

Thyatira, a Church in Need of Cleansing

Revelation 2:18-25



“Whenever there are domineering, power-seeking “church bosses” like Thyatira’s Jezebel; whenever Christians begin to accommodate themselves to the moral laxity and impurity of the surrounding society; wherever Christians slip into the idolatrous mindset of allowing ambition, self-gratification, and pride to remove God from the throne of their lives; whenever church structure becomes more important than Christian love, service, faith, and perseverance – at that point, that church, regardless of its denomination or its history, has become Thyatiran in character. The Lord will repay that church according to her deeds.” Stedman

- I. Jesus begins his letter to the church of Thyatira by emphasizing His Lordship over, awareness of and judgment toward His bride, the body of Christ. He wants the church He loves to understand that He takes seriously the spiritual attitude of His church. The emphasis on Jesus’ deity affirms His absolute authority over everything a church does. The emphasis on Jesus’ awareness shows that He is aware of everything that goes on in the church, good or bad. And the emphasis on Jesus’ judgment tells us that he will judge each church according to how well they represented Him as salt and light in a world in desperate need of the truth of the gospel.

Rev 2:18-19

Phil. 1:27 *Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel.*

- II. The church of Thyatira appeared to be a good church to be a part of. Its attitude of love, faith, service, and steadfast spiritual growth were commendable attributes in a culture steeped in the economy of idol worship. Yet, there was something dreadfully wrong deep within its leadership structure. Church leadership allowed Satan, who disguises himself as an angel of light, to gain a foothold through a very persuasive, dynamic, powerful woman who led the church into immorality and the worship of false gods. Many in the church chose to follow her instead of Christ. Were they false Christians (the church is full of them), weak immature believers, carnal believers? Whatever the case might have been, Jesus, unless they repented and submitted to His Lordship, would judge them severely with some suffering both a physical and spiritual death and others suffering a premature physical death because of their disobedience.

Rev. 2:20-23

2 Cor. 11:14

1 Kings 16:29-33

2 Tim. 2:12-3

Jezebel = "chaste"

1 Timothy 4:1 *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.*

- III. Jesus tells us that we are to watch out that no one deceives us, that many will turn away from the faith and that many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. He also tells us that those who stand firm till the end will be saved (Matt. 24:10-13). As an encouragement to us, the faithful believers in Thyatira give us an example to live by in this confusing and debauched world. They refused to accept or even consider any teaching other than the truth of God's Word. They refused to be deceived by the world and its ways. And they kept a firm grip on their relationship with Jesus Christ. All overcomers will be rewarded with the privilege of co-ruling with Christ and sharing in His glory during His millennial reign here on earth.

Rev. 2:24-29

Ps. 2:9

"The word for 'rule' (Gr. poimanei) means literally 'to shepherd.' Their rule will not be simply that of executing judgment, but also that of administering mercy and direction."
(Walvoord) Guzik