

We now come to the church at Thyatira. You could draw a circular road and travel to these church in the order that they are being addressed – John follows the geographical order here, for Thyatira lay a little to the left of the road from Pergamos to Sardis. Lydia, the purple-seller of this city, having been converted at Philippi, a Macedonian city (with which Thyatira was a Macedonian colony), by the apostle Paul with Silas in Acts 16 and was probably the instrument of first carrying the Gospel to her native town. Bordering upon Mysia on the north and Lydia on the south, Thyatira was a town of trade.

## **Prop. Thyatira was a Church of Doctrinal Compromise**

### **I. The Lord's Commendation**

A) This church was one that was thriving and active in the work of the Lord (**v. 19**)

1) They were as good as all the previous churches in their deeds

They had deeds like the church at Ephesus, but had not lost that agapn love for Christ – and they had a disposition to do good to all men, or more special, to the household of faith

They had a great faith which enabled them to do these mighty things for God

They had a great service – They were very active in their lives

They had perseverance like the church at Smyrna

2) Not only this, but they were a growing church

It doesn't say that they were growing in membership – But rather in effective service

Jesus notes that their later deeds were greater than the former – They were increasing in effective service

They were not stagnant or just keeping the status quo going along – This is an excellent character; when others had *left their first love*, and *lost their first zeal*, these were growing wiser and better.

Does this describe us as a church? – Are we seeking to expand our effective ministry – Are we prayerfully seeking what the Lord would have us to do as a church? It should be the ambition and earnest desire of all Christians that their last works may be their best works, that they may be better and better every day, and best at last.

### **II The Lord's Complaint**

A) There was one person in the church who was causing havoc (**v. 20**)

1) This was a person that Jesus equated with Jezebel (Read 1 Kings 16:29-33) – Set a new standard for corruption

2) Her teaching was the same as what Baal worship did in Israel:

Baal was a male deity associated with the rainfall – and hence crop production

Ahserah was the feminine counterpart that was a fertility goddess

Worship to these involved prostitution and open immorality – That's what Jezebel was key in bring in

B) That's what happened in Thyatira – This self-proclaimed prophetess lead people astray

1) She led them away from God to a false god

2) She led them to acts of immorality

3) This Jezebel had threatened the life of Elijah the Prophet (1 Kings 19:1-3) and had Naboth killed so her husband could get her vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-16)

She was a very evil and shrewd woman

C) This reveals to us that Jesus believed the Old Testament the way that it is written – **Same one that you have today**

1) He believed this account of Jezebel as being factually true (from 1 Kings 16) – He told the church at Pergamum that they had people who held to the teaching of Balaam (From Numbers 25)

When Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, 3 times He quoted from the Book of Deuteronomy

So Jesus believes that the Bible is accurate, factual and authoritative – Anyone claiming Christ today who doesn't believe this about the Bible is at odds with the very Savior they claim!

2) This is the second church that Jesus has had to address the practice of immorality (v. 20) – v. 14

- a) When people give into false teachings or indulge the desires of the old nature – This is generally the first to show up
- b) It is a natural desire – But when the constraints that God places within us are removed – Then it goes like wildfire

It is so subtle because it can happen under the surface in the people's private lives – Not be readily apparent to many in the church –

But Jesus sees and knows all (v. 23) – And He keeps tabs on what church people are doing – Including you here today

D) Notice that this was the only defect that this church had – Yet Jesus would not overlook it

- 1) The church was doing many good things for the Kingdom of God
- 2) Yet with just one defect – Jesus still cannot ignore it  
Because Jesus has called church members – You and me – To walk in holiness before Him  
Not in sinless perfection – As though we were beyond sinning at all – But repentant of all know sin

E) This is precisely what this woman wouldn't do (v. 21)

- 1) Jesus gave her a season to repent – In His mercy, He gives people a time to turn and avert the judgment  
Yet she refused – And this is what brings the judgment of God down upon anyone – Having the truth revealed and refusing to do what God wants

F) Jesus judges this teaching with the utmost severity (v. 22-23) – Why?

- 1) A life of sexual Immorality will lead people to eternal damnation – Not what the Lord wants  
( I Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:4-5, Heb. 13:4, Rev. 21:8)

He promises to effectively judge the children of this (Offspring of those who teach this to their children and they practice it)

If He doesn't nip this in the bud – It will continue on for generations!

- 2) Jesus is intolerant of other religions

He is the only way to the true God – Any other way or any other God is idolatry  
Jesus is intolerant of it because it leads people away from Him and ending up lost forever  
This is the essence of the first commandment – You shall have no other gods before Me

- 3) To present to the other churches just what a jealous judge He really is (v. 23) – TAKE NOTE!!!

- a) This is the way that He presented Himself to this church (v. 18)
- b) He is the the very Son of God – God Himself in a human being
- c) He has eyes like a flame of fire – They see all and can burn away all facades from the surface
- d) He has feet like burnished bronze – Representative of Judgment  
He depicts Himself to this church as the Lord who won't let you get away with a thing!

G) There is also a stinging rebuke to the others in the church (v. 20) – You tolerated it

- 1) The leadership had to know about it – And did nothing to expose her or to stop her
- 2) The average person in the pew should have known this right up  
God expects you to keep your Bibles open and examine what is going on  
When this was written – Only parts of the New Testament were formed  
But this would be quite evident to the people reading the Old Testament – Which is the example that Jesus used

## II The Lord's Encouragement

A) Jesus encourages the others to Press On (vv. 24-25)

- 1) They have not given into this false teaching – Which is commendable

2) But He also instructs them to hold fast what they have already

This is their faith in Him and their faithful service to Him – They are to keep these things and keep using them

B) The Lord offers a special reward to those who will (v. 26)

1) He wouldn't have to do this you know – But this shows you the marvelous grace of our Loving Lord

2) Not only does He sternly correct – But He graciously rewards with things that are beyond all human ability

3) It is promised to those who overcome – Not be deceived and sucked in by this false teaching

And He who keeps His deeds unto the end – Not just a one-time act – But a life of service

**What are these great and precious Promises?  
Do you want them today?**

C) Authority Over the Nations!

1) This reference is from Psalm 2 and talks about the Messiah when He comes to rule ON the earth OVER His enemies

“Ask of Me and I will surely give the nations for Thine inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.” (Psalm 2:8-9)

2) This is what will happen when Jesus returns and defeats all powers against Him at the Battle of Armageddon  
He will utterly destroy all kings, rulers and armies gathered against Him

He will utterly defeat all powers of Satan, demons and hell and the anti-christ

3) Jesus promises His overcomers to be there with Him when this happens

Can you imagine seeing all this happen first-hand?

And not only be there to see it first hand – But to be there and actually take the place of authority over them

4) To take the place as an under-lord under Jesus Himself OVER the nations of the earth!

This is what He promises! – We shall rule and reign with Him – “...they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6)

D) The Morning Star (v. 28)

1) This is the promise of having the abiding presence of Jesus Himself

“I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star.” (Rev. 22:16)

That in itself would be the greatest thing of all – Yet the Lord graciously promises even more than that

## **CONCLUSION**

The message to Thyatira required decisive action – Christ will not tolerate false teaching

It not only denies Himself personally, but it also destroys the life and vitality of the church

But to those who will – The Lord brings great rewards