

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2025**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
EPHESIANS**

Message Sixteen

**Loving the Lord Jesus Christ in Incorruptibility
So That We May Be Constituted with Christ to Become the Bride of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:24; Rev. 2:4-5; Col. 1:18b; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Mark 12:30; Psa. 73:25-26

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

2 Cor. 5:14-15—For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

Mark 12:30—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength.”

Psa. 73:25-26—Whom do I have in heaven *but You?* And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth. ²⁶My flesh and my heart fail, *But* God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.

I. For the church life we need to love the Lord in incorruptibility so that we may be constituted with Christ to be the bride of Christ—Eph. 6:24; 5:25-27:

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

Eph. 5:25-27—Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her ²⁶That He might sanctify her, cleansing *her* by the washing of the water in the word, ²⁷That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

A. According to the usage of *incorruptible* in the writings of Paul, this word refers mainly to God and the things of God; everything natural is corruptible, but God, the divine life, and all things that are in resurrection are incorruptible—1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:42, 52-54.

1 Tim. 1:17—Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

2 Tim. 1:10—But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

1 Cor. 15:42—So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;

1 Cor. 15:52-54—In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.
⁵³For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.
⁵⁴And when this corruptible will put on incorruption and this mortal will put on immortality, then the word which is written will come to pass, “Death has been swallowed up unto victory.”

- B. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the new creation, not in the old creation, so that we may enjoy Him as grace—Eph. 2:15; 6:24; 2 Cor. 5:17.

Eph. 2:15—Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, *so* making peace,

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

2 Cor. 5:17—So then if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

- C. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the regenerated and renewed spirit indwelt by the Holy Spirit—John 3:6; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 1:7.

John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

1 Cor. 6:17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

2 Tim. 1:7—For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

- D. To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him according to all the incorruptible things revealed in Ephesians:

1. Ephesians speaks concerning the dispensing of the Triune God to produce the church (1:3-23; 3:16-21), of what Christ is and has done for the church (1:7; 2:13-18; 5:25-27, 29), and about the church being the Body of Christ, being the bride of Christ, and being one with Christ in the heavenlies (1:22-23; 5:23, 25-27; 2:6).

Eph. 1:3-23—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, ⁴Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love, ⁵Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved; ⁷In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace, ⁸Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him; ¹¹In whom also we were

designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹²That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ, ¹³In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, ¹⁴Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory. ¹⁵Therefore I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you and your love to all the saints, ¹⁶Do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention *of you* in my prayers, ¹⁷That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, ¹⁸The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, ²⁰Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, ²¹Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; ²²And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, ²³Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:16-21—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are ¹⁹And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. ²⁰But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, ²¹To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 1:7—In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,

Eph. 2:13-18—But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have become near in the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity, ¹⁵Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, *so* making peace, ¹⁶And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. ¹⁷And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near, ¹⁸For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.

Eph. 5:25-27—Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her ²⁶That He might sanctify her, cleansing *her* by the washing of the water in the word, ²⁷That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Eph. 5:29—For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,

Eph. 1:22-23—And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, ²³Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 5:23—For a husband is head of the wife as also Christ is Head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the Body.

Eph. 5:25-27—Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her ²⁶That He might sanctify her, cleansing *her* by the washing of the water in the word, ²⁷That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Eph. 2:6—And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

2. All these matters are incorruptible, and if we love the Lord Jesus in all these things, our love toward Him will be incorruptible (6:24); such a love is not a natural love; it is a love in resurrection, the love that is God Himself in the nature of His divine essence (1 John 4:8, 16).

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

1 John 4:8—He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

1 John 4:16—And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.

- E. The church in Ephesus left the Lord as her first love, meaning that she did not give Him the first place in all things (Rev. 2:4-5; Col. 1:18b; Psa. 27:4; Josh. 9:14; 2 Chron. 20:12-13); such a failure became the main reason for the failure of the church throughout the ages (Rev. 2:1-7; Matt. 24:12; Mark 12:30-31; cf. Dan. 7:25):
Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love.
⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

Psa. 27:4—One thing I have asked from Jehovah; That do I seek: To dwell in the house of Jehovah All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of Jehovah, And to inquire in His temple.

