



Part 4: I Have A Secret
Pastor Grant Fishbook
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The “Before” Picture of the Church at Ephesus

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. – *Ephesians 1:15-16*

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. – *Ephesians 2:1-2*

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. – *Ephesians 2:13*

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household. – *Ephesians 2:19*

And in Him, you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit. *Ephesians 2:22*

For once you were darkness, but now, you are light in the Lord. – *Ephesians 5:8*

**Be very careful then, how you live – not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.
– *Ephesians 5:15-16***

The “After” Picture of the Church at Ephesus

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. – *Revelation 2:4-5*

Q: How do I know if I have forsaken my first love?

A: 1 John 2:3-6 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God’s love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus Did.

Spiritual Gut Check:

- Do you love to worship God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength? (*Deuteronomy 6:5 and John 4:24*)
- Do you love to listen to God by reading His Word for wisdom, knowledge, comfort and guidance? (*James 1:22*)
- Do you love to talk to God about the needs of others, your dreams and your trials? (*Ephesians 6:18*)

(Continues on back)

- Do you love to share your faith in Jesus with other people?
(*Matthew 28:19-20*)
- Do you love to steward the financial trust that God has given you by honoring Him with the first portion of what you earn out of gratitude and thanksgiving? (*Malachi 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 8:7*)
- Do you love to use your spiritual gifts and abilities to bless your spiritual family and to bring other people into a saving relationship with Jesus? (*1 Corinthians 12*)
- Do you love to be in community with other believers?
(*1 Peter 3:8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11*)
- Do you love to meet the real needs of those who are poor, sick, persecuted and in genuine crisis? (*Matthew 10:8 and 25:40*)

If I have forsaken my first love, what do I do?

1. Remember... the height from which you have fallen
2. Repent... and ask God for forgiveness
3. Return... do the things you did at first

Next Steps

Find someone who cares about you and transparently share your true spiritual condition. Ask them to pray for you and to hold you accountable for the changes that you have committed to this weekend.

On Your Way Home

Find someone who cares about you and transparently share your true spiritual condition. Ask them to pray for you and to hold you accountable for the changes that you have committed to this weekend.

Small Group Discussion Questions



- 1) Do you remember your first car? How about your first kiss? How about your first job? Pick a significant "first" and share! What you share will tell us a lot about you!
- 2) Have you ever remodeled something? What lessons did you learn about "before and after" that you would like to pass on?
- 3) What do you think happened to the church in Ephesus that allowed them to get so far off track? Do you see the same thing happening in the church today? What kinds of things draw your attention away from your relationship with Jesus?
- 4) Pull out a Bible and read the scriptures listed under each of the Gut Check listings. The Bible is pretty clear about God's expectations. Which of the commandments is the hardest for you? What you are going to do about it?
- 5) Repentance is hard. How do you repent when you are spiritually off track?
- 6) How can we pray for you tonight?