Revelation 2:18-29 – Tolerance: Virtue or Vice?

Interestingly, the church located in the least significant city receives the longest of the seven letters. But the size of a city or church does not determine its significance. All are important to Christ. Every lampstand is needed where Christ has placed it. And every lampstand needs to shine the light of Christ clearly and brightly and not be dimmed by compromise or corruption as we see in today's letter.

Warm Up Question(s) – choose one

- As a teenager, what person or group influenced you the most (positively or negatively)?
- In what setting have you experienced tolerance as a virtue? As a vice?

Discovering the Word

1) **Read Revelation 2:18-29**. How does Christ introduce himself to this church? What is the meaning and significance of these descriptions? Why are they appropriate for this church?

2) What are the strengths of the church in Thyatira? How do they compare to the strengths of the previous three churches (vv.2-3, 9, 13)? Which of these strengths do you see in your church or small group?

3) Describe the basic problem in this church? How does it compare or contrast with those in the first three churches (v.4, 14-15)? How significant do you think this church's weaknesses are given its strengths?

4) What do you know about the Old Testament character Jezebel (see 1 Kgs 21 = a sample story & 21^{25-26} = a sound bite)?[1] What does the symbolic name "Jezebel" reveal about the woman in this church?

5) Do we have any modern equivalents to "the teachings of Jezebel" (v.20)? Why are Jezebel and her "children" judged so strongly by Christ (vv.22-23; *cf.* Acts 5:1-11)?

6) Rather than "tolerate" Jezebel and her teachings, what should the church have done and be doing (vv.24-25; *cf.* 2:2)?

7) Who or what has played a role similar to Jezebel in your life (names aren't necessary)? How did the Lord free you from that influence?

8) What do you think Jesus promise in verses 26-27 means? What do you appreciate most about the promise to overcomers in this section?

[1] You might want to ask if people if they have any suggestions as to what contemporary film or TV show she might act in if she were alive today.