

Thyatira and the Love That Can't be Pimped

Revelation 2:18-29

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#7 in our series The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation

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Message

May 28th, 1983 at the Christiana Lodge in Vail, Colorado, Susan and I consummated our covenant with the sacrament of physical communion in the sanctuary of our shared temple of one flesh.

In Scripture, that's the thing that means you're married. And according to Scripture it's a picture to teach us about Christ and His Church, and even more . . . God and humanity.

Stripped naked, I offered all my heart, soul, mind and strength—like a living sacrifice placed upon an altar waiting to be consumed by the eternal fire that is unquenchable love.

I offered my strength and I offered my weakness—my shame. I surrendered that very place on my body that had been covered ever since the first Adam took leaves and covered that private place in confusion and fear. That place that expressed a profound longing that displayed the incompleteness not only in my flesh but in my soul. *That place* from which came seed . . . seed to be implanted in the broken soil of her body—seed that would die and then miraculously come to life as Jonathan, Elizabeth, Rebekah, and Coleman.

I presented myself a living sacrifice, in the sacrament of communion, consummating the covenant, forming one body in the place where there had once been two, and it was ecstasy. I fell asleep. And when I woke, I found a letter.

The Letter read:

"Wow... I had a really good time! Enclosed you'll find a check for \$41.37. I make about \$413.70 a week at the dentist office, after taxes and social security—is it 10% of gross or net? Let me know. I'll see ya next week, same time, same place. You can count on me . . . Except, of course, the weekend of the 7th, every year me and my girls plan a wild little weekend in Miami; you understand.

Thanks Again, Love Susan."

It's very hard to explain what happened next . . . the mixture of pain and longing, rage and burning desire is very difficult to express. My heart began to beat uncontrollably. It felt as if it was swelling in my chest and about to burst, and then it did. It literally ripped in two. Blood began to flow from my broken body.

It flowed out of the altar that was once a bed and out into the street and became a river that filled the land to the depths of a horse's bridle. And then the blood began to fall from the sky like burning wine poured from bowls in the heavens. The blood burned.

That's a true story! It didn't actually happen to me. But something like that did happen to Jesus.

Let's Pray.

Lord Jesus, we pray that you would show us your heart and that we would have the courage to see and believe who you are and that you are good. Give us the courage to believe the Gospel. Father, we ask it in Jesus' name with the power of your Spirit. Amen.

Revelation 2:18

This is our seventh sermon from the Revelation. And it's the middle letter of the seven letters to the angels of the seven churches. I think this is the heart of the matter.

"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'" (Rev. 2:18).

- Thyatira was located between Pergamum and Sardis, midway on the journey of the letters to the seven churches.
- It's the smallest of the seven but has the longest letter.
- It was known for the manufacturing of purple dye.
- Lydia (a seller of purple), in the book of Acts, came from Thyatira—Lydia who received the word from Paul and became the mother of the church in Europe and in Asia.
- Thyatira was known for purple, and for a temple to Apollos who was thought to be the sun god and the Son of God—whom the Greeks called Zeus...

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.'

Verse 23 “*And I (Jesus) will strike her children dead.*” Wow . . . What’s with Jesus?

What happened to Jesus meek and mild— the guy who said, “Suffer the little children to come to me...”? Jesus who is the voice of God, who made it clear in Deut. 24:16, “*Children shall not be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sins.*” That’s weirdly terrifying, and comforting, all at once. You won’t be put to death for your father’s sins. You *will* be put to death for your *own* sins.

Well, anyway . . . 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.

“Sexual Immorality” is such a terrifying term, for no one seems to know what it is. We’re each sexual creatures and the very first commandment before the fall was to be fruitful and multiply, which seems to involve sex and some sexual desire.

Life is sexually transmitted. Well . . . commands about sex are confusing. And “immorality” is really confusing, for immorality is a lack of morality and morality is the dominant mores of any particular society.

Our society just elected this man.

[Image of Donald and Melania Trump]

He’s seventy-one and she’s forty-seven. She is his third wife according to law, but by biblical standards, she’s a number far beyond three. We elected him right after the Access Hollywood tape came out, in which he brags about seducing women while newly married to a super-model.

