focus our attention on cultivating a love based relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Getting Started

Describe the first time you fell in love. It could have been with a puppy, gold fish, sport, activity, or person, but something to which you were wholeheartedly devoted.

What was your favorite insight, principle, scripture or life lesson from this week's message – and why? Did anything surprise you?

Study:

Ephesus was one of seven churches that Jesus was evaluating and confronting in Revelation. Each church had a unique message but all of the churches were to learn from what was being spoken. That's why Jesus said, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (Rev 2:7)

Letter from God

Write a letter from God to yourself using the general outline God used for the seven churches.

A greeting from God using a special name

A praise from God to you for something you're doing well.

A matter that needs to be changed (condemnation).

God's calling for repentance.

A promise from God, if you follow through on the change.

A warning - a threat if you don't repent.

A statement from God as a reminder to listen.

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Read Isaiah 29:13-15

What does this passage teach us about the value of going through the motions spiritually, without engaging the heart?

What would motivate someone to give lip service to God, when they know their heart isn't in it? What does it look like?

Read Acts 17:24-31

What does God need from us? What causes us to think that we are somehow helping God out by replacing devotion with lifeless duty?

Verse 27 What did God do in order to motivate us to seek Him? How far is God from those who seek Him?

Verse 30 Why is "pleading ignorance" unacceptable with God? Who is expected to repent?

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Psalm 139:23-24

Are you willing to ask the Lord to turn on the searchlight?

Revelation 2:5

The powerful formula for restoring the first love that was lost is to...

1. **Remember** – was there a time when you were more in love with God?
2. **Repent** – are you willing to turn from anything that is causing your love for God to weaken?
3. **Do** the things you did at first. Return to those things that “fanned into flame” your passion for God. Ask God to bring back to you memory those things that need to be re-established in your life.

Digging Deeper

1. When is your best time to cultivate a deeper, more intimate relationship with God? When are you most alert and receptive?
2. You cannot increase your passion for God without increasing your relationship with Him. What changes will you make in your schedule to cultivate a greater passion for God?