

Revelation 2.18-29

“The Scattered Field”

Jesus: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also... Let both grow together until the harvest...”
 Matthew 13.24-29

Lord of HARVEST is Patient > WAITS Until FINAL Day to Separate, Judge AS they Grow NOT EASY to DISTINGUISH the WHEAT from the WEEDS Sometimes it LOOKS like WEEDS have completely OVERRUN the WHEAT! Present ERA of Redemptive History: TIME of OPPORTUNITY, Find & Follow

Thyatira: SMALLEST of 7 cities, Receives LONGEST Letter from Jesus
 Thyatira – Church ‘in the middle’ > Most COMPLICATED Congregation

Ephesus Problem	Smyrna Perfect	Pergamum Problem
	Thyatira – All 3 Problem – Perfect - Perverse	
Sardis Perverse	Philadelphia Perfect	Laodicea Perverse

M. Robert Mulholland, Jr.



4th of 7 Churches addressed by Exalted Lord Jesus Christ

65 kms. inland from Pergamum > 1/2 way to Sardis If Ephesus >

Shanghai of Roman Asia / Pergamum > Beijing

Thyatira > HUGE Crowded Bazaar > COMMERCIAL Center

Trans-shipment point for TRADE between the Mediterranean and the East

1. Sin’s Enticement

a. ‘you gotta eat...’

Insurance Agent in Hawaii > Tommy Jitchaku > Impt Lesson “You Gotta Eat!”

Spoken in Supermarket > Tommy’s Trolley filled with BEER and Potato Chips

People of Thyatira had to Eat > Wanted to Satisfy Hunger & Other Appetites too

WANT Something: Know RIGHT PEOPLE > Thyatira > Belong to GUILD Society or BROTHERHOOD, Maybe similar to MAFIA > Thyatiran GUANSHI

Archeologists DISCOVERED Thyatira > Many Guilds.....

“more trade guilds are known in Thyatira than in any other Asian city... woolworkers, linen-workers, makers of outer garments, dyers, leather-workers, tanners, potters, bakers, slave-dealers and bronze-smiths” Sir William Ramsay

GUILD > More than a LABOR UNION > Religious Organization

Trade guilds > Pagan religious practices required for Membership

PAGAN FEASTS often led to SEXUAL PROMISCUITY

“If you wish to get ahead in Thyatira you must belong to a guild; if you belong to a guild, your very membership implies that you worship its god. You will be expected to attend the guild festivals and to eat food that has been offered to the tutelary deity and which you receive on your table as a gift from that god. And then, when the feast ends, and the real – grossly immoral – fun begins, you must not walk out unless you desire to become the object of ridicule and persecution.”

William Hendriksen

Gods of Thyatira must be PLEASED & APPEASED for BUSINESS SUCCESS

Want to BENEFIT from SOCIETY > Must BEND to the WILL of SOCIETY

“Every generation of Christians must face the question, ‘How far should I accept and adopt contemporary standards and practices?’ On the one hand, Christians must not deny the faith. On the other, they must not deny their membership of society. The cause of Christ is not served if Christians appear as a group of old-fashioned people always trying to retreat from the real world.” Leon Morris

b. A ‘God-sent’ Solution?

Conflict for Xtians in Thyatira: GODLESS SOCIETY > Bible banned Behaviors

How to be God’s NEW JERUSALEM People in FALLEN BABYLON World?

SOLUTION by New Teacher in Thyatira > Woman w/ Welcome Message

“RELAX!” BEHAVIOR has NOTHING TO DO with your BELIEFS

You can HANDLE FIRE without BEING BURNED

Biblical Basis? “about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that *an idol is nothing at all* in the world”
1 Corinthians 8.4

Not Spiritually Defiled by Meat sold in Market Place which was Offered to Idol
// Xtian enjoy CHAR cooked by Muslim > Slaughtered > even Prayed Over

BIG DIFFERENCE > btwn EATING & ENVIRONMENT > Embracing System
NOT Just *TAKE OUT* ORDERS of Meat Sticks: FULL DINING EXPERIENCE
Prayers & Incense to Idols / Play with Temple Prostitutes

Popular WOMAN TEACHER > No Problem > HAVE IT ALL > Do it All!!
Don't be SPINLESS, WEAK CONSCIENCE Christians > Afraid to LIVE!