Before that, we elected this man, who told us on national television, “*I did not have sexual relations with that woman*”

[Image of Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinski]

Well, I’m just pointing out that “moral” is not the same as “good.”

So, “sexual *immorality*” is a confusing term, and it’s not the term Jesus uses.

He uses the verb *porneou*, which comes from the noun *porne*, which immediately makes us think of pornography, which is a huge problem, but incredibly difficult to define.

I grew us thinking female nipples were pornographic. Fashion magazines were an exercise in showing as much female flesh as possible while playing “hide the nipple.” So fashion magazines were OK ... but nursing a baby in church would cause a scandal.

In Seminary, my professor told about some missionaries that purchased t-shirts for all the topless African women in a village where they ministered. The women were very grateful for the shirts and every one of them wore them to worship the following Sunday, but each one of them had cut two holes in the front so they would have no trouble nursing their babies during the long-winded sermons.

What they did was not *porneou*. That is actually a picture of the New Jerusalem in Isaiah 66:10. Read it when you have a chance.

Well, *porne* 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.” And it turns out that we are gonna read all about the great *porne*—the Great Whore—in the vision that John is sending to the churches.

Remember that the letters are sent to the angels of the churches, and the vision is sent to the churches. The vision describes the victory that the letters require, that is “how to conquer.”

Well, for some reason, we Americans stress about the beast, but never talk about the *porne*—the Whore—the Great Harlot.

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*. That's His people in Thyatira and, I would imagine, His people in Denver . . . or wherever you might be.

“*Come out of her my people.*” That paints quite a picture.

So maybe we ought to ask: What does Jesus have against *porneou*?

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

By that, I mean the entire enterprise—the selling and the buying (both the male and the female and the female and the male).

Hopefully, some answers seem readily apparent... Here are a few that I thought of:

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies (or “commodifies.”)

It turns people into objects or commodities.
And when you think about it that way, it may be far more common than you think.

I mean what does she see in him?

[Image of Donald and Melania Trump]

And what does he see in her?

Or . . .

What does she see in him?

[Image of Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky]

And what does he see in her?

We don't know. We can't know, but if you're a man or woman you can guess because you're basically the same.

She probably sees power, and he probably sees beauty. And there's nothing wrong with power or beauty, but if that's all a person is you've probably turned them into a commodity like a car. So, if your car loses power or beauty you just get another; it's a commodity.

Well, no one is as powerful or beautiful as Jesus.

Is that why you love Him?

Would you love Him if He was weak as a slave...

And ugly as a man nailed to a tree?

Well, harlots turn their tricks into a commodity—not a person, but a source of money, which is power. And a Johns turn a harlot into a commodity—not a person, but beauty that is to be consumed.

So if *porneou* has crept into your marriage . . . and your partner is no longer beautiful or rich, you'll probably find another.

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies

2. It quantifies

I once asked my three-year-old daughter: "*How much do you love me?*"

Her face lit up and she exclaimed, "*I love you twelve... and that's a lot.*"

It was precious because twelve was the biggest number she knew.

And it was tragically funny because some people actually think that way.

They quantify love... I suppose we all do.

Do you and your spouse run your marriage like a business—a place of trade?

Do you keep accounts of what each owes the other?

Or do you constantly forgive, which is to constantly give, like one member of your body constantly gives blood to another?

Do you keep a record of wrongs and rights?

If so... There's a moneychanger in your temple—and it's the spirit of *porneou*. "*Love keeps no record of wrongs,*" writes Paul. (No bookkeeping.)

Thyatira was known for its trade guilds so to do business in Thyatira you needed to belong to a guild. And to belong to a guild was to participate in the worship of a patron deity, much as groups like the Masons do today.

This woman, that Jesus calls Jezebel—like the notorious Queen Jezebel of ancient Israel—seems to have taught a little idolatry was OK. Idolatry is all about transactional trade arrangements with little gods that aren't God but pretend to be God.

