

The Messages of Jesus to the 7 Churches

Adultery & Death:

The Churches at Thyatira & Sardis

Revelation 2:18-29; 3:1-6

Introduction:

Briefly review the church of Pergamum.

So far, of the 4 churches we have already studied (Ephesus, Smyrna, & Pergamum) which is our church most like? Which church are you most like in your own life?

We will now study the next two churches: Thyatira & Sardis. Thyatira has some of the same problems that Pergamum had. Sardis receives the strongest rebuke and call to repentance of all of the 7 churches. We will study the letter to the church of Thyatira first.

The Church at Thyatira

Now we will look at the next church to receive a letter from our Lord: Thyatira.

Read Revelation 2:18-29.

The Descriptions of Jesus (2:18, 23):

1. **He is the Son of God.**
2. **He has eyes like the flame of fire.**
3. **He has feet like burnished bronze.**
 - Jesus, the son of Mary of Nazareth, is the Son of God. One of the Eternal and Almighty Three-in-One. He is the Holy One, the Judge of all the earth, as shown by his eyes like fire. The feet of bronze reveal His power and strength. We have seen these images already in ch. 1.
4. **He searches the minds and hearts.**
 - Jesus knows us. We have already been encouraged by His knowledge of our endurance and sufferings for Him. We must also remind ourselves continually that He also knows our sins. Yes, we are forgiven through His grace by His blood, but we are still accountable to Him for how we live.
5. **He rewards according to our works.**

APPLICATION: We must never forget that we Christians will stand before Jesus Christ and give an account to Him as well. We are saved by grace and are no longer condemned, but all of our good works will be rewarded and our worthless works destroyed. We will face great shame before God if we fail to walk in faithfulness and holiness while we live our lives. His justice about our rewards will be just as righteous as His justice towards the sins of the wicked. We will only be rewarded in accordance with our works for God.

Praise from Jesus for the Church in Thyatira (2:19):

1. **They were full of good works.**

2. **They had endurance.**

3. **They had experienced much spiritual growth.**

- Jesus gives praise to the church at Thyatira because they had grown much in the grace of God. They had become a church full of good works. They had endured persecution and had experienced much growth so that they were much stronger now than they were when they first believed.

APPLICATION: *Since you have believed on Christ, have you grown in your faith and in your good works to God? Are your latter works exceeding your first works? Are you serving God less than you used to? What would Jesus say about your works before Him?*

Rebuke from Jesus to the Church in Thyatira (2:20-24):

1. **They were tolerating false teachers like Jezebel**

- The teachings of Jezebel, Balaam, and of the Nicolaitans were all very similar. They all encouraged Christians to commit spiritual adultery by worshipping false gods and idols alongside of Jesus, and they all encouraged a life of sin instead of a life of holiness to God. As we read vv.20-24 we see God's hatred for this sin and His warnings against those that teach this and believe these lies. They will not escape God's wrath apart from repentance.

APPLICATION: *If we love and fear Jesus Christ, we will have nothing to do with teachings that lead Christians to worship other gods and pursue sinful lusts instead of holiness. It does not matter how many professed Christians follow these teaching or how knowledgeable their teacher seem. We must flee from these kinds of "Christians" because they are under God's wrath.*

2. **They were searching for spiritual knowledge outside of God's Word**

- Part of the teachings of Jezebel at Thyatira was a desire to learn "deep things of Satan." Some were studying and practicing spiritism and witchcraft claiming to be pursuing greater spiritual knowledge.

APPLICATION: *The Bible warns us over and over again to beware of false prophets that lead God's people to believe in dreams and visions that are not from God. We are told to "test the spirits" and "test those who call themselves apostles" so that we are not led astray. The Bible has all that we need to know God and His truth. We can learn nothing that is spiritually profitable from studying other beliefs and religions in pursuit of knowledge.*

Call by Jesus to the Church in Thyatira to Repent (2:23):

Repent or be made an example to the churches of God's judgment

APPLICATION: *Those who continue to follow the ways of false worship and sexual immoralities and other open sins who do not repent will be made an example of God's judgment for others to fear God. Are you continuing in sin? Are you following after the*

ideas of Jezebel? Are you among those who have remained faithful and have not believed the false teachers? If you have been faithful, you must hold fast to truth and endure until Jesus comes again.

