

- I) V18 INTRO: And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son
  
- II) As I have been reminding you, each letter to the churches has at least three applications
  - PRIMARY: Each letter has a direct bearing on the Churches addressed
  - PERSONAL: Each Church had people present, at that time, who needed to hear
  - PROPHETIC: Each church represents an of the church throughout history
  
- III) Ephesus is the Church from the Apostolic Age to 160 AD: The church in its Infancy  
Smyrna represents the Church from (160 to 312 AD): The Church under Persecution  
Pergamos represents the Compromising Church: (313-600 AD)
  
- IV) Today we examine the Church of Thyatira (600-1500 AD): The Church in *Apostasy*
  
- V) APOSTASY: Apostasy is a voluntary abandonment of the Christian faith and lifestyle
  
- VI) BACKGROUND: Thyatira was a small city located 48 mi. SE of Pergamos  
Alexander the Great established it as a Macedonian colony after the destruction of the Persian Empire. Because it was located in a rich agricultural area, it was distinguished for its industrial activity and was prosperous in trade and commerce. It was especially famous for its *purple dye*.
  
- VII) ORIGIN OF CHURCH: Unknown: May have been founded through the witness of Lydia
  
- VIII) WHILE IN PHILIPPI: On the Sabbath, Paul had gone to share the gospel  
Ac 16:13-15 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a *dealer in purple cloth* from the city of *Thyatira*, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.
  
- IX) It is possible that the church began in this way
  
- X) V18 These things says the *Son of God*, who has eyes like a flame of fire and His feet I mentioned that each introduction used an image given to us in chapter one

- XI) In Rev 1:13 Jesus was spoken of as the Son of Man  
Here, Jesus is the Son of God, which stresses His deity in contrast to the *Son of Man*
- XII) That verse emphasized that Jesus was a sympathetic high priest, who understood us
- I) This is what the writer of Hebrews told us about Jesus  
Heb 4:14-15 So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for He faced all of the same testings we do, yet He did not sin.
- II) V18 His using the title Son of God would emphasize His deity and not His humanity  
He is not relating to the church as a sympathetic High Priest, but as their judge  
He is not bringing comfort to the church, but is bringing judgment if they do not repent
- III) KEY: Jesus as *the Son of God* is an essential of the Christian faith  
Jn 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.  
1 Jn 4:15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.
- IV) John makes it clear that believing Jesus is the Son of God is essential to salvation  
1 Jn 5:12-13 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.
- V) QUESTION: Why would Jesus identify Himself as the *Son of God*?  
He said this because *the worship of His mother Mary* was entering into the Church  
As the *Son of God*, He rebuked the church that would degrade Him and keep Him the son of a *human mother* while exalting her above Him as the mother of God and the Queen of Heaven.
- VI) GILL: Mary, his mother according to the flesh, was but a mere human being but was being called the daughter of God, and was set upon the same level with Him, and even preferred to him
- VII) PROPHETIC: The seduction of worship from God to Mary was occurring  
This the Lord would not tolerate  
So He is identified as the Son of God to remind the readers of *His deity*

VIII) We need to remember that Jesus' mother Mary exalted Jesus, not herself (Jn 14:6)

Lu 1:46-47 My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior

Mt 12:46-50 While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

I) Lu 11:27-28 As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." He replied, "Blessed *rather* are those who hear the word of God and obey it.

II) Mary said something that we all should pay close attention to

Jn 2:5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

III) Mary is last seen in Ac 1:4 (though she was most likely present at Pentecost)

IV) This introduction is from John's initial description of Jesus found in 1:14-15

Notice how Jesus describes Himself:

V) V18 Who has eyes like a flame of fire and His feet like fine brass

His eyes are like a *flame of fire*, searching out and making true judgment of evil

VI) One commentator noted that the people of Thyatira worshiped the sun God, *Tyrimnas*

Jesus using the phrase eyes of fire would remind the church of this form of worship

His eyes were bright and penetrating, searching the hearts of the people (V23)

VII) His *feet* were like fine brass (speaking of holiness and firmness)

Brass is often used to symbolize judgment: He is the One who stamps out evil

V27 says They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels, showing judgment

VIII) This picture is a bit different than many artist's conceptions of Him!

IX) V19 *Commendation*: I know your works, love, service (spiritual), faith, and your patience

- X) **THESE:** Are beautiful earmarks of a church  
**WORKS:** These are to be expected of all believers  
Eph 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.  
Heb 6:10 For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.
- XI) **LOVE:** For God and others, which is the earmark of a Christian: (Jn 13:34-35)  
**SERVICE:** Ministry, spiritual service (Merciful service to the fellowship)  
**FAITH:** Loyalty, faithfulness: They were reliable, dependable  
**PATIENCE:** Steadfastness, constancy, endurance: In the NT the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his loyalty to God by even the greatest trials and sufferings
- XII) **V19 NOTICE:** As for your works, you have *even worked harder*, not less as time goes on
- I) The good works are increasing
- II) Unlike many churches, they have continued being faithful *over time*  
Gal 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.  
1 Pe 2:15 this is the will of God that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men
- III) **V20** Nevertheless I have a few things against you because you allow that woman Jezebel
- IV) **CONDEMNATION:** There is spiritual wickedness in the Church  
The problem was not something external but internal, coming from *within the church*
- V) They had given a teaching position to a woman who was teaching error to the church  
This actually has a two-fold element
- VI) **FIRST:** Women are not to be given teaching positions over the entire church (pastorally)  
1 Ti 2:12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence
- VII) Obviously, women hold various roles in the church but not as the pastor teacher

