Session 6
Tolerating Immorality - Rev 2:18-29

I. Review

A. **What do we consume that leads us into immorality?**

II. Church of Thyatira

A. Background

1. Apollo, son of Zeus was the primary deity

B. Trade Guilds – forerunner to the Unions of America

1. Most prominent fact of this city
2. Required attendance at the worship feasts for the guild's deity.
3. Guilds were the center of social, political and economic & religious life
4. Lydia – seller of purple from Thyatira

III. What does Jesus say to them?

A. Look at me!

1. I am the Son of God – vs Apollo - emphasizes Jesus' deity and power to judge. The Son of Man (Rev. 1:13-15) This emphasizes zealous attention over His people.
2. I have the eyes like fire - emphasizes His desire to impart passion (Lk. 24:32; Acts 2:1-4) and/or to convict of sinful deeds. Fire is the symbol of love and holiness.
3. I have feet like burnished bronze - a mighty warrior who walks over his enemy and brings all sin under His feet. Brass is a symbol of judgment against sin. Their compromise required that He intervene with judgment.

B. I Know

1. Your deeds – James 1:27, Eph 2:10
2. Your love – Phil 1:9, I Thess 3:12
3. Your faith –
    a. Jesus & healing – Mt 9:22, 29
    b. Faith that makes an impact - Rom 1:8; Col 1:4; I Thess 1:8
    c. Faith unto salvation – 1 Pet 1:9
4. Your service – ministry, serving
    a. Serving – Luke 10:40 Martha
    b. The apostles – Acts 1:25; Acts 6:1,4
    c. Variety of ministries – I Cor 12:5
5. Your endurance – what you suffer, you are steadfast
    a. 2 Thess 3:5

6. Your deeds are greater in number than before
7. What a great church!
    a. 2 Pet 1:2-11 – Faith, Virtue, knowledge, self-control, love
    b. 1 Tim 6:11 – pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, meekness
    c. 2 Tim 3:10 – you followed my teaching, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings, …
    d. Eph 4:1-3 – walk worthy of your calling – humility, meekness, patience, tolerance,…

C. But this I have against you… I Cor 5:1-5

1. Tolerate that woman Jezebel
    a. Tolerance in the church today
    b. Tolerance in the culture today
        (1) Same as recognizing we all are broken?
        (2) Therefore we don't deal swiftly with sin?
        (3) Therein lies the problem
        (4) We must deal with it swiftly in our own lives first
        (5) And deal with it in our churches
        (6) It requires wisdom, love, the Holy Spirit...
        (7) We don't know the hearts and motivations of people
            (a) Culture of Honor eg.
            (b) Drummer who lives in immorality
2. She calls herself a prophetess
3. Teaches and leads My bondservants astray
    a. so that they commit acts of immorality
    b. eat food sacrificed to idols
4. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses
    a. Look what I'm about to do – I Cor 5:5; I Cor 11:30-32
    b. I will throw her on a bed of sickness
    c. Those who commit immorality with her, into tribulation
    d. I will kill her children with pestilence
5. All the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts and give according to your deeds.
    a. "Fear of the Lord"?
    b. He weighs both the actions and the motivation of our hearts

D. But to those who do not hold this teaching
1. to those who have not known the 'deep things of Satan'
    a. the false liberty that sexual immorality is ok
    b. It is worthy of remark that the Gnostics called their doctrine the depths of God, and the depths of Bythos, intimating that they contained the most profound secrets of Divine wisdom. Christ here calls them the depths of Satan, being master pieces of his subtlety. Perhaps they thought them to be of God, while all the time they were deceived by the devil. [Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible; Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832)]

c. These false prophets boasted peculiarly of their knowledge of mysteries and the deep things of God; pretensions subsequently expressed by their arrogant title, Gnostics ("full of knowledge"). The Spirit here declares their so-called "depths," (namely, of knowledge of divine things) to be really "depths of Satan"; just as in Rev_2:9, He says, instead of "the synagogue of God," "the synagogue of Satan." Hengstenberg thinks the teachers themselves professed to fathom the depths of Satan, giving loose rein to fleshly lusts, without being hurt by this activity. [A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown]

d. The Ophites (worshippers of the serpent) and other later Gnostics (Cainites, Carpocratians, Naassenes) boasted of their knowledge of "the deep things," some claiming this very language about Satan (the serpent) as Paul did of God (1Co_2:10). It is not clear whether the words here quoted are a boast of the Nicolaitans or a reproach on the other Christians for not knowing the depths of sin. Some even claimed that they could indulge in immorality without sinning (1Jo_1:10; 1Jo_3:10). Perhaps both ideas are involved. [WORD PICTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT – A.T. Robertson]

e.

2. No other burden (except to repent of your tolerance)
3. Hold fast what you have until I come

E. To those who overcome

1. Who repent of the compromise, toleration of false teaching/immorality, who refuse to join in the immorality or deep things of Satan, who hold fast…
   a. I will give him authority over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron
      (1) Just as I have received authority from My Father
         (a) Ps 2
      (2) Lk 19:17 – You are to be in authority over 10 cities
   b. I will give him the morning star
      (1) 2 Pet 1:19 – the morning star that arises in our hearts at His coming
      (2) Rev 22:16 – I am the morning star!