



School of  
**DOMINION**

"Equipping the saints" - Eph 4:12-13

# SUSTAINING YOUR FIRST LOVE

MAXWELL E. OGAGÀ

[www.gkai.net](http://www.gkai.net) | [www.kdcbonny.org](http://www.kdcbonny.org)

Study Manual

## **SCHOOL OF DOMINION**

**School of Dominion** is a teaching initiative of Kingdom Development Christian Centre, Bonny Island aimed at maturing and equipping the saints for dominion as sons of God on the earth.

All materials (Manuals/CDs) of the School of Dominion are produced and given FREE to help equip the BODY OF CHRIST. This is made possible by the FREE WILL contribution of the saints who are blessed by the ministry of the word. We trust God to supply ALL needs in this regard.

If you would like to be part of those who help get out these materials for free or you know someone who would be blessed by any of our School of Dominion teaching sets (CDs/Manual), you can use the details below to contact us.

This Study Manual is also freely downloadable from the websites:

### **Information/Inquires:**

God's Kingdom Advancement Ministry  
(Kingdom Development Christian Centre.)  
NLNG Round about after the Military Post Agalanga.  
+2348034810869, +2348050637252.  
kdcbonny@gmail.com | www.kdcbonny.org  
www.gkai.net

### **Giving/Partnership:**

GKAM Bonny Island- GTB - 0126482961

© COPYRIGHT 2014. Maxwell E. Ogaga

No part of this document may be reproduced electronically or otherwise, **for financial or commercial gain.**

Allowance is made for the following:

- ▶▶ The contents may be **used freely to share with others.**
- ▶▶ **Photocopying** and other forms of electronic and digital recording of the contents of this manual for study groups, bible studies, church services, etc. **is permissible.**

The above allowances of the copyright principle is accommodated and encouraged.

### **SUSTAINING YOUR FIRST LOVE.**

## **1. HISTORY /BACKGROUND - THE CHURCH IN EPHEBUS.**

### **1.1 A.D. 52.**

On Paul's second mission tour, he visited Ephesus after leaving Corinth, and evidently planted the church there (**Acts 18:19**). Ephesus means desirable, and in many ways it was a desirable place to live. It was thought to have been founded by the Amazons about 2000 B.C. and was located in west Asia Minor, near the sea. This first glimpse is of sprouts just cracking open the ground.

### **1.2 A.D. 54-56.**

On his third preaching journey, Paul spent between two and three years teaching in the city (Acts 19:8-10). He spent his time weeding out false doctrines and pagan practices. Ephesus derived its greatness from two sources, commercial trade and religion. During the Roman Period it was a center for the mother goddess worship, known to the Greeks as Artemis and to the Romans as Diana. Diana is a beautiful name, and one might suppose that Diana would be a beautiful goddess. On the contrary, Diana of the Ephesians was a short, squat, repulsive-looking character covered with many breasts which emphasized fertility. It was believed by the superstitious Ephesians that Diana fell down from heaven. The magnificent temple of Diana took more than a century to construct. It was built about 400 B. C. and burnt the night Alexander the Great was born. Immediately rebuilt, it could accommodate 24,500 persons and is reckoned as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Worship in the Temple was comprised of the burning of incense and the playing of flute music as a result of which the people reached an emotional frenzy in which shameless acts were engaged (Marlin). These immoral practices of the priestesses and the merchants hawking silver shrines made it a difficult place to preach the Gospel. Nonetheless, Paul's teaching in the school of Tyrannus was so successful that those who practiced magical arts brought their books and burned them (valued at 50,000 pieces of silver) (**Acts 19:18-20**). The sale of silver shrines began to fall off, and the silversmiths caused uproar (**Acts 19:26-41**). After this was settled Paul left for Macedonia. It was during his stay in Macedonia that he wrote 1 Corinthians. It is now a well-groomed garden - the church

### **1.3 A.D. 57.**

Paul stopped on the nearby island of Miletus and made his farewell address to the Ephesian elders (**Acts 20**). Their mutual love is evident as these tenderhearted men weep because they will see Paul's face no more. Their desire to depart with prayer gives evidence of their spirituality. The picture now is of a church that has been carefully nurtured to the point of strong health.

## **1.4 A.D. 62.**

About a decade after the church had been started, Paul wrote a letter to the Ephesians commending their faith and love. A careful reading of this epistle shows that they had done well. They appeared well organized and busy. During these early years they had been growing, expanding and doing the will of God. He commends their sincerity (**Ephesians 6:24**).

The above picture is simply to give us a historical context of the church that God was speaking to. We can see from the above that it was not a mean church, it was well planted, rooted and grounded yet few years later, there was a direct word from the Lord to them as we would be examining in this series.

