

## **Thyatira: The Church that Tolerated Sin Revelation 2:18-29**

**When a church of Jesus becomes more tolerant than Jesus, that church has adopted the wrong definition of tolerance.**

**A) That was the problem with the church of Thyatira - the church that tolerated sin**

18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, ‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: 19 ‘I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. 20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

24 “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. 25 But hold fast what you have till I come. 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27 ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’— as I also have received from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star. 29 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

### **The City**

**A) Thyatira was about 35 miles north of Pergamos.**

**B) It was a smaller city, Of the seven cities mentioned, Thyatira would have been the least known.**

**C) But because it was located directly on a major Roman trade route, it was always very busy.**

**D) Because of the trade route, Thyatira was home to many trade guilds.**

1) We might today call these guilds labor unions.

**There were carpenter’s guilds, stone worker’s guilds,**

**A) And guilds for those who worked with wool, linen, leather, and bronze.**

**B) So Thyatira was a blue-collar town...**

**C) They worked hard and played hard.**

**Thyatira was famous for its purple dye, which was one of a kind.**

**A) Recall in our study in the book of Acts 16 we met a woman named Lydia who was a “seller of purple.”**

**B) The Bible tells us that she was from the city of Thyatira.**

**C) Note The establishment of these guilds or labor unions 1) plays a very important role in what happens with the church, as we’ll get into a little bit later.**

### **Revelation of Jesus**

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:

### **THE SON OF GOD**

**A) This is the only time Jesus introduces himself as the Son of God.**

**B) It’s the only time the term “son of God” is used in the book of Revelation.**

**C) At that time, the Imperial Cult taught that the emperors were gods in human flesh, sons of Zeus.**

**D) Jesus clarifies that He alone is the true Son of God, God by nature in human flesh.**

### **EYES LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE**

**A) Fire illuminates that which is in the darkness and burns away all things that are impure.**

**B) Jesus’ sight burns through all of our disguises - 1) You see, there is nothing that is hidden from the sight of the Lord.**

**C)I still remember the look of my father. He had a certain look about him; do you know what I mean?**

**1)Did your Dad have the same look?**

**My Dad would look at me and sometimes I would start crying - how did he know.**

**A)It was like he was looking right through me. He's reading my soul, so to speak.'**

**B)Sometimes I think I have that look too. - The other day I was home alone with my grandson Josiah**

**C)I was in one room - he was in the Kitchen - heard him opening cabinets - Josiah what are you doing.**

**1)Looking for scissors - Why? - Silence**

**D)So I get up I walk in right as he was stuffy a popsicle into the pocket of his shorts**

**1)Soon as he sees me - eyes get all big - he is shaking trying to hide the popsicle**

**E)He knew he already had treats that day - more than usual in fact because he was hanging out with popi**

**1)He knew he was Busted**

**The Eyes of Jesus were communicating to this church that they were busted.**

**A)Their sin had reached the eyes of Jesus**

**B)But there is one more thing: - FEET LIKE FINE BRASS**

**C)Brass is often identified with judgment.**

**The Altar in the Tabernacle/Temple was where the Bulls and Lambs were sacrificed -**

**A)To pay the price for sin**

**B)But the Brass altar also stood for salvation -**

**1)that an innocent substitute was paying the price for the condemned**

**B)Jesus would be that final sacrificial lamb -**

**1)pay the price so that sinners who believed in him trusted him would be saved**

**C)Numbers 21 the People of Israel sinned - rebelled -**

**D)God instructed Moses to make a serpent of Brass - put on a pole**

**1)Whoever looked to it would be saved**

**John 3 tells us the Brass serpent on the pole was a picture of Jesus**

**A)Who was lifted up for us - whoever would look to him would be saved**

**B)So Jesus reveals himself to the church at Thyatira**

**1)as the one with the authority, the vision and the purity to deal with problems that this church faced**

**C)And the one who could save and restore them if they repented of their sin.**

**After his Revelation of himself to the church - he follows that up with a Recognition of what they were doing well.**

**19 "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.**

**Jesus commends this church in 5 areas, which is the most out of every letter.**

**A)Works – Practical things done for the Lord**

➤ **Love – They had sincere hearts for one another**

**B)Service – Specifically in the church. Works can be inside or outside the church, but service is in the church.**

➤ **Faith – Their reliance on God**

**C)Patience –perseverance in suffering**

**D)There was a lot that the church in Thyatira was doing well.**

**Notice how he tops it off at the end of V.19 when He says, "and as for your works, the last are more than the first."**

