**Read Revelation 2:1-3.**

**First discussion:** What does Jesus point out about the church of Ephesus? What are they doing well? What were they intolerant of? How does He say they handled their intolerance? Who were these wicked people? How does this guide us when we see this in our church?

**Second discussion:** We saw how Jesus was pointing out that this church was able to identify and handle wicked people inside the church. How are we to deal with the wicked people outside the church? (Read 1 Corinthians 5:12-13a).

What do you expect from people who are captive to the lies of the devil? If it is not our business to judge, then what is our role to the outside world? Give some examples of how you build bridges between you as a Christian and those that are not? How important is that now, more than ever?

**Third Discussion:** In verses 2b & 3 what is the biggest issue for this church? Read 2 Cor:11:13 to help. They were challenged to be able to discern the false apostles coming into the church. What does the verse in 2 Corinthians infer about these people? We don’t really call anyone an apostle today. Does that mean that there are no people with beliefs like these false apostles exist today? That they do not infiltrate churches to spread falsehoods about the Gospel message and who Jesus really is? Should we stand on guard like this church in Ephesus did?

And if the answer is yes then discuss what we as the church should do.

**Notes:**

**Read Revelation 2:4-5.**

**Discussion:** What was the rebuke Jesus had for the church at Ephesus? Why was this so important? Think back just a few verses and remember all the good things Jesus said about this church. Why is it so serious that Jesus threatened to remove their lampstand unless they repented.

Discuss what Jesus is saying about this church. Do you see things like this going on in churches today? How does this show that a church can be busy and active but still be missing something vital? Have you ever felt like this described you at one point in your walk? If so, what did you do to turn it around? Read 1 Cor 13:1-3 to help visualize what Jesus is saying about this church.

**Second discussion:** What three steps does Jesus give to the church of Ephesus to regain their first love? What does it mean for a church's "lampstand" to be removed?

**Practical Application:** It's easy to confuse spiritual activity with a deep relationship with God. Are you "doing things for Jesus" but neglecting your personal time and fellowship with Him?

**Personal Application:** Can you recall the excitement and devotion you had when you first came to Christ? How can we prevent our relationship with God from becoming a routine or a series of tasks rather than a loving pursuit? Have you fallen in your love for the Lord? What are some "first works" you need to return to?

**Notes:**

**Read Revelation 2:6-7. We do not know much about the Niclolations but Pastor Chuck laid out a good definition for us that the word Nicolaitans comes from two Greek words: *nikos* (conquer) and *laos* (laity, or common people), meaning the establishment of a spiritual hierarchy. "**. **Therefore, the name literally means "one who conquers the people**

**Discussion:** Can you think of why Jesus would hate this? What was the outcome of the cross? Meaning what did we gain that would be in direct opposition to the understanding Pastor Chuck gave us?

**Practical Application:** Are there any systems or people in your life that you rely on to mediate your relationship with God? How does having direct access to Him look in your life? What blessings come from this direct access?

**Notes:**

**Read Revelation 2:8-11. Jesus tells the Smyrnan church that while they are poor in material things, they are "rich."**

**Discuss** what Jesus means by this comment. What does this tell us about what God values? What does He consider true riches?

**Practical Application:** Many people will measure their blessings by material possessions. How does the Smyrnan church's experience challenge our modern view of wealth and success? What are some non-material things God has blessed you with?

**Notes:**