

Small Group Leader's Guide

Revelation 2:18-29 - Faithful Until Jesus Returns



Warm Up

Introduction: Brief History of Thyatira

Thyatira was the smallest of the seven cities addressed in Revelation 2–3, yet Jesus gave it the longest letter. The city was known for its many **trade guilds**, including workers in textiles, leather, bronze, pottery, and purple dye. Lydia, mentioned in Acts 16:14 as “a seller of purple goods,” was from Thyatira.

For Christians, these trade guilds created spiritual pressure. Guild meetings often included pagan worship, meals dedicated to idols, and immoral practices. Refusing to participate could hurt a person financially or socially. The believers in Thyatira therefore faced a very real question:

How do we remain faithful to Jesus when compromise seems easier and more beneficial?

That same question still speaks to us today.



Know It

1. Keep Growing in Faithful Service - Revelation 2:18–19

Jesus commended the church for their works, love, faith, service, and endurance. He especially noted that their “latter works exceed the first.” They were not simply living on what they had done in the past—they were continuing to grow.

Important Greek Words

ἔργα — erga — “works, deeds”

Their faith was producing visible action.

ἀγάπη — agapē — “love”

Sacrificial, committed love that seeks the good of others.

πίστις — pistis — “faith, faithfulness”

Faith in Christ demonstrated through continued loyalty to Him.

διακονία — diakonia — “service, ministry”

Practical service offered for the good of others.

ὑπομονή — hypomonē — “endurance, steadfastness”

The ability to remain faithful while under pressure.

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Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you most about the qualities Jesus commends in verse 19—works, love, faith, service, or endurance? Why?
2. Jesus says their later works were greater than their first. In what area of your walk with Christ would you most like to see continued growth?
3. What is one practical way you can serve Jesus or someone else more faithfully this week?

Help the group notice what Jesus commends before focusing on what He confronts.

Jesus recognized the good in this church. Remind the group that Jesus sees faithful service even when others may not.

Emphasize the phrase “your latter works exceed the first.”

Spiritual maturity should involve progress. Encourage the group to think about whether their walk with Christ is growing or simply maintaining.

Keep the application practical.

Encourage each person to identify one specific area—love, faith, service, or endurance—where God may be calling them to grow.

2. Refuse to Tolerate Spiritual Compromise - Revelation 2:20–23

Jesus says:

“But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel...”

The issue was not simply that sin existed in Thyatira. The church was allowing false teaching and compromise to continue.

“Jezebel” points back to the Old Testament queen who promoted idolatry and led God's people away from faithfulness to Him.

Important Greek Words

ἀφίημι — aphīēmi — “to allow, permit, tolerate”

The church was allowing something Jesus said needed to be confronted.

διδάσκω — didaskō — “to teach”

The compromise was being taught and passed on to others.

πλανάω — planaō — “to deceive, lead astray”

To cause someone to wander away from truth.

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πορνεία — porneia — “sexual immorality”

A broad term for sexual behavior outside God's design and, in Revelation, often connected with spiritual unfaithfulness.

μετανοέω — metanoeō — “to repent”

A change of mind that produces a change of direction.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Christians can sometimes recognize compromise but still tolerate it?
2. What are some areas where our culture pressures believers to soften, ignore, or compromise biblical truth?
3. How can we stand firmly for biblical truth while still showing genuine love and grace toward people?

Help the group distinguish between loving people and tolerating sin.

Biblical love does not require approving everything a person believes or does. Jesus calls us to hold grace and truth together.

Keep the discussion from becoming only about “the culture.”

Bring the conversation back to personal application by asking where each person may feel pressure to compromise in work, relationships, finances, entertainment, or morality.

Emphasize both holiness and mercy.

Verse 21 says Jesus gave time to repent. Jesus confronts sin because He desires repentance and restoration.

3. Hold Fast to Truth Until Jesus Comes - Revelation 2:24–29

Jesus tells the faithful believers in Thyatira:

“Only hold fast what you have until I come.”

They did not need a new truth or a secret spiritual experience. They needed to remain faithful to what Christ had already given them.

Important Greek Words

κρατέω — krateō — “to hold firmly, grasp, retain”

The picture is of gripping something tightly and refusing to let it go.

νικάω — nikaō — “to overcome, conquer, be victorious”

A key word throughout Revelation describing those who remain faithful to Christ. Jesus also promises the faithful: “I will give him the morning star.”

Revelation 22:16 identifies Jesus as **“the bright morning star.”** The greatest reward of faithfulness is ultimately Christ Himself.

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Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What do you think it practically means to “hold fast” to your faith in everyday life?
2. What truths from God's Word are especially important for you to hold onto when life becomes difficult or confusing?
3. How should knowing that Jesus is coming again change the way we live, make decisions, and set priorities today?

Emphasize that “hold fast” is an active command.

Faithfulness requires intentionality through Scripture, prayer, obedience, Christian community, and dependence upon Christ.

Connect the return of Jesus to everyday life.

Help the group see that the return of Christ should shape priorities, relationships, decisions, and the way we use our time.

End the discussion with hope.

Revelation is not merely a warning against compromise. Jesus is victorious, and those who remain faithful to Him share in His ultimate victory.



Live It

Closing Challenge

Thyatira reminds us that following Jesus requires more than simply starting well.

We are called to:

1. Keep Growing in Faithful Service

- Don't live on yesterday's faithfulness.

2. Refuse to Tolerate Spiritual Compromise

- Love people without compromising God's truth.

3. Hold Fast to Truth Until Jesus Comes

- Stay faithful because Jesus is coming again.
- Keep bringing the discussion back to these three truths.

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Closing Question

What is one area where God may be calling you to be more faithful this week?



Prayer

Closing Prayer

Ask God to help your group continue growing in love and service, recognize and resist compromise, and remain faithful to Jesus until He returns.