**A)This is what we might call a "growing church."**

**B)This church was not content with where they were at and what they were doing.**

**C)They were always looking for ways to expand what they did for God's kingdom.**

**D)They grew in all their works, love, service, faith, and patience. In other words, they were being fruitful.**

**I find this to be so interesting because many Bible teachers would think that the Church in Thyatira was the worst of the 7....**

**A)Reminds of the church in Corinth**

**B)Corinth had lots of problems**

1)They were tolerating sin - guy sleeping with his step mom

**C)They were abusing the gifts of the Holy Spirit**

1)They were neglecting the needy and getting drunk at their love feast and communion

**D)They were divided into factions and skisms - I am of Apollos -I am of Peter - I am of Paul -**

1)We are of Jesus

**And yet when the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write to them this is how he starts - God's heart.**

<sup>4</sup>I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, <sup>6</sup>even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, <sup>7</sup>so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>8</sup>who will also confirm you to the end, *that you may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:4-9

**God chooses to see and commend the good.**

**A)But here is the TAKE AWAY: Spiritual activity doesn't always = spiritual maturity**

**B)Corinth was radically immature**

**C)Thyatira had activity amidst great compromise**

**How can an amazing church have so many problems?**

**A)Testimony to the power of the gospel - The Word of God - transforms**

**B)But blessing in some areas doesn't mean that we can overlook the sin in other areas -**

1)or that God does.

**Biggest mistake I have seen people make in ministry.**

**A)Known Pastors and leaders living in blatant sin and compromise - secret**

**B)God is radically blessing their churches - (His word doesn't return void)**

1)He is gracious and patient - He blesses - it is the byproduct of his grace

**C)But the Bible says - Know this - God will not be mocked - sow to the flesh reap destruction**

1)Your sin will find you out

**D)When it does - innocent sheep get hurt - the name of God gets blasphemed**

**So to this church that has several great things happening - Jesus comes in Judgment**

**A)Your time is up - I gave you time to repent- but you wouldn't**

**B)So His Word of Recognition is followed by a Rebuke**

**The Rebuke: V.20**

20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

**ALLOW = to Tolerate**

**A)The allowance or toleration of sin will always taint the good things coming out of a church.**

**B)There is a lot of pressure in our world today to tolerate sin**

**C)The idea of tolerance a few decades ago is much different than it is now.**

**Tolerance once indicated a patient with those with whom you disagree.**

**A)You could intelligently engage in disagreements while treating people with dignity and respect.**

**B)The modern-day definition of tolerance has received its own reassignment surgery!**

**C)Today tolerance is the assumption that "all values, all beliefs, all lifestyles, all truth claims should be given equal merit."**

**D)In essence, there's no right or wrong - no good or bad - no ultimate authority - everything is relative.**

1)Today, tolerance = inclusiveness and affirmation of every idea, except for any idea that comes from God.

**Things have gone from, "you disagree with me about my views, but you're nice,"**

**A)to, " Because you disagree with me, you're not nice."**

**You are a hateful person**

**B)Alan Wolfe a sociologist from Boston University says that view of Tolerance is now the supreme American Value**

**C)Wolfe spent two years interviewing the American Middle Class about their beliefs, fears, and dreams.**

**Predictably, Wolfe found that most Americans embrace three central values: God, family, and country.**

**A)But Wolfe also identified a new value that's taken the culture by storm.**

**B)This new virtue has become so entrenched in western civilization**

1)Wolfe refers to it as, "The 11<sup>th</sup> commandment" or simply, "Thou shall not judge."

**C)Tolerance is now the supreme American value.**

1)It comes from the ever-increasing human desire to justify their sin and limit any opposition to it.

**D)In modern, pluralistic America, the truth has become too risky.**

1)If we seek truth, we'll offend someone, so in the name of tolerance, we've succumbed to despair."

**The church in Thyatira was tolerating sin that was being promoted by this self-Proclaimed prophetess Jezebel**

**A)Some ancient Greek manuscripts state the phrase that woman Jezebel - as *your woman Jezebel* or *your wife Jezebel*.**

**B)Based on this, some (BC's) think that Jezebel was the pastor's wife,**

**C)Jezebel – this was probably not her actual name but a representation of her character.**

**D)Jezebel is still not a popular name unless you don't know the Bible or really don't like your kid.**

**E)In the ancient Hebrew mind, it would equate to calling someone a Hitler.**

**Jezebel was the wife of King Ahab of Israel In OT,**

**A)King Ahab - was dominated by his wicked wife, Jezebel. -**

**B)She wore the pants in the family - Ahab her husband was passive**

**C)Let her do what she wanted - She was infamous for introducing Baal and Asherah worship to Israel.**

1)She housed and fed the prophets of Baal in the royal palace.