Every time I turn on the TV, there seems to be some new "prophet" revealing some deep new insight into how to get your miracle or blessing. It usually involves some money or some deed that will make God turn a trick for you. Understand? It's not just whoredom that Jesus is renouncing, it's teaching whoredom in church and calling it prophesy.

Jesus said, "*An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign.*" You see a sign is not the substance but points to the substance. To seek the *signs* of God over the *substance* of God is adultery and *porneou*. Nothing's wrong with signs if you read them, and follow them to the substance. The substance belongs to Christ; it flows in His veins.

To the Pharisees, Jesus said, "*The prostitutes go into the kingdom before you.*" It's as if the Pharisees were the ones committing whoredom while Jesus seemed to have such compassion for whores. It's as if he says to them, "*You understand how I feel—how it is to be objectified, commodified, and used for your beauty or power while men utterly miss your heart.*"

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies
2. It quantifies
- 3. It qualifies (It says, "I'll love you if.")**

Porneou qualifies love, but that's not love.

"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

Love is not qualified by anything.

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies
2. It quantifies
3. It qualifies
- 4. It consumes**

Porneou seeks to consume love as if it were a commodity, like mere bread or wine . . . like something you could nail down and use as you see fit.

When we come to the communion table, we are confessing that we nailed Love down and turned Him into body broken and blood shed.

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies
2. It quantifies
3. It qualifies
4. It consumes

5. It consumes but will not be consumed

It seeks to consume love... but will not be consumed by love.

porneou is control, which refuses to surrender control.

porneou will sacrifice another but refuses to be sacrificed its self.

I'm struggling to know how to say this, but it reminds me of a story that one of my seminary professors shared in class one day. Dr. Mouw was at a conference somewhere when he decided to head down to the hotel bar and get a drink before bed.

A very attractive middle-aged woman sat next to him and they struck up a conversation. After a time, she explained that she and her husband agreed to have an open marriage so that each could pursue their own needs and desires, and now she wondered if he would like to come join her upstairs in her hotel room.

Dr. Mouw said that he was extremely flattered. He wasn't the handsome type and so he looked at this woman and said something like this:

Thank you. You're extremely beautiful and I'm very flattered, but I want to say no... because you see I'm married, and my marriage is my best shot at tasting the kingdom of God on earth. And that happens when two people sacrifice their own needs... and that's my greatest need.

So, my marriage is a covenant, in which I give all of myself to her, the way Jesus gave all of Himself to us. Sex is the sacrament of that covenant, and sex works. It doesn't just bind bodies, but it binds hearts, and not just for a moment. So, while I'm stuck in the confines of this body in space and time, I can only give all of myself to one other person, the way God has given all of Himself to me. So, if I give some of myself to you in this way, I can't give all of myself to her in this way—the way Jesus has given all of Himself to me.

Jesus can give all of Himself to each one of us for He's no longer bound by space and time, and He considers all of us to be His Bride, His One Bride, and One Body. Maybe one day we'll be just like Him, but as for now, I can only give all of myself to one other self, in the way that Jesus has given Himself to me.

My point is that Love is not a small thing that can be traded in a hotel room. Love is the limitless sacrifice of all that you are.

So, if we try to go trade little bits of love to satisfy our needs, it won't be love but the death of love.

So, Dr. Mouw said, "Thank you, truly I'm truly flattered... but no thanks."
He said that when he finished, he was surprised to look up and see her cheeks streaked with tears, as she said, "Oh that is everything I have ever wanted."

My old boss, Don Moomaw, who was the pastor of Bel Air Presbyterian Church, was seated at a dinner in Hollywood next to Hugh Hefner.
At one point, Hefner leaned over and said, "Hey Don, what do you have against my magazine?" Don had a great response. He answered; "It's not sexy enough."

Porneou is not too much love, but far too little.
Porneou is not too much sacrifice of self but the refusal to sacrifice self *to* Love.
Actually, *you* can't make Love. *Love* makes you.

Porneou tries to objectify, quantify, qualify and commodify love so it can consume love, but will not be consumed by Love. It tries to reduce love to a drop in a thimble when in fact Love is a mighty river. It tries to reduce love to a mere crumb of bread and drop of wine, when Love is the source of all things and the ocean in which we live, move, and have our being.