## **2. GOD'S METHOD OF EVALUATION**

In the letter to the churches we see a similar pattern usually beginning with a commendation for that which is praiseworthy and then moving to a rebuke for what is displeasing to the Lord. Corrective action is then outlined and the letter closes with the challenge to consider what has been said (He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches), as well as a closing promise for those who are victors.

## **3. TEXT : REVELATION 2: 1- 7 (Amplified).**

*1 TO THE angel (messenger) of the assembly (church) in Ephesus write: These are the words of Him Who holds the seven stars [which are the messengers of the seven churches] in His*

*right hand, Who goes about among the seven golden lampstands [which are the seven churches]:*

*2 I know your industry and activities, laborious toil and trouble, and your patient endurance, and how you cannot tolerate wicked [men] and have tested and critically appraised those who call [themselves] apostles (special messengers of Christ) and yet are not, and have found them to be impostors and liars.*

*3 I know you are enduring patiently and are bearing up for My name's sake, and you have not fainted or become exhausted or grown weary.*

*4 But I have this [one charge to make] against you: that you have left (abandoned) the love that you had at first [you have deserted Me, your first love].*

*5 Remember then from what heights you have fallen. Repent (change the inner man to meet God's will) and do the works you did previously [when first you knew the Lord], or else I will visit you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you change your mind and repent.*

*6 Yet you have this [in your favor and to your credit]: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans [what they are doing as corrupters of the people], which I Myself also detest.*

*7 He who is able to hear, let him listen to and give heed to what the Spirit says to the assemblies (churches). To him who overcomes (is victorious), I will grant to eat [of the fruit] of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*

#### **Revelation 2: 1-7(AMP)**

#### **4. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS**

*2 I know your **industry and activities, laborious toil and trouble, and your patient endurance, and how you cannot tolerate wicked [men] and have tested and critically***

*appraised those who call [themselves] apostles (special messengers of Christ) and yet are not, and have found them to be impostors and liars.*

*3 I know you are **enduring patiently** and are **bearing up for My name's sake**, and you have not **fainted or become exhausted or grown weary**.*

1. INDUSTRY
2. ACTIVITIES
3. LABORIOUS TOIL
4. ABILITY TO GO THROUGH TROUBLE.
5. PATIENCE/ENDURANCE
6. NOT TOLERATING WICKED MEN
7. NOT GROWING WEARY/TIRED: - *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”*. **Galatians 6:9 (KJV)**.
8. DISCERNMENT: - Testing those who preach and parade themselves as Apostles. Discernment is a critical component of the church in this season. If there are false prophets/apostles it is because many saints have become gullible also.

*“The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own authority; and my people love to have it so. What will you do in the end of it?”* **Jeremiah 5: 31 (WEB)**.

*“The Jews at Berea were of a nobler disposition than those in Thessalonica, for they very readily received the Message, and day after day searched the Scriptures to see whether it was as Paul stated.”* **Acts 17:11 (WNT)**

## 5. KEY WORD STUDIES

*4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy **first** love.*

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art **fallen**, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent – (KJV)

### **5.1 FIRST**

Greek Word *protos*, *pro'-tos* Which means: foremost (in time, place, order or importance):-before, beginning, best, chief(-est), first (of all), former.

#### **Foremost in TIME, PLACE ORDER OR IMPORTANCE - BEGINNING**

I would like us to carefully examine the above and see where our love walk and devotion is in terms of priority and importance. Do we give ourselves to the Lord first. On our scale of preference where can we find our devotion to the Lord and His Kingdom?

### **5.2 FALLEN**

Greek Word *ekpiptw* *ekpipto*, *ek-pip'-* to drop away; specially, be driven out of one's course; figuratively, to lose, become inefficient:--be cast, fail, fall (away, off), take none

When we take a look at the meaning of “Fallen” we can conclude that this does not happen in a moment or a day. It begins with a gradual drift. We see one of the definitions or meaning is “become inefficient” BECOME meaning it was a process.

As believers, we always need to be in that state of evaluation where our love walk and devotion for Christ is concerned. It is easy to walk in pride and assume that everything is alright especially when we take a look at all the things we are involved in our local church or our Christian life.

*Examine yourselves to see whether you are still in the Christian faith. Test yourselves! Don't you recognize that you are people in whom Jesus Christ lives? Could it be that you're failing the test? 2 Corinthians 13:5 (GWT)*

The fact that the apostle could ask a question like this indicates that a possible answer is what marks true Christianity. A Christian, of course, is not simply one who joins a Christian church. Nor does adhering to a certain moral standard in your life or the fact that you consistently read the Bible make you a Christian. A true Christian is someone in whom Christ dwells. And the person in whom Christ dwells will have certain inescapable evidence of that fact. Paul is suggesting that we ask ourselves if we have the evidence that Jesus Christ lives in us.