**D)Elijah would stand up against 450 prophets of Baal, on MT Carmel**

**1)Jezebel - vowed to kill him**

**Well in a Similar way this woman was introducing idolatry into the church of Thyatira**

**A)You have allowed her to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.**

**B)Now the Phrase she taught and seduced My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols -**

**1)was probably connected to the trade guilds of labor unions.**

**C)See This is the way that life worked in Thyatira**

**1)if you belonged to one of these trade guilds or labor unions - idolatry came with it**

**Each trade had their own god - their own idol that they sacrificed to -**

**A)The unions would have these mandatory social occasions**

**B)where sacrificing to the gods and engaging in Sexual immorality was a part of it.**

**C)If you didn't partake in the sacrifices and activities it was really bad for your career.**

**So as a Jesus follower - you were faced with a moral dilemma -**

**A) Do I go to the party- to I engage in the idolatry and immorality?**

**B) Or do I stay away standing for Jesus - knowing that it could mean - losing my job, or never getting promoted**

**C) Or simply being ostracized by my co-workers for my faith?**

**D) It seems that this woman “Jezebel was encouraging the men to go – perhaps even using a “prophetic” word –**

1) and when the man went, he fell into immorality and idolatry.

**E) Apparently, part of Jezebel's message was, "A little compromise is OK with God**

1) if it gets you ahead in the world."

**So Jezebel was the Queen of Compromise. She concocted a way to justify spiritual and sexual infidelity.**

**A) The problem that Jesus points out is that the church was allowing or tolerating this teaching to take place.**

**B) This teaching that was promoting a lifestyle that was contrary to the word of God.**

**C) Are we not seeing that in the Church today?**

**This is what it sounds like today:**

**A) What's wrong with sex outside marriage as long as it involves two consenting adults?**

**B) Who says homosexuality is a sin? The Bible was written long ago.**

1) Christians can't always take the Bible seriously.

**C) Society is enlightened now. Attitudes about morality have evolved. There's room for compromise.**

**D) In the name of inclusion and sometimes love it is an insistence on tolerance over truth.**

**Here is a statement from the association of Welcoming and affirming Baptists (AWAB) “Members of the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists are churches, organizations, and individuals who are willing to go on record as**

welcoming and affirming all persons without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity, and who have joined together to advocate for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons within Baptist communities of faith.”

**E) There are currently 26 affirming mainline denominations in America that affirm homosexuality**

**A culture that tolerates SIN calls disagreement “a phobia.”**

**A) Taking a stand is considered “hate”**

**B) Standing on Biblical Conviction is seen as bigoted fanaticism**

1) Centuries-old Christian doctrine is regarded as discrimination

**C) Culture can and will change- but the truth of God's word doesn't change!**

**Listen to me church - we want to be a place who loves everyone that comes through those doors.**

**A) We should never be rude or unkind or shunning of people who are in sin - or struggling in sin - who would come in this place**

**B) Unbelievers and lost sinners were drawn to Jesus - He was called the friend of prostitutes and sinners**

**C) Would that CV would have that same reputation**

1) They love people there.

**But listen: Love means speaking the truth in love. That is what Jesus did that is what we are called to do.**

**A) Be willing to hear someone's story - to show a genuine concern for lost people**

**B) But at the end of the day - we have to tell them what God word says about their life choices.**

**C) Can't some guy/gal who is in a difficult marriage and are engaged in an adulterous relationship -**

1) Where they are getting the love and affection that they are not getting at home that is ok. - God understands. -