Once upon a time Love allowed us to reduce Him to body broken and blood shed, but He will not stay weak and ugly for long. The drop in the thimble turns into a mighty river of life, which flows through all creation. Love rises from the dead in us like a seed that comes to life and we will see Him as He is. In fact, that's judgment—to see Him as He is—all eyes will see Him as He is.

What's Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies
2. It quantifies
3. It qualifies
4. It consumes
5. It consumes but will not be consumed
- 6. It seeks to buy and sell Love.**

You cannot buy Love. You can only be swept away by Love.
You can only love Love because you've been loved by Love.
God is Love. And Love is free.
Porneou is not free so it's not love but the death of love.

Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength . . . and the second command is like it, love your neighbor as yourself."

Maybe He said, “Love your neighbor as yourself” because, in some utterly amazing way, your neighbor actually is yourself. So, we are all one Self... one Body, one Bride. We are one Self, loving God’s Self, with all our heart, mind, soul and strength . . . for He is our Helper, our Husband.

You Know? If you were to love the Lord your God with *all* your heart, mind, soul, and strength that would leave no heart, mind, soul, and strength left, with which to love your neighbor . . . *unless* God was in your neighbor, *then* you could love your neighbor with all you’ve got and at the same time love your Lord with all you’ve got.

Perhaps God is in you and in your neighbor like Holy Fire in the Temple, or the Life is in the blood and circulates through the Body like blood in arteries and veins.

If that were the case, *porneou* would be a blood clot. It would be taking life and not giving life. It would be taking life and seeking to control life, for your own ends when Love is freely giving and receiving life, for Love’s own ends. Jesus is the End & Jesus is the Life & we are His Bride—His Body.

Now, that will blow your mind and I doubt that I’ve expressed it well. But I must receive Love freely and give Love freely. However, I mustn’t give sex freely and receive sex freely, for that is to limit love in my marriage, which is a reference to Christ and His love for us.

Sex is a picture of the faithful love that we are each to return to God our husband. Sin is being unfaithful to God and so using love to serve idols, one of which is me.

The problem with *porneou* (whoredom) is that it seeks to turn Love into something small and dead, that I can control when God is Love and to truly love He must control me.

What’s Wrong With Whoredom?

1. It objectifies
2. It quantifies
3. It qualifies
4. It consumes
5. It consumes but will not be consumed
6. It seeks to buy and sell Love.
- 7. It crucifies Love in the flesh.**

I’m saying: the problem with *porneou* is that it crucifies Love in the flesh.

- So whether Jezebel was just teaching folks that God’s favor could be bought with good works, the way that favors would be purchased from idols.
- Or whether Jezebel was teaching some that they could serve an idol a bit and still be able to serve God a lot.
- Or whether Jezebel was teaching that it was fine to have sex with temple prostitutes . . . it was all *porneou* and all the crucifixion of Jesus.

It was the spirit of *porneou* that tempted Eve to take knowledge of Good from the tree in the garden. The Good is God, and God in flesh, is Jesus, and Jesus is the Life. *Taking* that life is the opposite of Love while *receiving* that life as a gift is Love.

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.

It was the spirit of *porneou* that tempted Eve to take the fruit. It was the spirit of *porneou* that tempted the Pharisees to justify themselves and turn Love into law. It was the spirit of *porneou* that infected Jerusalem as she chanted "Crucify, crucify, crucify," and then, "We have no king but Caesar... "Yahweh is not our husband. We offer ourselves to the beast.

In Revelation Chapter 17 we'll meet the great *porne*, the Great Whore named Babylon, but it's clear that she's not simply Babylon. In places, she appears to be the city of Rome. But in other places, she sounds just like Jerusalem.

Throughout the Old Testament Jerusalem is called a Great Whore.

She's also called God's Bride for her "maker is her husband."

She's God's Bride that has made herself a whore.

- Isaiah 1:21 "*How the faithful city has become a whore.*"
- Jeremiah 3:2 "*Where have you not been ravished... you have polluted the land with your whoredom.*"
- Ezekiel has chapters and chapters on her whoredom with Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians and "any passerby."

