**Christ and the Churches**  
**PART I**  
Revelation 2:1-7

**MAIN THOUGHT** Jesus Christ accurately inspects (2:23) his churches with “x-ray” vision – looking not on the externals but on the internals.

**EPHESUS – A CARELESS CHURCH (1-7).**

**APPRAISER** (1). Jesus Christ is the ORIGINATOR (Matt. 16:18), CORNERSTONE (Eph. 2:20), SUSTAINER (Eph. 2:21), CHIEF SHEPHERD, and REWARDER (1 Pet. 5:4) of the churches and its individuals.

**APPROVAL (2-3, 6).**
1. A Church of DEEDS (Eph. 2:10; Rev. 14:13),
2. A Church of HARD WORK (Prov. 14:23; John 4:38; Acts 20:35),
3. A Church of PERSEVERANCE (Jam. 5:11) who had not grown WEARY (Gal. 6:9),
4. A Church of DISCERNMENT (1 John 4:1) who separated themselves from the doctrine (2 Cor. 11:4; 2 John 7-11) and deeds (6; 3:15) of false teachers.

**ACCUSATION (4).**
- This practically perfect church had an internal problem – lack of proper motivation. What we do for Jesus is important but so is why we do it (1 Thess. 1:3). Labor is no substitute for love.
- They had lost their FIRST LOVE as new believers. They started to take each other for granted through neglect and life had become routine.

> What is “first love”? It is the devotion to Christ that so often characterizes the new believer: fervent, personal, uninhibited, excited, and openly displayed. It is the ‘honeymoon love’ of the husband and wife (Jer. 2:1-2).” — Warren Wiersbe

**ADMONITION (5, 7).** The cure for this problem in church and in marriage is fourfold:
1. **REMEMBER** – keep on remembering your first love for one another.

> Down in the valley, look up to the cliff where pure love is and whence thou hast fallen down. — A.T. Robertson

2. **REPEND** – change your thinking and confess to God (1 Jn. 1:9) and one another (Jam. 5:16).
3. **REPEAT** – in word and action, the things you did at first (literally FIRST WORKS). This is the recipe to falling back “IN LOVE” again. It is possible.
4. **OVERCOME** – the key word (GK=nike – victory, overcome) of John (John 16:33; 1 John 2:12-14; 4:4; 5:4; 10x in Revelation). PARADISE, the restored garden (EDEN) of God, will be yours (Luke 23:43) through the tree of life (22:14).