

To The Seven Churches

Thyatira



To The Seven Churches Thyatira Revelation 2:19-29

When was a time you grew complacent with something that later had a negative effect on your life?

At first glance, it would seem as if the church in Thyatira had been doing alright. Very clearly, they are doing well in keeping with the issues and topics of the faith. Scripture even suggests that they grew in their faith during their lifetime. In many ways, they could be considered an example of what faith looked like in the context of daily living. Yet, like most of the churches in Revelation, there were particular sins that the church had to meet face to face. The church had allowed false teachings to persist as the influence grew over the congregation. Christ will not allow His bride to stray further from Him. The consequence for sin is always that the wrong doings cannot persist in the presence of God and must either be removed or punished. A Holy God cannot allow unholiness to persist. Furthermore, for the church during the last days, we cannot become complacent in allowing sin to run rampant amongst ourselves.

Thus, at the outset of the letter to the church in Thyatira, we see a return to the qualities of God as the Sovereign ruler over all His creation. His eyes like a blazing fire signify that He sees all in perfection. Nothing cannot escape the sight of God and nothing can remain hidden. His feet like burnished bronze display the strength and might of God to accomplish all things. He alone is the ruler and Savior and He alone is able to distribute justice to mankind. Within the feet like burnished bronze is both a sense of purity and royalty. For the church in Thyatira, the issue of allowing sin to persist would be met by a King who rules in purity and strength.

A Deadly Silence

The sin of the church in Thyatira rested in their permissive allowance of doctrine that directly contradicted with the teachings of God. While they were admonished for their deeds, love, faith,

service, and perseverance (vs 19), within their midst the teachings of a Jezebel who taught in contradiction to the true Gospel. Likely, this false prophetess, which the author leaves as anonymous referring to a type of her, taught the Imperial Cultic Worship which revered Caesar as God. Furthermore, this lifestyle ran in stark contrast to a life redeemed by the Risen Lord.

Sin and false teachings spread like a disease. It plagues mankind and draws a person towards their death. Allowing this condition to continue to exist unchecked can easily lead to the death of a person, a congregation, and the body of Christ. Silence should not persist in the face of falsehood. While the church in Thyatira excelled in various aspects of the faith, their silence as others were lead astray abdicated one of the churches primary purposes in the world. Their silence was deadly for those in the church. The influence spoke loudly and often to gain people's trust and lead them astray yet the church remained silent. God has given the church a voice as a gift both for the church to enjoy and for the world to hear the life giving message of redemption from sin. We should thus, never grow tired or weary of proclaiming the truth in grace and love just as our Savior never grows weary in pouring out both of those on us.

The Problem of Tolerance

Tolerance today comes off as a buzzword as people posture for moral superiority. Groups, religions, and individuals are societally judged based on how "tolerant" they are towards others. However, as if the previous letters to churches seem to indicate, the standards of tolerance or overly applied to Christians and the worldview of Christians is excluded. Every other belief system should be tolerated except for the Christian beliefs. As the world grows increasingly hostile to Christians during the end of days, something we are currently in, the church as the representation of Christ in the world, must be willing to be intolerant of contrary beliefs and graceful towards the ones who hold them.

It is no act of love to allow a person to continue to sin. Furthermore, it is likewise no act of love to ostracize a person because they are dealing with a sin. The woman Jezebel sought to disrupt

the church in Thyatira with doctrines and teaching that directly ran counter to the teachings of Christ. God will deal with her severely in falsely representing Jesus Christ. She had the opportunity to repent of her teaching and actions but declined. Furthermore, those who follow her now have the opportunity to repent. This is the core of the Gospel. Sinful people have the opportunity to repent and return to God or they will face the fullness of the wrath of God. The church, during this times should serve to herald the truth in the face of immense criticism. We hold fast to the truth with unwavering clarity while simultaneously showing the love and grace of God to the ones who have the opportunity to repent. We are intolerant towards sin and falsehood but grace filled towards those made in the image of God.

Discussion Questions

1. What two qualities of God are highlighted in verses 18? Why are they significant?
2. What five qualities of the church in Thyatira are highlighted as positives?
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 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
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3. What are the consequences for Jezebel? Her children? Those who follow her?
4. How does silence play a role in the decline of the church? When those who hold to the true faith are silent, who is left speaking? Where have you seen this in the life of Christians today?
5. Why are the teachings of others often appealing? What is it about the other worldview and beliefs that sound appealing? Why is it dangerous for the church to follow the deceptive teachings of other people?
6. Name some of the deceptive beliefs of the culture that lead the church astray? For you personally, what ideals, thoughts, or worldview that are the most challenging to you? God inform and direct the believer to avoid sin?