

THE FIRST LOVE



*Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee,
because thou hast left thy first love.*
—Revelation 2:4

In the verses preceding Revelation 2:4, eight signs are mentioned that show the zeal and activity of the church at Ephesus. But there was one bad sign, and the Lord said, "*I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*" (v. 5). And what was this sign? "*Thou hast left thy first love.*"

We find the same lack in the church of the present day. There is zeal for the truth, there is continuous and persevering labor, but what the Lord values most is still missing: the tender, fervent love for Himself.

This is a thought of great significance. A church, or even an individual Christian, may be an example in every good work, and yet the tender love for the Lord Jesus in the inner chamber is missing. There is no personal, daily fellowship with Christ, and all the manifold activities with which people satisfy themselves are nothing in the eyes of the Master Himself.

Dear brother or sister in Christ, this book speaks of the fellowship of love that we can have with Christ in the inner chamber. Everything depends on this. Christ came from heaven to love us with the love with which the Father loved Him. (See John 17:26.) He suffered and died to win our hearts for this love. His love can be satisfied with nothing less than a deep, personal love on our part.

Christ considers this of the highest importance. Let us have the same thought. Many ministers, missionaries, and Christian workers confess with shame that, in spite of all their zeal in the Lord's work, their prayer lives are defective because they have left their first love. I pray that you will write this down on a piece of paper and remember it continually: the love of Jesus must be all—in the inner chamber, in all our work, and in our daily lives.