



January 4, 2026

Kevin Sneed

Revelation 2:1-7

## Introduction

This week's message introduces a new series on Revelation by examining Jesus' letter to the church in Ephesus. Kevin Sneed challenges our common misunderstandings of Revelation, explaining that it's not primarily about predicting the future but about unveiling truth and interrogating our present reality. Through the lens of Jesus' words to the Ephesian church—a congregation commended for hard work and perseverance yet confronted for abandoning their first love—we're invited to examine whether Jesus remains central to our lives or has become merely an accessory. The message calls us to consider, repent, and return to the commitments we made when we first encountered Jesus.

### Key Texts:

Revelation 2:1-7; Revelation 1:1-6; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

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### Icebreaker

When have you been so busy doing something "right" that you missed the whole point of why you were doing it in the first place?

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### Discussion Questions

1. Kevin described how backpacking eventually helps you "come awake" to the wilderness around you. In what ways do you relate to going through religious motions without truly being awake to what God is doing? What helps you "wake up" spiritually?
2. **Read Revelation 2:1-3 together.** Jesus commends the Ephesian church for their hard work, perseverance, and doctrinal discernment. Why is it significant that a church doing so many things "right" still receives such a serious rebuke?

3. **Read Revelation 2:4 together.** Jesus says they've "forsaken the love you had at first." Scot McKnight calls this the "anguished language of a divorcing couple." How does understanding sin as "marital infidelity" change how you view your relationship with Jesus?
4. Kevin said infidelity to Jesus is often "opaque"—where He becomes an accessory to our lives rather than the center. What are some ways this subtle shift happens in your own life? What "lesser loves" tend to compete for the place only Jesus should have?
5. Kevin distinguished between "strong desires" (immediate wants) and "deep desires" (what we truly long for). What's an example of a strong desire in your life that might be competing with a deeper desire? How can recognizing this difference help you repent?
6. The first step in addressing "loveless orthodoxy" is to **Consider**—admitting powerlessness and living with radical honesty. Kevin quoted: "Being fully known and truly loved is the engine of change." What makes it so difficult to be radically honest about our spiritual condition? How does this group provide a safe place for that honesty?
7. **Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 together.** How does embracing your weakness and dependence on God challenge our cultural (and sometimes church) emphasis on strength and having it all together?
8. The message ended with three steps: **Consider, Repent, Do.** Which of these three feels most challenging for you right now, and what would it look like to take a practical step forward this week?

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## Key Takeaways

- Revelation unveils truth about the present, not just predictions about the future
- You can be busy doing good things while forsaking your first love
- Lesser loves promise freedom but lead to enslavement
- Radical honesty about our powerlessness is the path forward
- Being fully known and truly loved is the engine of change
- Repentance isn't about guilt—it's about realigning with your deep desires
- Spiritual maturity means staying sensitive to God's leading

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## Notes