

REVELATION 2: 1-11

In this health check of Ephesus, Jesus starts by affirming, yet he rebukes because they have forsaken the love they had at first. That word 'forsaken' is a powerful word in this passage. It's seen in Matthew 27:45: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It means to abandon, to leave someone, especially when they need you. They have forsaken Jesus' love. The deeds and hard work were done for Jesus, but was then held as *proof* they have done what they are told. Jesus wants them to re-experience just being in his love, and allow the deeds to come from love, rather than the other way around.

What about Smyrna? First, we learn to persevere in the face of difficulties. The church in Smyrna faced persecution and poverty, but remained faithful. Second, we learn to focus on spiritual rather than material wealth. The church in Smyrna was rich in faith and in their relationship with Christ. Finally, we can learn to trust in God's promises. Jesus promises the crown of life to those who remain faithful. We too can trust in God's promises, knowing He is faithful and true to His word.



01 — Beginning the letter

This letter was a circular letter to the seven churches in Asia. How do you think they would feel, knowing everyone else was going to hear Jesus' opinion of them?



02 — Acts of love and acts for love

Have we ever fallen into the trap of performative Christianity? What does true love for Jesus look like when acted out?



03 — Perseverance

Persevering is easy when things are going well - but can feel impossible when things get different. Share with the group (if you're comfortable) a time when you had to persevere - or couldn't.



04 — Practising what (Andy and Jake) preaches

This health check should make us a little uncomfortable - but God has promises for those who win the 'victor's crown'. What challenged you most this week about our discussion?