Josh. 9:14—And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

2 Chron. 20:12-13—O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no strength before this great multitude that is coming against us, and we do not know what to do; but our eyes are upon You. ¹³And all Judah stood before Jehovah with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

Rev. 2:1-7—To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ²I know your works and your labor and your endurance and that you cannot bear evil men; and you have tried those who call themselves apostles and are not, and have found them to be false; ³And you have endurance and have borne *all things* because of My name and have not grown weary. ⁴But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent. ⁶But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Matt. 24:12—And because lawlessness will be multiplied, the love of the many will grow cold.

Mark 12:30-31—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength.” ³¹The second is this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.

cf. Dan. 7:25—And he will speak things against the Most High and wear out the saints of the Most High; and his intention will be to change the times and the law; and they will be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.

1. The genuine ministry of the New Testament always stirs us up to love the Lord Jesus with the first love, strengthening us in the simplicity of enjoying Christ as our life supply—2 Cor. 11:2-3; 3:3-6.

2 Cor. 11:2-3—For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present *you as* a pure virgin to Christ. ³But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

2 Cor. 3:3-6—Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh. ⁴And such confidence we have through Christ toward God, ⁵Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2. The churches in Asia, including the church in Ephesus, turned away from the apostle Paul’s betrothing ministry (Eph. 6:24; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 11:2-3); approximately twenty-six years later, when the apostle John wrote the epistle to the church in Ephesus, they had left their first love and lost the genuine enjoyment of Christ, resulting in the loss of the testimony of the Lord (Rev. 2:4-5, 7).

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

2 Tim. 1:15—This you know, that all who are in Asia turned away from me, of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

2 Cor. 11:2-3—For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present *you as* a pure virgin to Christ. ³But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

II. To love the Lord Jesus in incorruptibility is to love Him with the first love, the best love, which is to give the Lord the preeminence, the first place, in all things, being constrained by His love to regard and take Him as everything in our life—v. 4; Col. 1:18b; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Mark 12:30; Psa. 73:25-26; 80:17-19:

Rev. 2:4—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love.

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

2 Cor. 5:14-15—For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

Mark 12:30—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength.”

Psa. 73:25-26—Whom do I have in heaven *but You*? And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth. ²⁶My flesh and my heart fail, *But* God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.

Psa. 80:17-19—Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself; ¹⁸Then we will not turn back from You. Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. ¹⁹O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

A. The beginning of love in everyone toward the Lord is a vision of His person; nothing but love can keep us in a proper relationship with the Lord—Phil. 3:8; Matt. 26:6-13; Eph. 3:16-19; 6:24; Rev. 2:4-5; cf. 3:20.

Phil. 3:8—But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count *them* as refuse that I may gain Christ

Matt. 26:6-13—Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷A woman came to Him, having an alabaster flask of ointment of great value, and she poured *it* on His head as He reclined *at table*. ⁸But when the disciples saw *it*, they were indignant, saying, Why this waste? ⁹For this could have been sold for much and given to the poor. ¹⁰But Jesus, knowing *it*, said to them, Why do you trouble the woman? She has done a noble deed to Me. ¹¹For the poor you have with you always, but you do not always

have Me. ¹²For in pouring out this ointment on My body, she has done *it* for My burial. ¹³Truly I say to you, Wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be told as a memorial of her.

Eph. 3:16-19—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are ¹⁹And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

cf. Rev. 3:20—Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.

- B. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to repent and do the first works; the first works are works that issue from the first love—2:5; 1 Thes. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:5:

Rev. 2:5—Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

2 Cor. 4:5—For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

1. In Song of Songs the Lord's banner over us is love, which means that love is our motto and that everything we do is based on our love for the Lord; the seeker in Song of Songs is also "sick with love," meaning that she is joyous in the Lord as love, to the point of exhaustion—2:4-5.