She's definitely Jerusalem, and probably Rome, and indeed just about any city on the face of the earth. She's an economy of consumption . . . just like ours. And she's dressed in purple that would likely have come from Thyatira. No wonder Jesus seems angry: the spirit of the harlot is infecting His Bride—His priceless little church in Thyatira—whom He loves with all He has and is.

So how will they overcome? How will they conquer the Great Harlot? Well, that is exactly what the vision will describe . . . And that is what the Spirit must communicate to our hearts. How do you conquer the Great Harlot? Well, this is one way

Clip from *Pretty Woman*

[A woman is about to leave her apartment. She suddenly hears honking outside and moves towards a window to check it out. Suddenly, beautiful opera music is playing. She continues towards the window. A man (Edward) comes down the road in a limousine. He is hanging out of the sunroof of the limousine and calls out: "*Vivian!*" "*Vivian!*" The woman in the apartment (Vivian) looks out the window with a huge smile on her face. She giggles and waves.

Clip from *Pretty Woman* continued on the next page

Edward: "*Precious Vivian, come down!*"

[Vivian comes out to her balcony. Edward crawls out of the sunroof and onto the sidewalk moving towards her balcony.]

Edward: "*It had to be the top floor right?*"

Vivian: "*It's the best!*"

Edward: "*All right, I'm coming up!*"

[Edward begins climbing the balcony while dramatic music plays in the background. Vivian lets her hair down in preparation from him. The scene changes to his arrival. The couple is face to face and embracing each other.]

Edward: "*So, what happened after he climbed up the tower and rescued her?*"

Vivian: "*She rescues him right back.*"

[Edward and Vivian passionately kiss while beautiful music continues in the background. The camera pulls back and the scene fades out.]

Vivian was a prostitute and a pretty woman. And that is one way to defeat the Great Harlot. (Perhaps it is the only way.) You could propose to her and turn her into a Bride. And if you were the harlot, you could accept the proposal. Of course, that's Hollywood. Scripture is reality, and far more graphic and real.

In the eighth century BC, God spoke to a man named Hosea, which means "He saves." Hosea 1:2 "...*The LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.*"

Hosea's harlot bride is a picture of Israel.

In chapter 2, The Lord says He will strip Israel bare, uncover her lewdness, and take away all her possessions... and then He says,

"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor (it means trouble) a door of hope... "And in that day, declares the Lord, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.'... That's the name of an idol

And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord.

John records that on Palm Sunday Jesus declared, *“And when I am lifted up from the earth I will draw [allure, or romance] all people to myself.”*

And when He said this, He was speaking of being lifted up on His cross.

Jesus is the door and we meet Him in the place of trouble, where we are stripped bare and have nothing with which to purchase His love. We meet Him in the place where whoredom is no longer an option.

Unlike Vivian in *Pretty Woman*, and unlike Gomer, Hosea’s harlot bride, we actually crucified our Bridegroom on the very day that He proposed. His body broke and blood poured out and it formed a river.

In Revelation 17, we meet the Great Harlot who has seduced God’s people and is described just as Jerusalem. And in Revelation 21 we see the New Jerusalem, who is also God’s people and is no longer a harlot, but a bride.

How do you defeat the Great Harlot? Well in the Revelation, the people of God conquer by being conquered by Love—who is a slaughtered lamb standing on the throne of God. The Lamb conquers the harlot with a covenant . . . of Love.

Now maybe you’re thinking, *“How sweet and kind of cheesy, Peter, although I did enjoy that movie Pretty Woman... but Peter, in verse 23, Jesus said, “...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.”*

“I will strike her children dead.” Yikes! Whose children? Well, I suppose it could be some lady’s children, but I’m guessing it’s the Great Harlot’s children. Revelation 17:5 *“And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: ‘Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.’”* She’s the mother of the earth’s abominations. Well, what’s an abomination? Luke 16:15 And [Jesus] said to [the Pharisees], *“You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”*

What is exalted among men is our pride,
Which tells us that we can justify ourselves,
Which means that we think we can pay for God,
Which means we’re trying to pay for Love and turning God—who is Love—into a whore.

