

Saturday 4th May



The Heart of Faith

*I see what you've done, your hard, hard work, your refusal to quit.
I know you can't stomach evil, that you weed out apostolic pretenders.
I know your persistence, your courage in my cause...
But you walked away from your first love—why?
What's going on with you, anyway?
Do you have any idea how far you've fallen?*

Revelation 2: 2–5 (The Message)

I have always loved the imagery in the book of Revelation. The letters to the seven churches in the opening chapters of Revelation are always an interesting read, especially when we use them to reflect on ourselves and our own churches. The one quoted above is part of a letter to the church in Ephesus.

The church works hard, tirelessly even, for the kingdom. They hold on to the truth of the gospel and are not swayed. However, they have abandoned their first love; they work hard in their business of being church, but they no longer do it for love of God.

How many of us, or our churches, are at times guilty of this? We work tirelessly, but occasionally we do it because we have always done it, or because we should do it, not because of or out of our deep love for God? We do that coffee morning, that spring fayre, that meeting, but we no longer have that deep love for God; we have stopped listening to God's voice. How many of our churches are full of activity but, if we look closely, how few are about worship, prayer or learning about God? The letter to the church in Ephesus is a wake-up call to us to remember why we do what we do, to remember our first love – our God.

One hymn that reminds me of the need to keep God at the heart of all we do is 'Jesus be the centre' (*Singing the Faith* 447) by Michael Frye, or the modern song, 'Beyond these walls of worship' (*Singing the Faith* 547) by Ian Worsfold and Paul Wood, which reminds us to keep God in everything we do.

God in all things
We thank you for our church and all that we do together
Give us insight into the work that we do for you
Help us to keep a balance between doing and being
Guide us to find time just to be with you
To keep you in the centre, in our hearts
God in all things, help us to be in you as you are in us
Amen

You can download this Prayer for the Week at www.mwib.org.uk
Prayers for May 2019 by Revd Claire Rawlinson
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