

THE ONE WHO OVERCOMES:

Back to First, Revelation 2:1-7

September 13, 2026

Message Summary.

Jesus sees His church, commends hard work, perseverance, and commitment to truth, and He also warns that we can do the right things while our hearts drift from Him. Jesus calls us back to first love and first loyalty: remember where we started, repent of what has taken His place, and repeat the things we did at first.

Key Scripture Summaries.

Revelation 2:1-3 | Jesus walks among His churches, knows their work, and commends perseverance, discernment, and faithfulness.

Revelation 2:4-5 | Jesus confronts Ephesus for forsaking its first love and calls the church to remember, repent, and do the things it did at first.

Revelation 2:7 | Jesus calls His church to listen to the Spirit and promises life with God to the one who overcomes.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 | Love is active, patient, truthful, sacrificial, and persevering.

John 14:15 | Love for Jesus is expressed through obedience.

Start Talking.

1. What is something you were unusually excited or committed to at first?
2. What is the difference between doing something from love vs. on autopilot?
3. When life gets busy, what relationships or priorities are easiest to take for granted?

Start Thinking.

- What does Jesus commend in the church at Ephesus? What does that tell you about what matters to Him?
- Why is Jesus's statement, "*You have forsaken the love you had at first,*" so serious when this church was doing so many other things right?
- What is the difference between loving people graciously vs. tolerating teaching or practices that oppose Jesus?
- The message said, "You can be right about Jesus and still lose your love for Jesus." What might that look like?

- How do 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and John 14:15 keep us from reducing love for Jesus to a feeling?
- What do the three words REMEMBER, REPENT, REPEAT teach us about *the way back* when our hearts drift?

Start Sharing.

1. Which part of this week's message challenged or encouraged you the most?
2. Where are you most tempted to go through the motions spiritually (doing things for Jesus while losing sight of Jesus)?
3. Think of a season when Jesus had first place in your life. What were you doing that helped keep your heart close to Him?
4. Ask the question: "*Jesus, what has moved into Your place?*" What competes most strongly for your first and best right now?
5. Is there something you know Jesus is asking you to obey, forgive, or surrender? What would repentance look like in action?
6. Who could help sharpen your faith and keep you from drifting into autopilot?

Start Praying.

Jesus, You see us completely. Thank You for noticing our faithfulness, and for loving us enough to confront what is missing. Show us anything that has moved into Your place. Give us humility to repent, courage to obey, and hearts that love You in action and truth. Help us remember Your grace, return to what matters, and give You our first and best. Amen.

Start Doing.

- REMEMBER: Write down what changed when Jesus became first in your life, and remember where He is leading you.
- REPENT: Ask, "Jesus, what has moved into Your place?" Name it and turn back to Him.
- REPEAT: Choose a "first thing" to do again (open Scripture, talk to God, worship, serve, forgive, give, or tell someone about Jesus).

