

## Revelation 2:18-29

### Discussion Questions November 19, 2017

### Thyatira and Love That Can't Be Pimped

(Sex and sexuality can be hard to talk about. Why do you think that is?)  
(Do you think there is a spiritual side to our sexuality? Explain)  
(When you hear the word sexual immorality what do you think of?)

Read

Revelation 2:18-29

*“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. “I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality [porneusai from porneuo. Root: porne] and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality [porneias]. Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. Only hold fast what you have until I come. The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority [exousia it is also translated power] over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority [exousia] from my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”*

This mix of desire and apparent rage in Jesus is a bit shocking isn't it?

He gives these folks an incredible compliment. And then rails against them for tolerating a woman and her teaching, this teaching, which leads people to sexual immorality and some form of idolatry.

We often think of love as being only “nice” to someone. But Proverbs 27:6 says, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.”

- In what ways do you think Jesus is being faithful and a friend in this passage?
- Do you think it's loving to compliment and at the same time come down hard on someone for something that you know is harmful?
- Has someone you know loves you ever done that to you and what was the outcome?
- Have you ever done that to some you love? What was the outcome?
- What compelled you to confront them? Was it love?

#### **Sexual immorality**

The words sexual immorality used in the above passage are actually one word: *porneou*, which comes from the noun *porne*. It doesn't really mean sexual immorality or pornography, as such, even though it likely includes both. *Porne* (the female) and *pornos* (the male), both come from the verb *pernemi*, which means to sell as in selling a slave. The verb *perneuo* is the activity that a *pornos* or *porne* engages in. Young's literal translation translates it as “whoredom.”

In Revelation 18:4 a voice cries from heaven, “*Come out of her my people.*” That's got to be the voice of Jesus and it's got to mean that His people are participating in *porneou*—whoredom.

The problem with whoredom is . . .

1. It objectifies (It turns people into objects or commodities)
2. It quantifies (It runs things more like a business, a place of trade or a contractual agreement)

- rather than in grace and love.)
3. It qualifies (It says, "I'll love you if...")
  4. It consumes (It tries to nail down and use as it sees fit.)
  5. It consumes but will not be consumed (It seeks to Love but won't be consumed by Love, which is God.)
  6. It seeks to buy and sell Love. (It doesn't receive love as a free gift but thinks it must & can earn it.

- Have you ever experienced the church participating in these things? If so in which ways?
- In which ways do you feel tempted to the above list?

"It was the spirit of *porneou* that tempted the Pharisees to justify themselves with the knowledge of Good, that we call the law. The law is a *description* of Love, but it's not Love. It's love objectified. To justify yourself with the law is to objectify Love to obtain things that are not love—from Love—so you can *use* Love when you *don't* love in order to *pretend* to love. It is to crucify Love in flesh in a garden on a tree." —Peter Hiett

"The spirit of *porneia* has crept in through the father of lies.

It's that thing in you that tells you that you can purchase love with money, beauty, power, works of the law, or even faith.

It's that thing in you that fills you with arrogance and fear and makes you compete against the very neighbor that you are commanded to love.

It's that thing in you that makes you intolerant, unforgiving, and finally alone.

It's that thing in you that tries to possess love and so crucifies Love.

It's that thing in you that must be destroyed if you are ever to love in freedom in the image of God.

The abomination is your ego, which keeps telling you that you must pay for Love, which tells you that you must play the whore with God."

- Take a moment to search your heart in each of the following areas.
- Ask the Lord to reveal to you any ways the enemy might have crept into your own heart through some of the above lies.
- Confess them to God (and to a trusted friend if you like).

Now listen to the Lord's Judgment for Israel His Harlot Bride—who played the whore. I believe these words are for you too because you also are His Bride and we all have played the whore. But we are forgiven!

Ezekiel 16 ends this way: "*I will establish for you an everlasting covenant...and you shall know that I am the Lord ...and never open your mouth again [in pride] because of your shame, when I atone for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord God.*"

*He* establishes an *everlasting* covenant for you. *He* atones for you!

Take a moment to thank Him!

*\*These questions were prepared by Kimberly Weynen.*