DEEP SECRET > Many Christians YEARN to GO DEEPER, Know More!
And that is GOOD THING! Something we ADMIRE! – Shallow? Yuck!!

IMPORTANT Question: Go DEEPER in What? Word? Someone's Imagination?

The “Deep Secret” > DUAL Citizenship Fallen Babylon and New Jerusalem

“How convenient in a city dominated by trade guilds, for a prophetess to reveal the deep secret that Christians need not suffer loss by refraining from the guilds' immoral and idolatrous celebrations!” Dennis E. Johnson

FALSE TEACHING is more DANGEROUS to Church than MARTYRDOM
Tertullian > BLOOD of the Martyrs is the SEED for GROWING the Church
Martyrdom will NEVER Destroy a Church > False Teaching ALWAYS Will

MATERIALISM: More Damaging than Persecution > Persec drives TO CHRIST

Materialism > Drives a WEDGE BETWEEN the Believer and His Lord

Later in Revelation > when the Beast and the Dragon cannot Destroy the Church

Satan sends Babylon the Harlot of Materialism

11 yrs KZ– Early 1990’s REVIVAL Began, More MUSLIMS to X Anywhere
 1991 – PERISTROIKA – Collapse of USSR – Poverty, Dysfunction, Confusion
 End 1990’s Republic of KZ well Established – Rich: Oil, Uranium, Gold, Copper
 Pockets FULL – Shops Loaded – Fancy Malls Open > Dresses, Cars, Toys!!
 CROWDS left Churches and went to MALLS > Literally! Sad Decline!!

HAD HER IDEOLOGY BEEN EMBRACED BY THE CHURCH

There is no Fundamental Difference between Babylon and the New Jerusalem
 TODAY Xtianity would be Ancient Relic like Zoroastrianism or Eastern Cults

c. Source of the ‘Solution’ JESUS UNMASKS Lie, Origin of Deep Secret...

WONDER WOMAN with this LIBERATING TEACHING --- NEW Jezebel...

Woman Teacher in church of Thyatira – Not REAL Name – All Knew her Name

SHOCKING & Awkward Moment > Letter from Jesus goes SOUTH

v. 24 “her teaching... *Satan's* so-called deep secrets”

RESPECTED, Charismatic Teacher is RENOUNCED: Thrown UNDER BUS

OR literally Thrown on her DEATH BED by Lord of Church

Real Jezebel died a HORRIBLE DEATH 1000 years EARLIER

Pagan queen of Israel REPLACED worship of BAAL for Worship of YAHWEH

Her MORAL Lies RESURRECTED: No Conflict between Prayers & Prostitutes

BEHAVIOR is not connected to BELIEF / Doctrine not related to Duty

v. 20 “that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols”

She was SELF-Taught Rather than APOSTLE Taught

She was SELF-Appointed Rather than CHURCH Appointed

Probably said “The Lord has TOLD Me” or “Spirit has Shown Me” Teaching
 Once Person has made CLAIM it ENDS the Conversation > No More DEBATE
 Someone Announces “God told us to... Only Response > Congratulations!

If want to DINE with the DEVIL > YOU BETTER HAVE A LONG SPOON

“God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.” 1 John 1.5,6

2. Searching Examination

v. 18 "To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire"

DIRTY DEEDS of Thyatira were DONE IN DARKNESS > Not everyone Saw!

Hiding at OWN Computer Terminals > NO ONE SAW their PEEP SHOWS

Some members of Thyatiran Church > LIVING A SECRET LIFE

ANGEL > Protective Reference, NAMES of Church Leaders kept Anonymous
 Only time TITLE > Son of God > Occurs in the Book of Revelation

Jesus TRUE Son of God > to Center for the worship of Apollo, the Sun god

Jesus EYES SEARCH Out THOUGHTS & INTENTIONS of Every Person

Jesus sees thru Outer Facade > Discerns Deep MOTIVATIONS of HEART

v. 23 “I am he who searches hearts and minds”

Jesus “did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.”