S. S. 2:4-5—He brought me into the banqueting house, And his banner over me was love. ⁵Sustain me with raisin cakes, Refresh me with apples, For I am sick with love.

2. God's love in Christ is a banner spreading over us, displaying, exhibiting, that we who are loved by God are always more than conquerors—Rom. 8:31-39.

Rom. 8:31-39—What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who *can be* against us? ³²Indeed, He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things? ³³Who shall bring a charge against God's chosen ones? *It is* God who justifies. ³⁴Who is he who condemns? *It is* Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

³⁶As it is written, "For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; we have been

accounted as sheep for slaughter.” ³⁷But in all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor things present nor things to come nor powers ³⁹Nor height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. We have a love that conquers everything if we live in His love.
 4. If we have left our first love toward the Lord and do not repent and do the first works, we will lose the testimony of the Lord, and the lampstand will be removed from us.
- C. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to have a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual relationship with the Lord—S. S. 1:1-4.

S. S. 1:1-4—The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s. ²Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine. ³Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; Your name is like ointment poured forth; Therefore the virgins love you. ⁴Draw me; we will run after you— The king has brought me into his chambers—We will be glad and rejoice in you; We will extol your love more than wine. Rightly do they love you.

- D. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to live a day-by-day life of morning revival so that we may satisfy Christ by being His young men like the dew from the womb of the dawn (Psa. 110:3), so that we may have the tongue of an instructed one to know how to sustain the weary with a word (Isa. 50:4-5), and so that we may fellowship with God, seeking God’s will and pleasure for His gospel service (Mark 1:35).

Psa. 110:3—Your people will offer themselves willingly In the day of Your warfare, In the splendor of *their* consecration. Your young men will be to You Like the dew from the womb of the dawn.

Isa. 50:4-5—The Lord Jehovah has given me The tongue of the instructed, That I should know how to sustain the weary with a word. He awakens *me* morning by morning; He awakens my ear To hear as an instructed one. ⁵The Lord Jehovah has opened my ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn back.

Mark 1:35—And rising very early in the morning, *while it was still* night, He went out and went away to a deserted place, and there He prayed.

- E. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to live a day-by-day life of consecration, becoming today’s Nazarites, who are fully separated unto God and saturated with God in order to bless the children of God by dispensing God in His Divine Trinity into them—Psa. 110:3; Num. 6:1-9, 22-27.

Psa. 110:3—Your people will offer themselves willingly In the day of Your warfare, In the splendor of *their* consecration. Your young men will be to You Like the dew from the womb of the dawn.

Num. 6:1-9—Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ²Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, When a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazarite, to separate himself to Jehovah, ³He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink; he shall drink no vinegar of wine or vinegar of strong drink, nor shall he drink any juice of

grapes, nor eat fresh or dried grapes. ⁴All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grape vine, from the seeds even to the skin. ⁵All the days of his vow of separation no razor shall pass over his head. He shall be holy until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to Jehovah; he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long. ⁶All the days that he separates himself to Jehovah he shall not come near a dead person. ⁷He shall not make himself unclean for his father or for his mother, for his brother or for his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is upon his head. ⁸All the days of his separation he is holy to Jehovah. ⁹And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him so that he defiles the head of his separation, then he shall shave his head on the day he becomes clean; on the seventh day shall he shave it.

Num. 6:22-27—Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ²³Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the children of Israel; you shall say to them, ²⁴Jehovah bless you and keep you; ²⁵Jehovah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶Jehovah lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. ²⁷So shall they put My name upon the children of Israel, that I Myself may bless them.

- F. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to live a life of prayer—1 Sam. 12:23; Matt. 6:6; 14:22-23; Dan. 6:10; 2:17-18; 1 Tim. 2:1; 2 Tim. 1:3; 1 Thes. 5:17.

1 Sam. 12:23—Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I would sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for you, but I will instruct you in the good and right way.

