



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 9.20.26

Revelation 2:12-29 // Joe Valenti

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

CONNECT (10 MIN)

- ① On Sunday, one of the things Pastor Joe talked about was the role that peer pressure can play in the church. Think back to your early childhood and young adulthood. Can you think of a time in your youth when peer pressure led you to make a decision that you probably wouldn't have made on your own (feel free to use examples that are serious or silly!)?

EXPLORE (30 MIN)

Create Context (5 min):

HERE is the Sermon Recap video playlist on Vimeo.

Study & Discussion (25 min)

Read Revelation 2:12-29.

- ① Take some time to review the "Symbolism and Terms" section on the final page of the Sermon Notes for this week (Sermon Notes can be found at this link or at cvconline.org/sunday).
 - Which of these terms were new to you, or explained to you in new way, during the sermon from Sunday? What is something you learned about them (these new terms) that stood out to you, challenged you, or particularly encouraged you?
 - Which, if any, of these terms or symbols are confusing to you, and why?
- ② In the sermon on Sunday, Pastor Joe talked about two tactics of compromise that Satan uses to destroy churches from the inside: peer pressure (trusting the crowd instead of God), and platform pressure (trusting an influential leader instead of God).
 - Can you think of a time when one of these (peer or platform pressure) was significantly influencing your own spiritual life in an unhealthy way? During that time, what or who was it that addressed that unhealthy influence in a way that helped lovingly correct you?
 - Can you think of someone you know and care about right now who is being over-influenced by peer or platform pressure from the wrong places when it comes to spiritual things? How might the Lord be calling you to step in, speak with, or disciple them with truth and love in this season?



③ Review Revelation 2:12-17. The church in Pergamum was facing a kind of peer pressure - there were some in the church who were sharing and believing false teachings. For those in Pergamum, peer pressure was influencing some in the church to hold to the teaching of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. For us today, peer pressure in the church still exists, but might look a little different. Here are some example that Joe shared of what peer pressure in the church can look like today:

1. Changing our dating standards or sexual behavior to match the culture.
2. Making excuses for media we know is shaping us in unhealthy ways.
3. Changing the way we speak or joke so that we fit in.
4. Letting the American dream shape our budget and giving more to it than to the kingdom of God.
5. Allowing other parents, coaches, or social expectations to determine our parenting convictions.
6. Speaking about politics with more venom than grace.

- Which one of these examples in the list above have you found yourself tempted to do in the past, or do you find yourself tempted to give in to in the present?
- Which of these do you feel are especially prevalent in the circles you inhabit or with the Christians that you know well?
- What do you think it looks like for us, as a church (at CVC) and as individual Christians, to challenge others and invite accountability into our own lives as we seek to fight against peer pressure and cling fast to Jesus and His Word and teachings?

④ Review Revelation 2:18-29. The church in Thyatira was facing a kind of platform pressure - there was a false teacher inside the church who was teaching falsehood and amassing a following. There were others in the church who were opposing this false teaching. Today, platform pressure (like peer pressure) still happens - but can look a little different. Here are some examples of what platform pressure can look like today:

1. Following a well-known pastor, author, or podcaster for so long that we stop noticing when the teaching shifts.
2. Mistaking talent for godliness and giving gifted leaders a private pass on obvious compromise.
3. Excusing sin in leadership because confronting it might damage the ministry.
4. Letting an influencer's confidence or popularity move an idea directly into our beliefs without asking, "Does the Bible actually say that?"

- Which one of these types of platform pressure have you experienced first-hand or seen in the life of someone you know or know about?



- How do you think CVC in particular, and the Western church in general, should resist and/or fight against these forms of platform pressure in an increasingly digital and online age?

⑤ In the church in Pergamum, there were certainly those who were going along with and believing false teaching, but there were also those whom Joe called the “audience” on Sunday - those who didn’t believe false teaching personally, but also didn’t want to address it in the church for fear of causing problems. Jesus called the whole church to repent (verse 16) - those who believed false things, and those who stood by and said nothing.

In the church in Thyatira, it seems there were those who believed false teachings and those, on the other hand, who were standing up against it. To those standing up against falsehood in the church, Jesus said, “Hold fast!” (verse 25).

These churches in the book of Revelation received clarity from Christ Himself about their conduct when it came to false teaching. For Christians today, we may not receive a direct letter from Jesus - but we are still responsible to teach God’s Word rightly and correct false teaching in the Church.

- What steps should a Christian take to address a false teacher or a false teaching that’s exerting influence in the life of a friend, or in the life of our church?
- In assessing the truth and reliability of a teacher or a teaching, what trusted sources should we rely on as we weigh out truth and falsehood?
- When addressing false teaching, there are two pitfalls to avoid. On the one hand, we don’t want to be the audience in Pergamum - standing by as others fall to false teaching. On the other hand, as we strive to stand in truth like those in Thyatira, we don’t want to allow correcting others to become the thing we love more than Christ Himself - we are not seeking to become heartless dogmatists who lack the heart of Jesus.
 - What does it look like to find the balance here, to love Christ and His people and therefore long to correct falsehood boldly without allowing the idea of “being right” to become its own form of idolatry or temptation?

RESOURCES

A Tale of Two Kingdoms Recommended Resources: https://cvconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/TaleOfTwo_Resources_CVC.pdf

CVC Blog: <https://cvconline.org/category/articles/>

To learn more about Polycarp: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Polycarp.html>

To learn more about Balaam: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Balaam-in-the-Bible.html>

To learn more about Ahab and Jezebel: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Ahab-and-Jezebel.html>

PRAY AND APPLY

- Pray for discernment to recognize compromise that comes disguised as acceptance, influence, or belonging.
- Pray for courage to repent where cultural pressure has quietly shaped our convictions or conduct.
- Pray for CVC to love one another enough to confront compromise rather than silently tolerate it.
- Pray for wisdom to test every pastor, author, podcaster, teacher, and influencer by Scripture rather than platform or popularity.
- Pray for those who have never trusted Jesus to hear his warning as a gracious invitation to repent and believe.



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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please take a moment to share
these announcements with your group.

CONNECT

Pizza with the Pastor - September 27

We'd love the opportunity to get to know you and help you get to know us. Join us for Pizza with the Pastor, It's a relaxed, informal time to connect with one of our pastors, hear more about CVC, ask questions, and discover your next steps. Join us at CVC in Lower Level 114 at CVC after the 11:15 service. Register [HERE](#)

JOIN CVC - October 11

To become a member of our church, attendance at two classes is required. The first class is called Explore CVC, and the second is Join CVC. Completion of both is necessary for membership. Explore CVC is required before you can take Join CVC.

[Register here.](#)

GENEROUS LIFE

Leave a Legacy, Not a Mess - October 6

As Christians, we should be very intentional about how we use the resources God has given us to steward, both while we are living and after we die. This FREE workshop will provide you with key estate planning information so that you can plan for you and your family's future. WHO SHOULD COME TO THIS? EVERYONE, regardless of age, marital status, or financial status. It is designed to serve those who do not have a will/trust in force and for those who have a will/trust that needs to be reviewed and updated. And if you have minor children, this will be extremely helpful because having a guardianship plan in place is a huge part of planning for your future in the event something happens to you. Register [HERE](#)