John 2.25

As He walked Earth Many Believed in Jesus, but He did NOT Believe in Them
 What JESUS SEARCHED for.... v. 19 “I know your deeds”

Cannot SEPARATE your BELIEF from your BEHAVIOR > Both ESSENTIAL

v. 26 “overcomes and *does my will* to the end”

“I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened...The dead were judged *according to what they had done* as recorded in the books.”
Revelation 20.12

NOT Saved by WORKS > Cannot be Saved WITHOUT WORKS

3. Sober Evaluation

a. Good > These Receive COMMENDATION of the Head of the Church

v. 24 I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching

v. 19 “I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.”

LOVE > the Greatest Virtue

FAITH > Complete Trust in Christ Alone

SERVICE > What the MASTER EXPECTS to See in Our Lives

PERSEVERANCE > Steady PROGRESS in Grace and Godliness

GREATEST TRIBUTE > “you are now doing more than you did at first”

The Christian Life is a LIFE of GROWTH, & PROGRESS, & DEVELOPMENT



1973 Horse ‘Secretariat’ won Triple Crown:

Kentucky Derby – Preakness – Belmont Stakes (photo)

Belmont Ran EACH ¼ mile FASTER than PREVIOUS ¼ mile

Finished Race 31 Lengths AHEAD of all other Challengers

How we should RUN the RACE of Faith in Christ > Get Better and Better

How does YOUR PACE? Compared to last month? Year? Decade?

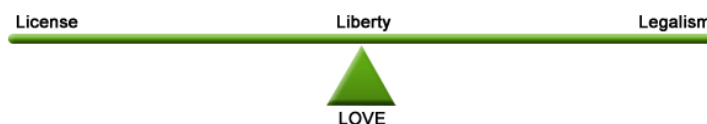
Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.
1 Timothy 4.15

v. 24 I will not impose any other burden on you”

Reference to JERUSALEM COUNCIL > Apostolic Decree to Gentile Churches:

“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements...abstain from food sacrificed to idols...and from sexual immorality...”

Acts 15.28,29



Human BEHAVIOR > Often SWINGS to EXTREMES like Pendulum / See-Saw

EXTREME > Christian Jezebelites Belief is SEPARATED from BEHAVIOR

Many Church Leaders > SWING to OPPOSITE EXTREME > More LAWS

From Extreme of LICENSE or Libertinism to Extreme of LEGALISM

LICENSE can NOT be DEFEATED by LEGALISM

Lord Jesus Commends NEITHER Extreme >> Offers us His LIBERTY

	Human Legalism	Christ's Liberty
Appears...	Impressive, Obedient	Erratic, Messy
Says ...	Do	Done
Emphasizes ...	What we do	What God does
Lives out of ...	The flesh (self-life)	The Spirit (Christ-life)
Draws on ...	Our resources	God's resources
Deals with ...	External rules, regulations, standards	Inner heart Attitude
Primary focus ...	Ought to, should, must	Want to
Creates ...	Bondage, duty, obligation	Freedom
Lives life from the ...	Outside-in	Inside-out
Declares ...	Do in order to be	You are; therefore do
Produces ...	Guilt and condemnation	Acceptance and security
Leads to ...	Defeat	Victory

Uganda > Problem of Sexual Immorality in Society > Crept into the Church
 Strange Teaching arose in Church > “fruit of knowledge of good & evil” = SEX
 ANY SEX is Bad > Xtian Wives denied Husbands > IMMORALITY Increased
 LIBERTINISM can NOT be DEFEATED by LEGALISM

WISDOM of JESUS vs. 24,25 “I will not impose any other burden on you:
 Only hold on to what you have until I come.”

ENTRUSTS His Chosen Ones with HIS WORD and HIS SPIRIT > HOLD ON!
 His YOKE is EASY but his BURDEN is LIGHT

b. Bad v. 20 “you tolerate that woman Jezebel...by her teaching she misleads”
 Jesus says: “I love you, but I hate your tolerance”

Church EITHER had POOR CONSCIENCE or a FEEBLE COURAGE

Church Tries to be All Embrasive: Members Anyone who is YOUR FRIEND
 “Does NOT Matter what BELIEVE or how you BEHAVE – as long SINCERE!”