**D)No he doesn't - He calls it sin - wrong! - Repent**

**In the same way: Can't tell a person living in a same sex relationship that is ok**

**A)Born that way - and God understands -**

**B)My Bible says: You and I were made in the image of God - made for godly relationships - holy relationships**

**C)Sin wrecked that - But Jesus came to FIX what sin wrecked.**

**Culture can and will Change: But God's word and will - don't change friends**

**A)His will - you abstain from sexual immorality -**

**B)His will - that each one should know how to possess their own vessel in Sanctification and honor.**

**Bb)We have to stand on the truth - Have to speak the truth in love - Not shoving it down someone's throat**

**C)We listen - we care - we have compassion - and we share the why behind the truth.**

**D)God loves you and sin will hurt you -it will ruin your relationship with God**

**1)Choosing a lifestyle of sin = choosing an eternity separated from God.**

**E)So our loving father warns us against living in sin!**

21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

**A)Repentance is always the goal of Discipline**

**B)Remember the church in Corinth - Tolerating sin - man who was sleeping with his step mom**

**C)Everyone knew what he was doing and no one said anything - he was coming to church like everything was ok**

**D)Paul rebuked the church for tolerating the sin -**

**He said you need to cast this guy out of the fellowship - for the destruction of his flesh**

**A)But that he soul might be saved.**

**B)He needs to feel the ramifications of his sin - A loss of fellowship**

**1)It wasn't like today where he could just go and find another church down the road.**

**C)Usually only one Christian church in each city - so the next church would be 20-30 miles away -**

**1)they walked everywhere.**

**D)The Goal of the Discipline was repentance - and with that guy it worked -**

**1)he repented and was restored to fellowship**

**E)Repentance is always the goal of Discipline**

**Just as God gave an opportunity to the OT Jezebel to repent, and she did not**

**A)Jesus says: I gave her time to repent - but she didn't**

**B)God is so patient with us - No one will stand before God and say, "God, you never gave me a chance."**

**C)Peter tells us that the very reason that Jesus hasn't returned yet - is that The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. 2 Peter 3:9 NLT**

**Here is the mistake many make - they interpret God's patience for his approval - he must be ok with this**

**A)He is not disciplining me - No he is not ok - he is just being patient - hoping you get tired of living in sin**

**B)You get tired of not experiencing the relationship with him that he wants you to have -**

**1)Turn from your sin and turn back to him -**

**C)Here is the thing: Every opportunity that you get where the Holy Spirit is convicting you - maybe like he is tonight**

**1)The longer you resist - the harder your heart gets toward God and His word and then you are just lost.**

**D)God gave her time to repent - she resisted and hardened her heart -**

**1)and so now Jesus comes with a more severe discipline**

## **E)The Ramifications V.22**

22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

**A)What does that mean? I'm going to cast you into great tribulation?**

**B)It could mean a few things. Number one, in the immediate sense, it could refer to persecution by the Roman government.**

**C)Secondly, it could mean that in the moral sense, you will reap the repercussions for your sexual immorality (i.e. disease, suffering).**

**D)I'll cast you in a sickbed. It could refer to experiencing sickness associated with your life style choices**

**E)Law of sowing and reaping - Sow to the flesh - reap destruction - so to the Spirit reap every lasting life.**

**1)Not mean that is reality**

**You sow to a diet of eating Donuts for every meal - sweet tasty - enjoyable - yes**

**A)So many flavors and choices - Donuts are amazing - but it that is your 3 squares - 7 days a week 365 -**

**B)Reap destruction - not healthy**

**C)Same is true spiritually - so it could mean that - you are going to reap the consequences of your choices**

**D)It will be great tribulation unless they repent -**

**Catch that - He is still hoping they repent!**

**A)The Great tribulation - God is still hoping for repentance - but it will probably result in Martyrdom**

**V.23 I will kill her children Her Children – not God's children** with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

**A)Those who are genuinely not of God's children will be taken out and fall into God's judgment.**

24 “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.

**A)Some there who weren't following this false teaching**

**B)Why didn't they leave - the closet church was 20-30 miles away.**

**C)Here is the thing: We can't leave planet earth either - we are not supposed to isolate ourselves from the world or sinners**

**We are in this world - but we are not to be of it - we are to V.25 But hold fast what you have till I come.**

**A)The Lines are being drawn friends - what side are you going to be on ? Truth or tolerance**

**B)The Promises to those who stand**

26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27 ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; - Authority They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels’—

**They will get to rule with Him**

**A)A wonderful biblical truth is, your faithfulness here and now matters**

**B)Not to get you to heaven, for that you just need to accept the free gift God offers you- Trust Jesus**

**C)But let us not forget the parable of talents, to those who multiplied and did things for the Lord**

**1)They are given much to rule over**

**And the Greek word for “rule” Jesus uses there is “poimanei” (poui-mine-oh) and it literally means “to shepherd.”**

**A)The rule of Christ's faithful ones in the millennium will not be simply that of executing judgment,**

**B)But also that of administering mercy and direction, just like Jesus does**

**C)Guys/ Gals as you continue to be faithful**

➤ to live for the Lord, and not tolerate sin

**D) understand, and never forget – they day is coming you will rule with Him,**

1) He will entrust you with responsibility in His Kingdom

**E) Live with eternity in View**

**#1 – They will get to rule with Him**

**#2 – They will receive Him as I also have received from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star.**

**A) The morning star is an OT phrase for the Messiah – Numbers 24:17**

**B) Jesus refers to himself as the birth and The Morning star – Revelation 22:16**

**C) What do they get ? More of Jesus - Him shining brightly in their lives**

**D) As God told Abraham...**

**“I am your exceedingly great reward!” – Genesis 15:1**

**“In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” – Psalm 16:11**

**E) He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him - he rewards us with more of Himself!**

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