

**Introduction:**

**THESIS—We’re going to trace the history of the Ephesian church through 5 STAGES so that you can learn, be warned, and be aware of the dangers of falling away from Christ!**

Keep watch over your spiritual life with ALL diligence! Don’t become apathetic, lazy, and unaffectionate for Christ or you *too* may end up just like the church at Ephesus!

## I. Salvation—You’re on Fire! (Acts 18:19-21)

### *IN MID 40’S AD*

#### *The Story*

#### *Application to Today:*

#### **The GOSPEL**

- i. **God**—God is a powerful God, eternally perfect, untainted by sin, and sovereignly just and righteous. He must do what is right.
- ii. **Man**—Man is radically and totally affected by sin in every way, shape, or form. Man is not perfect, is not righteous, and is not pleasing to God. Man is sinful in thought, word, deed, and motive. We often reject worshipping God for the worship of *self*.
- iii. **Jesus**—But God, justly deserving to POUR out his wrath on wicked sinners, chose to send His Son, Jesus—fully God and fully man—to this earth to live a perfect life which we could never do, and die a criminal’s death that we sinners deserved to die. And on that cross God flooded the eternal fury and violent wrath upon Jesus on the cross that should be poured out on sinners in hell.
- iv. **Faith**—The only way sinners can be forgiven by God and have the punishment that we deserve pardoned in Christ is *by means of* faith in Jesus Christ and in his death *in our place* (substitution) and in his resurrection from the grave three days later showing his victory over sin and power over death and hell. It is by faith alone that we are saved—**not** by works.
- v. **Submission**—After placing faith in Jesus Christ and being eternally saved and supernaturally justified (declared right with God and treated as a son), the *only* and *inevitable* result of salvation is declaring “Jesus is LORD” where He is master over the Christian’s life. This must result in a life of obedience, Lordship, submission, and suffering for Christ.

## II. Growth—You Are Learning! (Acts 19-20)

***IN 54-57 AD***

***The Story***

***Application for Today:***

### **III. Maturity—You Are Holy! (Ephesians 1-6)**

***IN 62-63 AD***

***Story:***

***Application for Today:***

### **IV. Heartless (Lukewarm)—You Are Apathetic! (Revelation 2:4)**

***IN ABOUT 96 AD***

***Story:***



Here was the problem: This church was so busy doing the WORK of the LORD that they forgot the LORD of their work.

***Application for Today:***

***What are the symptoms of becoming HEARTLESS?***

- A busy life where you begin to be more concerned about *doing things* for God rather than *glorifying Christ* in doing things
- A lack of excitement for God and His Word
- A diminishing hatred of personal sin in your life
- An apathetic attitude toward holiness, prayer, evangelism
- No desire to share the gospel with others
- More time spent and more energy doing time-consuming things that are not spiritually productive than you do wrestling with God in prayer and studying His Word.

**Ephesians 6:24 – “Don’t Lose Your Love for Jesus Christ and Fall Away from the Faith!”**

- An apathetic (uninterested, lazy, and bored) attitude with God and in God’s presence

### **How can I recover if I am HEARTLESS?**

- **Remember** what your Christian faith was like at the beginning (the excitement, the zeal, the passion, the love, the obedience).
- **Repent** that you have become lukewarm and confess it as *sin* to God and beg for His help and grace to change.
- **React** and **Recommit** yourself to do the same things you did when you were *first saved* (diligent and daily time with God, evangelism, study and ask questions).

### **How can I prevent becoming HEARTLESS?**

- **Realize** that Christianity is *loving Christ* and being *satisfied in Him*.
- **Reflect** daily on your Christian walk.
- **Repent** fervently of all known sin.
- **Recommit** to faithfully hear God’s Word preached and *apply* it to your life.
- **Remind** yourself constantly of the biblical gospel.
- **Restructure** your life so you spend less time doing “time-consumingly worthless” things and more time doing spiritually encouraging things that will grow you.

## **V. Useless—You Are Dead!**

This is important because: *if you are lukewarm, and you don’t recognize it, repent, and change, it’s only a matter of time before you will spiritually die and leave the faith!*

### ***ABOUT 200 AD***

#### **Story:**

#### **Application for Today:**

**John 10:27-29** <sup>27</sup> "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; <sup>28</sup> and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup> "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand.

**1 John 2:19** <sup>19</sup> They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

**And perhaps the scariest text—Hebrews 10:26-31**

### **Conclusion:**