Jezebel’s Lie leads to Jezebel’s End: Ignore TRUTH is to Invite FALSEHOOD

“Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those
 before him...he married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and
 began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of
 Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab...did more to provoke the LORD, the God of
 Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.” 1 Kings 16.30-33

Before long 850 False Prophets EATING at Ahab & Jezebel’s ROYAL TABLE

THEN > this Snake in the House of God > began KILLING Prophets of God

c. Ugly > SIN is UGLY > and its RESULT is even MORE UGLY

Prophet ELISHA said to Future King JEHU: “I anoint you king over the
 LORD's people Israel...and I will avenge the blood of my servants the prophets
 and the blood of all the LORD's servants shed by Jezebel. The whole house of

Ahab will perish...As for Jezebel, dogs will devour her...and no one will bury her." 2 Kings 9.6-10

Jezebel of Thyatira also had BITTER END v. 22 "So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely"

BED WHERE THEY PLAYED BECAME BED WHERE THEY PAID

TERRIBLE END FOR HER BED PARTNERS: v. 23 "I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds."

vs. 21-22 "*I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.*"

TIME TO REPENT > No one can be sure HOW LONG that Time WILL BE

Do YOU Know Jesus? Have you REPENTED of Your Sins?

'I came here to learn English, meet foreigners, make friendships' WELCOME!!

HEARD > God in Heaven sent His Son in Love > Save you from Sin > New Life

HEARD ALSO > God's Love DEMANDS A RESPONSE > No Indifference

4. Strong Encouragement

v. 18 "the Son of God...whose feet are like burnished bronze"

600 yrs before Prophet Daniel in Babylon saw: "a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude" Daniel 10.4-6

Jesus' Feet > BETTER THAN BEST BRONZE GUILDS OF THYATIRA!

Christ gives the Conqueror Far Beyond what his works ever Deserve

AMAZING PROMISES > Hope for Despondent Believers in Thyatira

v. 26,27 "To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations -- 'He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery' -- just as I have received authority from my Father.

FULFILLMENT of Messianic Promise of PSALM 2

Jesus = God > Authority over the Nations can be Promised to the Victorious
 "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?" 1 Corinthians 6.2

v. 28 "I will also give him the morning star.

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star." Revelation 22.16

Lit. Jesus is saying I WILL GIVE YOU MYSELF > FOREVER YOURS!

Thyatira - City > Least Significant of the 7 Churches in Roman Asia
 OUTCASTS in Society > REJECTED BY GUILDS > No Where to Turn

Christ turns to Them > EMBRACING GRACE > Longest of 7 Letters
 SIGNIFICANT and Important to the Son of God > THE MORNING STAR

To Church that Faithfully SHINES Gospel-Lamp in Dark Night of this World

Christ Promises Himself as Morning Star > Assurance of Coming Dawn

v. 29 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

WHAT have YOU Heard? What will YOU do?

Revelation 2:¹⁸“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. ¹⁹“I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. ²⁰But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. ²¹I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. ²²Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, ²³and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. ²⁴But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. ²⁵Only hold fast what you have until I come. ²⁶The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. ²⁸And I will give him the morning star. ²⁹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

1. It is easy for us to tilt off to either Legalism or License. What helps you keep balanced onto Christ’s loving Liberty?

2. “Jezebel” of Thyatira appears to have been a gifted and popular teacher. Jesus’ public shaming must have been a surprise to the congregation! How can we be sure that our preacher(s) are pleasing to Jesus?

3. It is awkward and embarrassing to picture how Jesus blunt “sex talk” would go down as this letter was being read in Thyatira. Are you fully aware that Jesus sees us? Even in the dark? Is He pleased with what He sees?

4. Isn’t it wonderful that the Jesus who “sees” is the Jesus who “saves!” It seems counter-intuitive, but the Scriptures are clear, hiding our sin is futile. Honest faith and repentance – though never easy – is His pathway to salvation. Are you on it?