

## THYATIRA

### Int.

1. Aim: To give an exegesis of the verses and make application to us today.
2. Rev. 2:18-29 - Thyatira
3. Characterization of these first 4 churches in a phrase:
  - a. Ephesus - the honeymoon was over - left their first love
  - b. Smyrna - The suffering saints -- because of persecution
  - c. Pergamos - Hell's headquarter's - seat of satan
  - d. Thyatira - Jezebel junction - danger from within - false teaching
4. Background for the City of Thyatira - old - established about 300 B.C.
  - a. Very wealthy city and important
    - i. Located in a valley with hills on both sides
    - ii. Small in population - most obscure of all the 7 cities
  - b. Trade - center located there
    - i. Purple - Lydia was a seller of purple - purple dye was extremely expensive and so was the favorite of kings and famous people
    - ii. Two basic sources of purple - Madder root and shell fish from which they could get 1 drop per fish - Small portion would cost a years wages
    - iii. Also produced wool and pottery
    - iv. Trade guilds much like our unions were very common there. Christians objected to them for two reasons
      - (1) First - To join you had to acknowledge the emperor as a god - "Lord Ceasar"
      - (2) Second - Banquets were really feasts of revelry and immorality - Acts 15:20

c. The present city is called Akhigar with a population of 60,000 [Akhisar]

#### 5. Religion in Thyatira

a. Appollo was chief object of worship - the Sun god

b. Diana

c. Emperor worship

#### 6. The Church in Thyatira

a. In Acts 16:14-15 we read of Lydia who was converted. She was a seller of purple from Thyatira.

b. The church could have been started by the influence of this woman and her friends and family

c. Probably a small struggling church

d. Remembered most for two women -- Lydia for Good ~ Jezebel for evil

#### 7. The letter

a. The longest of the 7 - 12 verses

b. The longest of the letters written to the least known and least important of the cities.

c. Very much like the rest in arrangement - introduction of speaker, praise, condemnation, encouragement, and promise

## Discussion

### I. INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER - v. 18

"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; these things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass."

- A. Angel = messenger
- B. These things saith the Son of God
  - 1. He identifies himself as the Son of God
    - a. Sometimes the Jews called the Messiah - Son of man, Son of God, or Son of Woman
    - b. Only time in this book that he is called the Son of God
  - 2. He was the Son of God because he has power and authority - they must pay attention to what he has to say!
- C. Who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire
  - 1. Suggests his all-knowing ability combined with his wrath against all evil
  - 2. Nothing more penetrating than fire
    - a. Everything yields and melts before it
    - b. Penetrates all
  - 3. Hagar said "Thou God seest me..." Gen. 16:13
  - 4. The Son of God sees everything at Thyatira
  - 5. God is able to pierce even the thoughts and intents of the heart - Heb. 4:12

D. And his feet are like fine brass

1. Fine brass - A.S.V. = burnished
  - a. Denotes purity and holiness, not contaminated
  - b. Also signifies strength and invincibility
  - c. Firmness of His tread when He comes to destroy the guilty
2. He is coming in judgment which is strong and pure - he is able to tread down all opposition!

**II. WORDS OF PRAISE** - v. 19

"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."

A. I Know...

1. Thy works - nothing escapes God's attention
2. Charity = love
  - a. This was what Ephesus did not have - Love for God and man
  - b. Love is the fountain from which all acceptable activities flow
  - c. Love is greater than eloquence, more powerful than faith and more permanent than knowledge
  - d. Gal. 5:6 - faith worketh by love
3. Faith
  - a. Fidelity -stedfastness
  - b. They had been faithful in service to God
  - c. It is not as powerful as love but is a permanent and necessary trait
  - d. Without faith we cannot please God - Heb. 11:6

## 4. Service

- a. Love and faith find expression in life
- b. I Jn.3:18 "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth"
- c. 1 Thes. 1:3 "Labor of love"

## 5. Patience

- a. Same as steadfastness
- b. I Cor. 15:58
- c. Peace under pressure

## B. Their last works were more than the first

## 1. A church's only security is in going forward...

- a. It was "pressing on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". Phi. 3:14
- b. It was a church that had not grown weary in well doing - Gal. 6:9
- c. It was abounding more and more as time passed - 1 Thes. 4:1

## 2. People who act on worldly principles are likely to do their best first

- a. They feel that they have done enough
- b. They think their part is done and they are through

## 3. We are never through

- a. We must always be growing -doing more and more
- b. Blessed is that disciple whose last works of service and love are more and better than the first
- c. II Pet. 3:18 - growth is the object of life!