You may be asking, How can I know that? The answer is found in several places in Scripture. For instance, Scripture speaks of an inner witness. In Romans Paul says, *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children (Romans 8:16)*. That is one

way you can know. There is an inner testimony, a feeling, a sense within produced by the Spirit of God who dwells within that you are part of the great family of God.

Scripture speaks also of desires that are born in the heart of a new Christian. **First Peter 2:2** says, *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.* One of the marks of born-again believers is that they have a deep and **sudden** thirst for the Word of God, a hunger to be fed, to know the truth of God.

This inner change will also produce an outward change, which is not at all subjective. We can answer the question, *Is Jesus Christ in you?* by observing our conduct, because the inner change will produce a different attitude toward our behavior. One of the striking things about new Christians is that they invariably begin to manifest a totally different attitude toward things they once thought were appropriate.

### **COMTEMPLATIVE PRAYER**

***“So, people who think they are standing firmly should be careful that they don't fall”. 1 Corinthians 10:12 (GWT)***

**Lord, help me to honestly examine myself Thank You that as I do so, I can trust Your Spirit to show me what is displeasing to You.**

## **6. AREAS WE CAN CHECK OUR FIRST LOVE.**

### **6.1 PRAYER**

Is prayer your FIRST or LAST resort? Do you pray just to get God to give you something or your prayer is dynamic fellowship (communion) with your father. Is prayer a burden or an act of Joy of fellowship? Do we still find it okay to spend long hours in prayers/travails or

intercession? Are we still in active intercession for others or we pray more self centered prayers – ME, MY FAMILY AND I.

ELIJAH WAS HUMAN- HIS PRAYERS BIRTHED GOD'S PURPOSE. - Are our prayers advancing the kingdom of God Or just our personal kingdom?

*"16 Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins) and pray [also] for one another, that you may be healed and restored [to a spiritual tone of mind and heart]. The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].17 Elijah was a **human being with a nature** such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]; and he prayed earnestly for it not to rain, and no rain fell on the earth for three years and six months." - James 5:16-17 (AMP)*

## **6.2 THE WORD**

Is the word of God still the final authority in our lives, family, business, financial decisions or is it just another good book lying on our shelves?

Do we consult the word **DAILY** for Wisdom or do we walk by the wisdom of the world and validate our positions and choices by the word?

*"Blessed is the man that heareth me, **watching daily at my gates**, waiting at the posts of my doors." (Proverbs 8: 34 KJV).*

One of the priorities of a believer is PLANTING the SEED of GOD'S word DAILY in the soil of your HEART – The manna we gather for our sustenance must be FRESH and GATHERED DAILY.

*"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." Luke 8: 11 (KJV)*

*"After this the people **gathered the food morning by morning, each family according to its need**. And as the sun became hot, the flakes they had not picked up melted and disappeared." Exod 16: 21 (NLT).*

When the WORD is being preached/taught are we actively LISTENING, TAKING NOTES or have we become so familiar with God that we can be busy with our phones, nails, and distracted or engaged in informal discussions? Do we actually consider the MINISTRY OF THE WORD our LIFE SOURCE of Spiritual Nourishment or just a religious exercise hearing the PREACHER PREACH another sermon?

*"Therefore, we never stop thanking God that when you received his message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of*

*God--which, of course, it is. And this word continues to work in you who believe.” - 1 Thessalonians 2: 13*

*“Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and **the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.” Haggai 1:12***

*“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” - Romans 10:17*

***“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart”. Hebrews 4:12***

***“They are not just idle words for you--they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess”.- Deuteronomy 32: 47 (NLT)***

### **6.3 RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER.**

The Gospel of Christ makes us see others in the image of Christ. One of the basic tests of our faith is how we relate to one another. Let us briefly evaluate this in the light of the following scriptures.

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13: 34-35 (KJV)*

How will all men know that we are GOD’S DISCIPLES? WHEN WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

THIS IS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. People do not have to QUALIFY for it, WE LOVE THEM BECAUSE CHRIST FIRST LOVED US.

*We love, because He first loved us. 20If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 1 John 4: 19- 20.*

*“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” -1 John 4:10*

*“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen”- 1 John 4:20*

We must constantly evaluate our LOVE WALK. This LOVE is only possible when we receive the Love of God and ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO WORK IN US.

PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE/ RESPONSE/ ACTIONS TOWARDS US MUST NEVER DETERMINE OUR LOVE FOR THEM; THE WORD OF GOD MUST BE THE BASIS FOR OUR LOVE.

*"And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love". Romans 5:5 (NLT)*

WE MUST CONSTANTLY EVALUATE OUR RELATIONSHIPS IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE SCRIPTURES.

**Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 1 John 3:16**

*"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.<sup>13</sup> Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." 1 John 4:12*

*"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16*

### **CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYERS**

**Lord, help me ALLOW the Holy Spirit to PERFECT YOUR LOVE IN MY HEART.**

*"<sup>14</sup>For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>15</sup> Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,<sup>16</sup> That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;<sup>17</sup> That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," -Ephesians 3:14-17*

*"<sup>3</sup>We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,<sup>4</sup> Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints," - Colossians 1:3-4*

### **THE PRAYER OF AN OLD SAINT ON LOVE – ANDREW MURRAY**

Blessed Lord Jesus! in holy reverence I bow before Thee as Love Incarnate. The Father's love gave Thee. Thy coming was a mission of Love. Thy whole life was Love; Thy death its Divine seal. The one commandment Thou gavest Thy disciples was Love. Thy one prayer before the throne is that Thy disciples may be one, as Thou with the Father, and that His

Love may be in them. The one chief trait of Thy likeness Thou longest to see in us is, that we love even as Thou lovest. The one irresistible proof to the world of Thy Divine mission will be the love of Thy disciples to each other. And the Spirit that comes from Thee to us is the very Spirit of Thy self -sacrificing love, teaching Thy saints to live and die for others, as Thou didst.

Holy Lord Jesus! look upon Thy Church, look upon our hearts. And wherever Thou seest that there is not love like Thine, oh, make haste and deliver Thy saints from all that is still selfish and unloving ' Teach them to yield that self, which cannot love, to the accursed cross, to await the fate it deserves. Teach us to believe that we can love, because the Holy Spirit hath been given us. Teach us to begin to love and serve, to sacrifice self and live for others, that love in action may learn its power, may be increased and perfected. Oh, teach us to believe that because Thou livest in us, Thy love is in us too, and we can love as Thou dost. Lord Jesus, Thou Love of God! Thine own Spirit is within us; oh, let Him break through, and fill our whole life with love. Amen.

#### **6.4 FELLOWSHIP**

Christianity is a communal faith. The church is basically described as a family unit, a body. It was never designed to be an organization of isolated individuals.

Do we still have joy attending fellowship meetings or Sunday mornings have become a ritual? Do we long to be among the brethren? Like David are we glad when it is time to go to the house of the Lord and the assembly of the saints? Do we see it as a time of being built up spiritually or part of our weekly social routine?

*“not staying away from our worship meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day drawing near”.- Hebrews 10:25 (HCSB)*

*“not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near “Hebrews 10:25 (NET BIBLE).*

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”. Acts 2:42.*

*“And on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together” Acts 20:7*

*“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together,” 1 Corinthians 5:4.*

*“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” Psalm 122 (KJV).*

There must be an inherent JOY within about going to the house of the Lord. When this Joy begins to disappear we must track and evaluate our walk.

We should look forward with joy for the opportunity to worship God. Worship is a privilege only children of God have. There are many blessings we receive from faithful attendance in worship. God has commanded us to assemble regularly to worship Him in spirit and in truth when we worship God in spirit and in truth we can know the Lord will be there with us. Jesus says in **Matthew 18:20**, *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them"*.

### **NOTE**

When we forsake the assembly of other believers, we are saying to our children that worshipping God is not that important. Parents have the spiritual responsibility of "training up a child in the way he should go" so that when he matures "he will not depart from it" (**Prov. 22:6**). If we train our children to believe that missing the worship assembly is not a big deal, then when they are older, that is exactly what they will believe. How can we show our children that God must come first in their lives when we give priority to sports events, leisure activities, or time for relaxation? Fathers have been charged by God to bring their children up in the "training and admonition of the Lord" (**Eph. 6:4**). Our children need to grow up seeing their parents put God first in their lives so they will follow their godly example.

## **6.5 GIVING**

We can give without love, but we cannot love without giving. Giving in this context is not just about MONEY. It includes it, but involves everything else, most importantly our time, treasures and talents. We must ensure that we are stewards of these resources for the benefit of the Body of Christ and the Advancement of the Kingdom of God.

