

## 7. The Message to the Church at Thyatira

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Christ said that He will judge those who follow the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. We also saw that we want to help them explain the blessings promised to the true followers of Christ. In this topic, we will see that Christ gave John a message to write to the church at Thyatira.

In Revelation 2:18-19, we read, “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, ‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first.’” We begin these verses by seeing that Christ has eyes like a flame of fire. This makes it clear that Christ can see and know the thoughts and intents of the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7 says, “But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *the LORD does* not *see* as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’” In addition, His feet are like fine brass. In the Old Testament, the altar where Israel offered their sacrifices was made of bronze (brass). The sacrifices offered on that altar were a covering for sin. As a result, brass speaks of judgment.

Christ began by speaking about the things that were good in the church at Thyatira. First, we see that Christ knew their works. The word translated “works” talks about “*business, employment, acts or deeds that a person does*”. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Christ looked at the works of the church at Thyatira and saw that they were good works. Second, Christ saw that the church was a church that had a real love. 1 John 4:7 says, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” Love was shown by their actions toward one another. Third, Christ saw the service of the church at Thyatira. The word translated “service” means *ministry or service to others*. Colossians 4:17 says, “And say to Archippus, ‘Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.’” The Christians in Thyatira were carrying out the ministry the Lord had given to them.

Fourth, Christ saw the faith of the church at Thyatira. Faith is the conviction that God is the provider of all things or that Christ is the only One who can provide eternal salvation for us. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 says, “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father.” The faith of the Christians at Thyatira was faith in both the Father and the Son because Christ recognized their faith. Fifth, Christ saw the patience of the church at Thyatira. The word translated “patience” means *endurance or patience especially under suffering*. James 1:3-4 says, “Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” Sixth, their works are mentioned a second time so their works were increasing.

Then, Christ began to warn about the sins of the church at Thyatira. Revelation 2:20-23 says, “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things

sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.” Here, we see that many in the church were being deceived by a false prophetess.

This false prophetess was named Jezebel which may have been her real name or may have referred to the fact that she was like the Old Testament Jezebel recorded in 1 Kings 16 through 2 Kings 9. This woman was guilty of trying to get the Christians in Thyatira to commit the same sins that Jezebel in the Old Testament tried to get Israel to commit. Here, we see that she was working “to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.” In a letter to the Gentiles in Acts 15, following the Jerusalem Council, the church at Jerusalem wrote, in Acts 15:28-29, “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.” Blood and things strangled would go back to Genesis 9:4-6.

However, sexual immorality and idol worship are a violation of the first two principles mentioned in Genesis. Genesis 2:24 says, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” This principle was given to Adam and Eve who had no father or mother to leave so it was a principle for all future generations. Any form of sexual immorality is a violation of this principle. That is why 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 says, “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” We are to be different than the world and flee immorality because we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. That is why Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” The greatest testimony that we can have for Christ in this world is to live our lives differently than the world especially in these two areas.

Genesis 4:3-5 says, “And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.” Cain became the first idol worshiper and brought the result of his own works as an offering to God. God made it clear that we cannot worship God by offering our own works to Him instead of coming by faith. 2 Corinthians 6:15-18 says, “And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.’” False teachers try to get Christians to violate one or

both of these principles.

God gave this false prophetess time to repent of her own sexual immorality but she did not repent. God said that he will judge all those who follow her teachings and her ways unless they repent. Those followers of these teachings and ways when Christ comes for the church will experience the great tribulation because they are not true believers. Christ searches the minds and the hearts. As unbelievers they will experience eternal separation and judgment because they will be judged according to their works.

Christ then gave promises to those who have not known the depths of Satan. Revelation 2:24-29 says, “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. But hold fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels— as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” Christ said that those who have followed the ways of this false prophetess have known the depths of Satan and will be judged with Satan. However, those who are true followers of Christ are set free from their burdens.

Christ said that all true followers are to hold fast until He comes. Christ gave a promise to those who overcome and carry out the works of Christ until the end. Christ said that He will give them power to rule over the nations. This is delegated power from Christ. Matthew 28:18 says, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’” Christ is the One who will rule with a rod of iron. Revelation 19:15 says, “Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” When Christ came the first time He came as the Savior. When Christ comes the second time He will come to judge the nations. In Revelation 2:28, we see that this power has been delegated to Christ by the Father. As a result, Jesus will be carrying out the will of the Father.

To each one who have kept His works, Christ promises that He will give him the morning star. In Revelation 22:16, we read, “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” All believers have received Christ as our Lord. Here, we see that we will have Christ as our Savior and Lord throughout eternity. He will be the One who gives us Light for all eternity. Christ then concludes this message just as He has concluded the message to each of the other churches. Christ says that we are to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the lessons that Christ taught about the church in Thyatira. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain the lessons we can learn from each of the churches.