



**Part 6: Hope to Overcome Moral Seduction  
Revelation 2:18-19**

*We have hope to overcome moral seduction because  
Jesus loves us with a costly love.*

**THE PERPLEXING CHARACTER OF JESUS**

Goodness and love look differently in different situations. Sometimes the loving act of protection requires a fierce response from us.

*“Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” 1 Corinthians 13:6*

**A CARELESSLY TOLERANT CHURCH**

- The center for the worship of Apollo. The citizens of Thyatira also believed the Roman Emperor was the incarnation of Apollo and known as the “son of the high god.”
- As in Pergamum, the Christians were facing the challenge of trying to make a living while belonging to a trade guild that would hold feasts dedicated to Apollo and the other gods, often degenerating into drunkenness and sexual immorality.
- Jesus’ Commendation (Revelation 2:19)
- Jesus’ Rebuke (Revelation 2:20-25).
  - An influential woman, who Jesus calls Jezebel, was misleading the believers into the practice of idolatry and sexual immorality. Her name is most likely a reference back to Jezebel, married to King Ahab, who advocated the Israelites could worship both Baal and the Lord (1 Kings 16-19, 21).
  - She justified her teaching through her “deep secrets,” which she claimed were revealed to her through spiritual experience. Jesus says their origin is Satan (Revelation 2:24).

Jesus' reference to her children is probably a reference to her spiritual children (Revelation 2:23). Jesus has given this woman opportunities to repent, but she has refused (Revelation 2:21). Jesus' judgments are not hasty, but He does not wait forever.

## GOSPEL TRUTHS TO KNOW AND LIVE

- Our sanctification into the character of Jesus is a lifelong process calling for our diligent attention to Jesus (Revelation 2:19, Philippians 2:12-13, Hebrews 12:1-3).
- Sin is more than breaking God's commands; it is spiritual adultery (Revelation 2:22, Jeremiah 3:6, Hosea 9:1, Ezekiel 23:19).

Ultimately all sin is against God's grace. Sin is spurning Jesus' costly love for other lovers.

- Jesus ultimately defines reality, health, good and evil, and His commands for holiness as prescriptions for wholeness (Revelation 2:24).
- Note: Holiness = set apart for God; pure; healthy or whole

*"There is no such thing as casual sex, no matter how casual people are about it....Nobody can go to bed with someone and leave his soul parked outside....The demand for self-restraint is not a kill-joy rule plastered on the abundant life by anti-sexual saints. It is respect for reality. The moral law fits the inner reality of sex."*  
Lewis Smedes

## LOVED BY THE SON OF GOD (Revelation 2:18)

Two motivations for doing something – fear of consequences and love for another (see Revelation 5:5-6).

### Discussion Questions (for small groups or the dinner table):

Since the issues are the same as in Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17), the discussion will be similar.

- What has been your experience, if any, of growing pressure to compromise, hide, or deny your faith in order to be accepted? What do you see in our culture?
- Do you see the Church tolerating false teaching? In what areas?
- Look at the "Gospel Truths to Know and Live." Which one has the most significant impact on you and why?
- What do you think of the idea of sin as "spiritual adultery"? How does this truth motivate you?
- What steps can you take, or are you taking, to protect yourself against moral seduction?