In the initial stage of our walk with God, a lot of people pray for the "blessing" of the Lord. When this prayer is answered, most of us move from being STEWARDS of His resources and we become OWNERS. This is a gradual departure from the original intention of God for His sons as regards their TIME, TREASURES AND TALENTS. Until these are offered to the LORD with a generous heart they cannot be used to benefit humanity accurately according to the WILL AND PURPOSE OF GOD.

One thing the LOVE OF GOD will do in our HEART is compel us to be generous GIVERS, because we know ALL THINGS BELONG TO US IN HIM AS HEIRS OF GRACE.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **John 3: 16.***

Our Giving MUST be rooted in LOVE, not because we are manipulated, or out of guilt. When it becomes of necessity the love factor is questionable.

*"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. 38"Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure-- pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." **Luke 6: 37-38***

Our giving here goes beyond money. Do we give love or we give judgment all the time? If we have become judgmental and critical of everything is it possible that the love of the Father that should constrain us is not having as much effect as it should?

**DO YOU STILL GIVE LOVE TO THOSE AROUND YOU?** It is not just about **WHAT** we give but **HOW** we give it.

*"You must each **decide in your heart** how much to give. And **don't give reluctantly** or **in response to pressure**. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." **2 Corinthians 9:7 (NLT).***

## **6.6 SOULWINNING/KINGDOM ADVANCMENT.**

One of the most critical ways through which we test our first love is our desire and commitment to see souls redeemed back to their creator. Are we still passionate about evangelism? Is Soul winning outdated? Do we still have time to talk to someone about CHRIST?

*"Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and **He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.** 20Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, **as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God** **2 Corinthians 5:19-20 (NIV).***

*"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." **John 15:8 (NIV).***

Our heart's desire must constantly be to see the kingdom expand. We must understand that GIVING (SOWING) MONEY IS NOT THE SAME THING AS WINNING SOULS. We must all CULTIVATE and CREATE TIME to spread the MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM.

*"So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full.'" Luke 14:23 (NLT).*

*"13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." 14How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? **And how will they hear without a preacher?** 15How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" Romans 10: 13- 15.*

**Are your FEET BEATIFULL? There must be the restoration for the love of souls IN US..**

## **7. SOME THINGS THAT MAKE US FALL FROM OUR FIRST LOVE**

*15 The ones along the path are those who have the Word sown [in their hearts], but when they hear, **Satan comes at once and [by force] takes away the message which is sown in them.***

*16 And in the same way the ones sown upon stony ground are those who, when they hear the Word, at once receive and accept and welcome it with joy;*

*17 And they **have no real root in themselves**, and so they endure for a little while; then **when trouble or persecution arises on account of the Word**, they immediately are **offended (become displeased, indignant, resentful)** and they stumble and fall away.*

*18 And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word;*

*19 Then **the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age**, and the **pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches**, and the **craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word**, and it becomes fruitless. Mark 4:15-19 (AMP)*

### **1. SATAN.**

2. NO PERSONAL DEPTH (ROOT)
3. TROUBLE OR PERSECUTION BECAUSE OF THE WORD.
4. OFFENCE
5. CARES AND ANXIETIES OF THE WORLD.
6. DISTRACTIONS OF THE AGE – Social Media, Sports etc
7. PLEASURE
8. FALSE GLAMOUR
9. DECIETFULLNESS OF RICHES.
10. CRAVING AND PASSIONATE DESIRE FOR OTHER THINGS.

## 8. STEPS TO RECOVERY.

### 8.1 REMEMBER

The first step to recovery was to **remember** from where they had fallen (v. 5). The charge against the church is that they had at one time practiced love in a commendable way, but that had, by neglect, greatly diminished. The first step to the cure is to continually recall (the imperative is in the present tense) those days when their love was vibrant and active. This would give the Ephesians a fresh grasp of the goal, as well as a vivid reminder of how it was achieved.

### 8.2 REPENT

The second step was to repent (A call for a decisive act). True repentance goes far beyond sorrow. It is a genuine change of heart and mind which results in a change in lifestyle and behavior. The word repent is the Greek word *metanoew metanoeo*, to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction) REPENT.

### 8.3 RESTART

This leads to the third step, which is to begin, once again, to put love into practice (stressing the need for a new beginning). In the words of our Lord, the Ephesians saints should do the deeds they did at first.

I would advise you have a detailed plan after this study that would keep you on track. Bible Study plans, prayer plans, personal retreats, giving plans etc.

Never lag in zeal, **be aglow with the Spirit**, serve the Lord- Romans 12:11

## 9. References

### Bible Versions

WNT- Weymouth New Testament

WEB- World English Bible

AMP- Amplified Translation

KJV – King James Version

GWT- God's Word Translation

NLT – New Living Translation

HCSB – Holman Christian Standard Bible