Christ's View of Local Churches-Lesson #1

Week of September 6th

Over the next 7 weeks, we are going to look at the 7 churches that Jesus addresses in Revelation 2 & 3. We often look at church through our "American culture" filter. I would like to encourage us to think differently and ask some probing questions as we study these passages together.

The Message to the Church in Ephesus

2 "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Ephesus. This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, the one who walks among the seven gold lampstands:

2 "I know all the things you do. I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance. I know you don't tolerate evil people. You have examined the claims of those who say they are apostles but are not. You have discovered they are liars. **3** You have patiently suffered for me without quitting.

4 "But I have this complaint against you. You don't love me or each other as you did at first! **5** Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don't repent, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches. **6** But this is in your favor: You hate the evil deeds of the Nicolaitans, just as I do.

7 "Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God.

1. What did Jesus find right with the church of Ephesus?

2. Jesus found fault with this church in that they no longer loved the way they did at first. How can a group of Christians do all the great works they were doing and not have the love they should? What does this tell us about the importance of love in our lives?

3. The answer to getting the love back is repentance. Are we asking God to forgive and soften our hearts and grow our love for Him and our fellow man?

4. Do we hate the evil deeds done by those around us or do we hate *them*?

5. Do you look forward to eating fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God? We should because that will be a glorious day!!