Encouraging command from Jesus to the Church in Thyatira (2:25):

“Hold fast what you have until I come”

APPLICATION: *Do we NEED this command? Absolutely! This church has been in existence for four years. If every person who claimed to believe on Christ and has taken part in our fellowship held fast to their faith, how many more would be a part of our church today? A number have fallen back into sin and idolatry. They did not hold fast for their faith was not true. We must hold fast until death!*

Rewards for Conquerors (2:26-29):

1. They will reign with Jesus over the nations in the Millennium.

- This is a great privilege of God’s people who remain faithful until death. When Jesus comes again to rule and reign for 1,000 years, we will come and rule and reign under Him. There will still be many peoples and nations on the earth and we will be given authority to govern over the nations. In that day will be in our resurrection bodies and without sin and we will serve Jesus on the earth during His awesome reign of justice and righteousness before the Last Battle and Day of Judgment.

2. They will be given the Morning Star.

- Jesus is the Morning Star. He will give us Himself. He is our reward and inheritance. We will know Him as we are known and we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is. The Morning Star is a special star not ever seen by most people. This Morning Star all believers will see.

APPLICATION: *Rejoice in the amazing grace of our God and determine by His help to hold fast until the end!!!*

The Church at Sardis

Read Revelation 3:1-6

The Description of Jesus: (3:1)

“The one who has the 7 spirits of God and the 7 stars”

- Jesus Christ uses the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish His will in the churches. The Holy Spirit is represented by the number of perfection and completion, the number 7. The Lord governs over and shepherds His people through the 7 stars, which represent either the angels that serve God’s people of the elders of the churches. Jesus is continually at work among His people.

APPLICATION: Jesus is actively working in our church right now. His Holy Spirit, His angels, and His pastors are working to help God's people follow His Word and set their hope on the inheritance to come. Our church can do nothing without the Holy Spirit. Without the grace and help of God we are nothing.

Praise from Jesus to the Church of Sardis (3:4):

"Yet you still have a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments"

- We do not know how many people were members of the church at Sardis, but it is obvious that most of the people who called themselves Christians there had soiled their garments in unbelief and sin. The only praise that Jesus could give to the church was that there were still a few that had not been soiled by the sins of the flesh and the world.

APPLICATION: If Jesus were to speak directly to our church today, would He say that our church is clean from the sins of the world? I do not mean sins that everyone has every day like selfishness, pride, worry, etc., but sins that God tells us cannot remain in His church: drunkenness, sexual sins, evil speech, complaining, covetousness, envy, etc. Would Jesus say that many of us are soiled by these evil sins, or have we already been changed by God's power?

Rebuke from Jesus to the Church of Sardis (3:1-2):

"You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead"

- The Lord rebukes the church at Sardis very strongly. They claimed to be Christians. They claimed to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ that saves people from the penalty and power of sin. And yet, the power of the Gospel was not in their lives. Many of them did not love God or love one another. Many just went through the motions of being religious. They were DEAD.

APPLICATION: Does this describe you? Is the power of God in your love causing you to be free from sin, love God, and love God's people? The Gospel of Jesus Christ is powerful to bring forgiveness but it also is powerful changing people lives. Those that have no desire to serve God or be holy are DEAD.

Call by Jesus to the Church of Sardis to Repent (3:3):

1. Remember what you have seen and heard!
2. Keep what you have heard!
3. Repent! Wake up!
4. Warning: I will come against you!
 - These are very fearful words to hear from the Almighty God and Judge of all the earth. Jesus DEMANDS that those who are dead repent and receive Christ's life! If we fail to repent and continue in sin Jesus will war against us.

APPLICATION: *If you are spiritually dead, professing the Gospel but not living it, you must repent and begin to live for God or God will surely chasten you.*

Reward for Conquerors:

1. They will be clothed in white garments.

- Those who live the Gospel are those who are truly God's children who have the righteousness of Jesus upon them. They will wear the robe of Jesus' righteousness and the righteousness of their life by grace for all of eternity. Their sins will be remembered no more.

2. Their names will never be blotted from the book of life.

- There will be no chance for them to be missing or misplaced into hell, or ever to be lost. God will keep their names in His book of eternal life forever.

3. Jesus will confess their names to the Father and His angels.

- Jesus will not be ashamed of His people before the Father, nor before His angels. Why? He has saved them by His blood and made them His own. His people were not ashamed of Him while on the earth, for they know God.

APPLICATION: *Rejoice in the security that we have in Jesus Christ as we have the fruit of His life in our lives right now. If we are spiritually dead, we cannot have any security about eternity. Those who walk in new life in Jesus have confidence and security about being with Christ for all of eternity. Those who are dead should not be confident unless they repent.*