

“I know all the things you do. I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance. I know you don’t tolerate evil people. You have examined the claims of those who say they are apostles but are not. You have discovered they are liars.”
Revelation 2:2 NLT

lectio // Revelation 2:1-7

What a shocker right? Jesus comments to the seven churches in Revelation. Ephesus, we know a little about it because of the deep work Paul did. Not only writing to the church in Ephesus, but also two more letters to Timothy about how to Pastor a metropolitan, wealthy, influential church. Ephesus had a lot of itinerant preachers, speakers and philosophers come through. It was like the gold rush of ideas and commerce. It was a boon town! It’s STILL there!! At least some of it is, and it’s still massive and modern. Paul rode Timothy hard about doctrine, heresy and false teachers. He gave Tim a backbone to stand up to religious nonsense and to call the church to both unity and purity of the gospel. And Jesus COMPLIMENTS them on accomplishing that task. But they forgot something incredibly important in all the focused fury to eliminate all falsity, the lack LOVE. The words of Paul in Corinth ring out... you had all the bells and whistles of righteousness, but what about LOVE? Love for me, he writes which is absolutely connected to how we love each other. What about love? What is it about fighting for and protecting the gospel, the beliefs we hold so dearly, that we lose the core of WHY the gospel exists? We’re pure, but we don’t love. We’re right, but we don’t get along well with each other. We’ve crushed fake-religion and TV evangelists, but we lost ourselves and our love for God. God says, yeah we both hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, but you still gotta change - go back to fundamentals, your first deeds of... LOVE.

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Dad,
Again, I can’t get this theme out of my head. As humans we work so hard to protect, defend and try to force people to truth and to keep your ways, but it seems we eventually fall into the same trap - CONTROLLING others instead of loving others. I don’t want to control anyone, I just want them to do right, be right, act right! But the same love that sees potential must be willing to let them go - let them work that out with the Holy Spirit. I cannot and should not control or manipulate to right thinking or behavior, it’s just too risky of losing love for you and definitely for others. Please help me on this.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root