

GOING BACK TO OUR first love

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FORSAKING OUR FIRST LOVE | Revelation 2:1-7

The problem of entropy. Without intentional effort, all things naturally move from order to disorder and decay.

And what is true in the natural is true in the Spirit. “Spiritual entropy” is when we stop being intentional about our relationship with God. A close relationship with Him doesn’t just maintain itself. When we stop making room for His presence, His Word, prayer, worship, etc., other things slowly creep in and take His place. Jesus told the church at Ephesus, “You have intentionally forsaken your first love.” We don’t lose our first love like we lose our car keys. We begin trading that closeness with God (time spent with Him) for other things that promise happiness, success, comfort, or temporary pleasure. If we’re not intentional about staying close to God, we will naturally begin to drift.



*Moses warned Israel about this very danger in Deuteronomy 8.
His warning wasn't about what would happen if life became difficult, but about
what could happen when life became good.*

Moses' warning in Deuteronomy 8

God had carried them through the wilderness, humbled them, tested them, fed them with manna, and taught them that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.” But Moses knew that when they entered the Promised Land and started building their homes, their possessions multiplied, and life became comfortable, that they would begin to think that they had gained wealth and power in their strength.

- **The warning:** Don’t allow the blessings of God to cause you to forget the God who blessed you.

Israel's three-stage decline in Judges 2–3

The book of Judges is a clear example of spiritual “entropy.” Israel's decline didn't happen overnight, it happened slowly, step by step...

1. They forgot (neglected) God.

- **Judges 2:10** *Another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. (The previous generation neglected to teach and pass on their relationship with the LORD)*
- **Judges 3:7** *The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God...*

2. They compromised and became like the cultures around them.

- **Judges 2:12** *They followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them...*
- **Judges 3:5–6** *The children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites... And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods.*

3. They became enslaved (they were in bondage) by what they embraced.

- In **Judges 2:14–15** Israel is repeatedly delivered into the hands of their enemies.
- **Judges 3:7–8** *...they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs.*

That is why Jesus' words to the people in Ephesus are so powerful. But with the rebuke He also showed them how to return. "**Remember** from where you have fallen; **repent** and **return** to your first works." The answer to "spiritual entropy" is intentional return. Go back to the place where Jesus wasn't simply part of your life, He was your first love.

Here's how...

1. **Remember** | Remembering is **recognizing what has changed**.

- What was different then? What did I do when my heart was tender toward God? How did I pray? How hungry was I for His Word?
- Psalm 42:4 *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me...*

2. **Repent** | Repentance is more than feeling bad about drifting... it means **changing direction**! (The Greek word, metanoia means a change of mind that results in a change of direction)

- Can you identify what has taken God's place as most important? It may not even be something sinful. It just began to compete for affection and time. Now ask His forgiveness and ask Him to fill you with His Spirit again. (Psalm 51:10-12; 1 John 1:9)
- James 4:8 *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.*

3. Return | Don't wait until you feel close to God again. **Do what once brought you into deeper fellowship with God.**

- Return to prayer, not just asking God for things, but spending time with Him.
- Return to the Word, not just gathering Biblical information, but allowing God to speak personally to you.
- Return to worship, not just singing the words, but letting the words draw you into His presence.
- Return to obedience, if God has already spoken about something, act on it.
- Return to gratitude, remember what God has done and give Him the glory that everything you have came from Him!
- Jeremiah 29:13 *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

Removing the distractions...

Sometimes returning requires removing the very thing or things that created the drift. Ask yourself, “What do I need less of so I can have more room for God?” Maybe it's “screen time,” busyness, entertainment, unnecessary commitments, or the constant noise.

Hebrews 12:1-2 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*

My prayer

Father, forgive me for allowing other things to take the place in my heart that belongs to You. Wake me up and restore my first love for You. Show me where and how I've drifted. I repent of what has taken Your place, and I return wholeheartedly to You.

Remove anything that competes for my attention and affection and give me a fresh hunger for Your presence and for Your Word. Jesus, be more than just a part of my life... be the very center of my life! Be my life!! And fill me again with Your Holy Spirit.
