

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

5. The Church in Thyatira



In this study we will look at another message that was given by Jesus to the church in Thyatira.

Scripture Reading: Revelation 2:18-29

The city of Thyatira was south of Pergamum, and a great commercial centre in that day. One of the first converts in Philippi, Lydia, was originally from Thyatira. See Acts 16:13-15, 40. Lydia was a business-woman who sold purple cloth, and after responding to the gospel she opened her home to Paul and the Church. Thyatira, where she came from, had a successful cloth dying industry.



What were the commendations Jesus gave to this church? V19

(Jesus commended the Church for their deeds, love, faith, service and perseverance.)



What was the main problem in the church in Thyatira? Who was this woman 'Jezebel' do you think? V20-21, 24

(The problem was that there was a woman in the church teaching others to compromise their walk with God – by eating food offered to idols and committing immorality. The 'so-called deep secrets of Satan' could refer to a belief that it was acceptable for Christians to experience sin so they could enter Satan's strongholds. Jesus called this woman Jezebel, although this name may only be used to describe what she was like. He was likening her to Jezebel in 1 Kings 16:31 who led Israel astray.)

Little is known about this Church, except what is written here. However, it is known that Thyatira was noted for its' trade guilds, which were associations of people involved in different trades. These associations usually met in temples, where drinking and immoral practices took place, and the meat that was eaten had been offered to idols. It is thought that this woman was teaching Christians that it was acceptable to be involved in these gatherings for the sake of commercial prosperity.



In what ways are the Christians in your country in danger of compromising for the sake of material gain? Discuss.



Have you ever been in a situation at work where there has been pressure to compromise so that you/or the company will prosper? Share your experiences.



How was the church in Thyatira to deal with this situation? v20, 24-25

(Those who had accepted this woman's teaching had to repent, and the others had to 'hold on' and not be swayed. Jesus Himself was going to judge the woman if she did not repent.)

In some of the churches mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3 the believers were facing persecution, but here in Thyatira the danger was subtle. It was the danger of compromising for the sake of material gain.



Look up the following verses: Matthew 6:19-21, 24, 32-33. How can these words of Jesus help us when we face the temptation to compromise for the sake of gain?



What promises are given to those who overcome? Why do you think these promises would be of real encouragement to the Christians in Thyatira? V26-28, Revelation 22:16

(Jesus gave the promise of authority to rule with Him. He also promised that they would receive the Morning Star – who is Jesus Himself.)

Conclusion

In our world, power and authority are often linked with wealth. If the Christians in Thyatira stood firm and did not compromise, they might have to sacrifice business opportunities, and probably have less 'worldly power'. Jesus gives a wonderful promise though – if they were faithful to Him and continued to do His will to the end, He would give them authority over the nations. It is not always easy to put God's Kingdom first, but when we do, we will receive eternal blessings.