

REVELATION

The Church of Thyatira - The Importance of Holiness

Icebreaker

What is a movie that you dislike that seemingly everyone else loves? Why are you able to maintain your position even though most people disagree with you?

Context

Jesus moves on to the next church in our circular journey in Turkey. The city of Thyatira is the smallest of the seven cities receiving letters. They are not wealthy, spiritually famous, or politically powerful. They do have several crafts and trade guilds that exert great influence in the community though. While Thyatira may be the smallest and least significant of the places mentioned in these seven letters, it is the longest letter Jesus sends.

We will see that Thyatira has all of the positive qualities mentioned about the previous three churches. They have much that is commendable, but they have allowed a false teacher to remain in their midst. Like a wolf among the sheep, several in the church are being harmed spiritually. What is at stake in Thyatira is not doctrine or motivation but moral conduct.

One of the most prominent attributes of God is his holiness. He is without error or moral defect. He calls his people to reflect that character in their lives as well. Failure to live out a life of holiness requires a response from the Lord. Thankfully, God's grace is available as well.

Passage

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

19 " 'I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. 20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. 22 Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into



great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, 23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. 24 But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. 25 Only hold fast what you have until I come. 26 The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, 27 and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 2:18–29.

Sermon Notes

1. Our Savior Is the All-Seeing Warrior

- a. Penetrating Insight
- b. Fiery Wrath Against Sin
- c. Mighty Warrior
- d. Pure and Holy

2. Jesus Is Pleased with Progress

3. Don't Tolerate False Teachers

Heed the Warning- Jeremiah 29:8

Test the Spirits- 1 John 4:1

4. The Result of Sin Is Always the Same... Death

Romans 6:23

5. God's Grace Is Available to All, but His Patience Has Limits

2 Peter 3:9

6. God's Grace Is Even Seen In Our Rewards



Post Sermon Questions

If your group is meeting after hearing the sermon, here are some basic questions to discuss among the group.

1. What did you like about the sermon, or what was one of the more important things you heard in the sermon?
2. What was something in the sermon that caused you to have questions?
3. What did we learn about Jesus in this passage?
4. What do we learn about man (or human nature) in this passage?
5. Are there any sins we need to confess because of this passage?
6. Are there any actions we should take in light of this passage?

Discuss

Full Disclosure: A couple of these questions are taken from Dr. Daniel Akins' commentary on Revelation in the Christ-Centered Exposition series.

1. For those who have been studying with us from the beginning, what do the eyes like flames of fire and the feet like burnished bronze symbolize or represent? The city of Thyatira was known for their bronze making, why do you think Jesus made a point to note that his feet are "burnished" or "fine" bronze?

Read Psalm 4:2, Hebrews 4:15, and James 1:13. What do these verses tell us about the holiness of God?

Read 1 Peter 1:15-16. How important is holiness in the life of a Christian?
2. What do you think it means that Jesus commends the church for their latter works exceeding their earlier works? Do you think it is important for churches and Christians to be growing? (in works and holiness, not necessarily in attendance) What are good works that our church, Family Church, that God has called us to do and we do them well?
3. Give the definition of "tolerate." We hear the word "tolerate" used today in a different way: is supporting and encouraging someone to do something that was previously considered unacceptable equal toleration? Why or why not?
4. What character traits or actions does a false teacher have/do to help them win over people? What is a Christian's defense against false teachers?
5. What does it mean to "repent?" Does it surprise you that "Jezebel" was given an opportunity to repent in the past? Why or why not? Does it surprise you that in this letter it appears she will not be given another chance to repent? Why or why not?
6. Why does Jesus keep bringing up the sins/false teachings concerning food sacrificed to idols (it is more than just eating the food, it is the participation in



the worship of a pagan god) and sexual immorality so often? Do you think these are an issue today in the church?

7. How are the mercy and patience of Christ seen in this passage, even in judgment?
8. Why is it that so often claims that promise a deeper and more profound spirituality often end up losing the biblical gospel in the process? How does Revelation 2:24-25 encourage us to respond?
9. Jesus promises those who overcome authority to rule and they will be given the morning star (Jesus himself). Do Christians “earn” those or are they gifts given to them? Why does Jesus point out that the authority he has to rule was given to him?

Next Steps

Reflect on the books you read, the sermons and podcasts you listen to, and the shows that you watch. Are there any false teachers you are allowing to speak into your life?

Are there any practices/sins that you find yourself committing consistently? Repent of those sins and ask the Holy Spirit help you resist temptation. For example, Job in Job 31:1 talks about making a covenant with his eyes to avoid sin.

This is not a “one and done” kind of decision, especially for sin that seems to entangle us often. We must resist temptation with the Holy Spirit’s help, moment by moment. It must be consistent and persistent choice to resist temptation. The first step is to avoid temptation, and then flee it when it presents itself to you.