Matt. 6:6—But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Matt. 14:22-23—And immediately He compelled the disciples to step into the boat and to go before Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. ²³And after He sent the crowds away, He went up to the mountain privately to pray. And when night fell, He was there alone.

Dan. 6:10—Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had *always* done so previously.

Dan. 2:17-18—Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸That they might request compassions from before the God of the heavens concerning this mystery so that Daniel and his companions would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

1 Tim. 2:1—I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men;

2 Tim. 1:3—I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day,

1 Thes. 5:17—Unceasingly pray,

- G. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to love, treasure, and muse on God's word—Psa. 119:11, 14-15, 23, 48, 72, 78, 97, 99, 111, 113, 119, 127, 140, 147-148, 159, 162-163, 165, 167.

Psa. 119:11—In my heart I have treasured up Your word That I might not sin against You.

Psa. 119:14-15—I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies As much as in all riches.
¹⁵I will muse upon Your precepts And regard Your ways.

Psa. 119:23—Princes as well have sat and spoken against me, *But* Your servant mused upon Your statutes.

Psa. 119:48—And I will lift up my hand to Your commandments, which I love; And I will muse upon Your statutes.

Psa. 119:72—The law of Your mouth is better to me Than thousands of *pieces of* gold and silver.

Psa. 119:78—Let the proud be put to shame, for they have subverted my cause with a lie; *But* I will muse upon Your precepts.

Psa. 119:97—Oh, how I love Your law! All day long it is my musing.

Psa. 119:99—I have more insight than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my musing.

Psa. 119:111—Your testimonies are my heritage forever, For they are the gladness of my heart.

Psa. 119:113—I hate those who are double-minded, *But* I love Your law.

Psa. 119:119—You do away with all the wicked ones of the earth *like* dross; Therefore I love Your testimonies.

Psa. 119:127—Therefore I love Your commandments More than gold, indeed, more than fine gold;

Psa. 119:140—Your word is very pure, And Your servant loves it.

Psa. 119:147-148—I anticipated the dawn and cried out; I hoped in Your words. ¹⁴⁸My eyes anticipated the night watches, That I might muse upon Your word.

Psa. 119:159—See how I have loved Your precepts; O Jehovah, enliven me according to Your lovingkindness.

Psa. 119:162-163—I rejoice at Your word, Like one who finds great spoil. ¹⁶³I hate and abhor falsehood, *But* I love Your law.

Psa. 119:165—There is great peace for those who love Your law, And there is no occasion of stumbling for them.

Psa. 119:167—My soul has kept Your testimonies, And I love them very much.

- H. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to be governed by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord—Exo. 33:11, 14; 13:21-22; 2 Cor. 2:10.

Exo. 33:11—And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his companion. And Moses would return to the camp, but his attendant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart out of the tent.

Exo. 33:14—And He said, My presence shall go *with you*, and I will give you rest.

Exo. 13:21-22—And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them on the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might go by day and by night. ²²Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night departed from before the people.

2 Cor. 2:10—But whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive*; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, *it is* for your sake in the person of Christ;

- I. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to love the church in the church-loving Christ—Eph. 5:25; 2 Cor. 12:15; 1 Cor. 16:24.

Eph. 5:25—Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her

2 Cor. 12:15—But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?

1 Cor. 16:24—My love in Christ Jesus be with you all.

- J. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to love the ministry that builds up the church—2 Cor. 8:5; 1 John 1:3; Eph. 4:11-12.

2 Cor. 8:5—And *this*, not as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.

1 John 1:3—That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Eph. 4:11-12—And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, ¹²For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

- K. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to live and walk by the Spirit, to serve by the Spirit, and to minister the Spirit—Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:3; 2 Cor. 3:6; Zech. 4:6; Judg. 9:9; cf. 1 Sam. 2:30b.

Gal. 5:25—If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Phil. 3:3—For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Zech. 4:6—And he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.