In John 8:41: They say to Jesus, *“We are not born of porneia.”* And Jesus says, *“You are of your father the devil.”* Does Jesus believe that the devil can father children by sleeping with whores? No! Jesus then says, *“the devil is the father of lies.”* He’s the father of a lie about yourself that is your false self, your flesh that is your pride.

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 not your attraction to nipples in fashion magazines.
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.

In Ezekiel 16, Ezekiel is commanded to *"make known to Jerusalem her abominations."* What follows is perhaps the most gut-wrenching and mind-bending chapter in all the Bible. (Some older versions tried to change it because they couldn't stomach it—so I suggest the ESV.)

In Ezekiel 16 God describes how He found Jerusalem as a young girl abandoned in a field, how He cared for her and raised her, how she grew and became beautiful, how he proposed to her and showered her with blessings, but how she trusted in her beauty and played the whore, and how she slaughtered their children in her lust. And how he will pour out His wrath upon Jerusalem, for her pride is far worse than that of *Sodom* and *Samaria*.

And then the Lord issues His judgment and it is this: He will restore Sodom and Samaria to their former glory and restore Jerusalem in their midst, that Jerusalem might bear her disgrace and have compassion on Sodom and Samaria, that she might know Love is free, and then freely bestow it upon them.

Ezekiel 16 ends this way, *"I will establish for you an everlasting covenant... and I will give Sodom and Samaria to you as daughters... 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."*

"When I atone for you."

Communion

When and where was that? Well, that was in Jerusalem, not far from the Valley of Achor, on the night that we all betrayed Him, which was the day He took the bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given to you"... and He took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood."

It was the custom in that day when a boy wanted to marry a girl,

- He would go to her house and tell her that he would prepare a place for her,
- He would present a marriage covenant and the bride price given to her father.
- He would then pour a cup of wine that represented blood, and if she accepted his proposal she would drink from the cup.

Jesus makes an unconditional and eternal covenant, which He pays for in blood. And when He hands the cup to the disciples, they know what He's saying. He's proposing.

In the morning, we all break His body and His blood flows, and He's still proposing. In Revelation 14, Jesus tramples the winepress that is a picture of His cross—wine that is blood that flows out and fills the land to the depth of a horse's bridle. It stops the war horses in their tracks; it burns away pride.

In Revelation 16, seven angels pour out seven bowls of wrath, wrath that is wine and wine that is blood; it must be the blood of the Lamb that is slain for the sins of the world.

It burns away pride, which is the abomination of this earth.

It burns away pride, and the life in the blood turns harlots into brides.

The Great Harlot is judged and then the Bride descends and the voice from the throne says, "*Behold I make all things new.*" "We overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony."

Like I was saying, Jesus took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you for the forgiveness of sins."

How do they conquer in Thyatira?

They conquer by being conquered by Love. They drink from the cup.

To Him who conquers, says Jesus, I will give authority, *exousia*, that's power.

Jesus is God's authority, God's power.

And to him who conquers, says Jesus, I will give the morning star.

That's Venus, and that's Jesus. He is the Beautiful One.

Do you hear what the Lord is saying? I want to give you all my power, and I want to give you all my beauty. But even more, I want to give you "me."

So as a minister of God's word I ask you: Do you now take this God? Do you take this Man, Jesus, to be your lawfully wedded Husband? By coming to the table and drinking from His cup you are saying, "I do."

Prayer

Lord God, we give ourselves to you. We give The Sanctuary to you. We give ourselves to you and we say that you are our Lord and so we invite you to live your life in us—your Body. So, Lord God, whether you lead us out into the wilderness for forty days or you decide to raise the dead and heal the sick among us, we offer ourselves to you and we seek you and ask that you would live your life in us. Be glorified in us, for you Lord God are good. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Benediction

Listen to Song of Solomon 5:1 "*Eat friends, drink and be drunk with love.*" Be drunk by Love. I think Solomon was saying, "Believe the Gospel and live from that place." In Jesus' name, Amen.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.