- VIII) This prohibition can cause some to get upset and angry  
It seems to denigrate and de-value women  
If there were no women leading churches many churches would close their doors
- IX) This especially causes the younger generation to disassociate from the church
- X) When younger people are asked why they reject the church, they give various reasons  
They see older Evangelicals as ignorant, angry Right-wingers who hate homosexuals and are skeptical of things like global warming  
They think of the church as a subculture that is unwelcoming to the young and secular  
They reject Christianity's claim of exclusivity as to truth and salvation  
They think that the preaching and teaching of the pastors is superficial
- XI) Because pastors know this, sometimes the response is to water down the message
- XII) We can try to become so relevant that we actually become distasteful to non Christians  
Many see the church today as entertainment driven", which it can often become  
Trying to reach people, we try to become cool and forget the power of God's Word
- I) QUOTE: The Church is going to have to become more authentic *morally*, for the greatness of the Gospel is now seen to have become quite trivial and inconsequential in its life. If the Gospel means so little to the Church...why then should unbelievers believe it?
- II) REMEMBER: Ephesus did not tolerate false teaching, but was spiritually cold  
Thyatira was *loving*, but the lack of discernment led them to tolerate false teaching
- III) This condition continues to exist today  
One Church is thought of as loving, yet is not discerning about false teaching  
Another church is rigidly orthodox, but is looked at as being cold and unloving
- IV) We need to hold to the proper study and teaching of scripture while loving people  
This woman was given a teaching position and had introduced error into the church
- V) NOTICE: She was *calling herself a prophetess*
- VI) Because of this, Jesus speaks sternly to the angel (pastor) of the church

You are tolerating heretics to enter into the Church, and to infect it

VII) EXHORTATION: Pastor, you must safeguard the flock against these kinds of things

VIII) This is your responsibility: teach your people the counsel of God, consistently

2 Ti 4:2-3 Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

IX) In the OT, Jezebel was the wife of King Ahab, and she introduced idolatry into Israel  
1 Ki 16:30-31 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

X) OBVIOUSLY: Jezebel is a symbolic name, emphasizing her wickedness  
She was influencing the people to do evil

XI) V20 Jezebel of Thyatira was bringing immorality and doctrinal error into the church  
This is done by emphasizing *love* while neglecting doctrine and moral purity  
This is common even today as people consider tolerance more important than truth

In the case of Christians, this is the fruit of not reading the bible and poor teaching

I) Her teachings allowed sexual immorality and idolatry  
Some commentators believe that she taught gnostic heresy

II) For them, the spirit is good and the flesh is evil  
In the end, since God is interested in the spirit it doesn't matter what you do in flesh

This means you can commit sexual sin or practice idolatry and it doesn't matter

III) She may have twisted the teaching of God's grace to make anything permissible  
Since God forgives people of sins, then don't worry if you continue practicing them

IV) Paul had much to say on this way of thinking

Ro 6:1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

- V) V21 I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality and *she did not repent*  
She had undoubtedly been warned through the Word, and refused to turn  
Even though she would have been clearly instructed, she refused to listen
- VI) She certainly must have felt that based on her influence, that she was above correction  
The real reason she did not repent is she loved what she was doing  
Jn 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, *and men loved darkness rather than light*, because their deeds were evil.
- VII) V22-23 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into
- VIII) HIS JUDGMENT: She and her *illegitimate converts* will go through great tribulation  
This would speak specifically of great pressures and difficulties  
This included believers who were deceived by her teachings: they will reap from it
- IX) WHY SUCH HARSH TREATMENT: What is wrong with making a simple mistake  
These were not simple errors but intentional lies  
The lies produced false hope and a False faith
- X) It is only the truth sets you free, not error  
Dt 12:32 Whatever I command you be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it  
Pr 30:6 Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar
- XI) V23 And I will kill her children with death and all the churches shall know that I am He  
Jezebel is unrepentant, but Jesus gives her spiritual children opportunity to repent  
He will do what ever is necessary to purge the church of its error
- I) Jesus' words should awaken us to the importance of believing the right things  
What we believe produces the way that we live
- II) Jezebel's teaching produced ungodly fornicators, and Jesus said He would deal with it  
Col 3:25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.
- III) He searches the minds and the hearts and gives each according to their works

All the churches would see how He deal with such error, and learn not to tolerate sin

IV) V24 But to you I say and *to the rest* in Thyatira as many as do not have this doctrine He writes to those remaining faithful to the Lord and have resisted the false teachings

V) Notice how He speaks of the depths of Satan

They thought they could give the spirit to God, and the body to the flesh and the devil

They believed they could plumb the depths of Satan's secrets and remain *unscathed*

This was not true and they should turn from this evil doctrine

VI) V24 I will put on you no other burden

You are burdened by false teaching, immoral living, and pressure from Jezebel That is burden enough for you to bear

VII) V25-27 Hold fast what you *have till I come*. And he who overcomes and *keeps My works*

Persevere in your works, love service faith and patience *until I come*

This refers to His immediate judgment that is about to take place on the church

VIII) In a wider sense all believers are to hold fast (under intense pressure) till He comes  
Ro 12:9 Cling to what is good

IX) REWARD: To him I will give power over the nations

Those who remain faithful to Jesus will rule with Him in His millennial kingdom

2 Ti 2:12 If we endure, We shall also reign with *Him*

Pr 14:14 The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good man rewarded for his.

X) V28-29 I WILL GIVE HIM: The Morning Star (The Morning Star is a title of Jesus Himself)

Rev 22:16 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*

XI) The promise: A deep and abiding fellowship with Jesus which is truly knowing Him