Judg. 9:9—But the olive tree said to them, Shall I leave my fatness, because of which God and men are honored by me, and go to wave over the trees?

cf. 1 Sam. 2:30—Therefore Jehovah the God of Israel declares, I surely said that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever; but now Jehovah declares, Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who spurn Me will be lightly esteemed.

- L. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to take Him as the fountain of living waters; God's intention in His economy is to be the fountain, the source, of living waters to dispense Himself into His chosen people for their satisfaction and enjoyment to produce the church, God's counterpart, as God's increase, God's enlargement, to be God's fullness for His expression—Jer. 2:13; John 4:14b.

Jer. 2:13—For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew out for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns, Which hold no water.

John 4:14—But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.

- M. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to eat Him as the tree of life; eating Christ as the tree of life, that is, enjoying Christ as our life supply, should be the primary matter in the church life—Rev. 2:7.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

- N. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to continually come to Him to contact Him, take Him, receive Him, taste Him, and enjoy Him—Isa. 57:20, footnote 1.

Isa. 57:20—But the wicked are like the tossed sea, For it cannot be calm, And its waters toss up mire and mud.

Isa. 57:20, footnote 1—The evil condition of the wicked is that they do not come to the Lord to eat and enjoy the Lord (cf. 55:1-2). They do many things, but they do not come to contact the Lord, to take Him, to receive Him, to taste Him, and to enjoy Him. In the sight of God, nothing is more evil than this.

- O. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to take Him as our centrality—our holding center—and our universality—our everything; we need to take Him as the center, content, and circumference of our personal universe—Col. 1:17b, 18b.

Col. 1:17—And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

- P. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to aspire and determine to gain the honor of pleasing Him in all things—2 Cor. 5:9; Col. 1:10; Heb. 11:5-6.

2 Cor. 5:9—Therefore also we are determined, whether at home or abroad, to gain the honor of being well pleasing to Him.

Col. 1:10—To walk worthily of the Lord to please *Him* in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,

Heb. 11:5-6—By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing *to Him*, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

- Q. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to have a clear sky like awesome crystal with God's sapphire throne above it; this means that there is nothing between us and the Lord and that we are filled with the heavenly atmosphere, condition, and situation of His ruling presence—allowing Him to rule and reign within us—Ezek. 1:22, 26.

Ezek. 1:22—And over the heads of the living creature there was the likeness of an expanse, like the sight of awesome crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

Ezek. 1:26—And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

- R. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to hold Him as the Head, staying intimately connected to Him and enthroning Him as the ruler and decider of everything in our life—Col. 2:19.

Col. 2:19—And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

- S. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to ask for the counsel of Jehovah in every detail of our Christian life and work—Josh. 9:14; Phil. 4:6-7.

Josh. 9:14—And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

Phil. 4:6-7—In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses every *man's* understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

- T. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to give the flow of life, the flow of the Lord Jesus within us, the preeminence in all that we are and do; then He is the shining One, the redeeming One, the reigning One, the flowing One, and the supplying One within us—Ezek. 47:1; Rev. 22:1-2.

Ezek. 47:1—Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south of the altar.

Rev. 22:1-2—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and

on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

- U. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to be dominated, governed, directed, led, and moved by our mingled spirit, caring for the rest in our spirit by being His captives and by praying, “Lord, make me Your captive; never let me win; defeat me all the time”—2 Cor. 2:13-14.

2 Cor. 2:13-14—I had no rest in my spirit, for I did not find Titus my brother; but taking leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia. ¹⁴But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ and manifests the savor of the knowledge of Him through us in every place.

- V. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to enthrone Him with our praises; praise is the highest work carried out by God’s children—Psa. 22:3; 119:164; 34:1.

Psa. 22:3—But You are holy, You who sit *enthroned* Upon the praises of Israel.

Psa. 119:164—Seven times a day I praise You For Your righteous ordinances.

Psa. 34:1—I will bless Jehovah at all times; His praise will continually be in my mouth.