- d. Are we personally growing? Has there been steady growth in love, faith, patience, and service? Or have we declined?
- e. We cannot stand still in living the Christian life !

C. This was a fine compliment

- 1. If the letter had ended here we would think it was the ideal church
- 2. But in spite of the good they had, they also had some evils which could not be tolerated
- 3. Good traits, no matter how many there are, do not cancel out the bad.

### **III. WORDS OF CONDEMNATION** v. 20-23

“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

A. V. 20 Jezebel

- 1. Sufferest - permit, allow tolerate
- 2. They allowed this woman to teach a false doctrine - it is possible to be so longsuffering as to bid false teaching God-speed!
- 3. They failed to obey I I Thes. 3:6 “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”

4. Calleth herself a prophetess
  - a. She claimed to be of God - claimed a new revelation
  - b. Men and Women had the spirit of prophecy in N.T. Times
  - c. She was not a real but a false prophet
  - d. They raised no protest against her!
  
5. Jezebel
  - a. Woman in I Kings - Husband was Ahab ~ She was wicked and ungodly
  - b. She worshipped Baal - and she wanted Israel to worship Jehovah and Baal -  
unite the two
  - c. She caused the people to do evil and the woman here is the same kind of woman
  
6. Teach and Seduce - fornication and eat meat
  - a. She was capable of influencing others to commit wrong doing
  - b. Deceived by claiming inspiration
  - c. Fornication = physical, and spiritual - Hosea - like those who turn back to live  
in sin
  - d. Eat what was sacrificed unto idols - she taught that it was o.k.

B. V. 21 SHE REPENTED NOT

1. Gave her space to repent
  - a. She practiced what she got others to do!
  - b. God had been longsuffering with her
  - c. Evidently she had been warned earlier
  - d. God always warns - then He desires repentance

2. She repented not
  - a. She did not desire to repent
  - b. Only God could know that

C. V. 22-23

1. Cast her into a bed - great tribulation
  - a. Cast into a bed of punishment and anguish
  - b. She would find corruption in the midst of the very corruption which she has erected
  - c. Except she repent
2. Them that commit adultery with her
  - a. The leader and those lead will be punished
  - b. Children - refers to those influenced to follow her false doctrines!
  - c. Adultery - it could refer to spiritual adultery - backsliding - Rev. 18:3 Mt. 12:39
  - d. Adulterate and falsify the truth of the word!
  - e. Kill - suffer some terrible and painful form of death
  - f. The wages of sin is death - Gal. 6:7-8 we reap what we sow
  - g. Sooner or later sorrow comes upon those who are disobedient!
3. All the Churches shall know
  - a. Those of Asia - other 6
  - b. This punishment will be so apparent that it will convince all that Jesus knows what is in the hearts and thoughts!

4. Will give to every one according to his works
  - a. The wicked get the reward of their deeds
  - b. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" Ezek. 18:20
  - c. I I Cor. 5:10 Mt. 16:27 Rev. 22:12

#### **IV. WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT** V. 24-27

- A. V. 24 "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden."
  1. To the rest - the faithful few
  2. They had not practiced this doctrine
  3. They had not known the depths of satan
    - a. Some thought it best to learn the meaning of sin by actual participation in it
    - b. Complete surrender to Satan
  4. No other burden -no extra - just guard against these false doctrines!
  
- B. V. 25 "But that which ye have already hold fast till I Come."
  1. Continue to do all that ye have been doing
  2. Till He comes
    - a. Hold on until death - Mt. 24:13
    - b. If they held on till death, it would be the same as if he had come in their life time

C. v. 26 "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations :"

1. Reward for overcoming - Heaven is not the place for failures -but for those who overcome
2. Power over the nations
  - a. The godly shall triumph over those in error
  - b. You will be exalted while those evil civil governments and rulers shall be doomed

D. V. 27 "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

1. Those who live godly shall condemn those who live ungodly
2. They shall be destroyed - this was encouraging to those suffering persecution!

#### **V. WORDS OF PROMISE** V. 28-29

"And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.I"

A. V. 28 Morning star

1. Even though it is night now, there is a morning coming
2. The morning of final glory
3. The morning of deliverance for the righteous
4. It is a symbol of hope

B. v.29 He that hath an ear..

1. Hear = means to understand and obey
2. Mt. 7:24 wise man

**CONCLUSION** Lessons we can learn from the church at Thyatira

1. We must continue to Grow
  - a. Let our works increase
  - b. Let them be more now than at the beginning
2. We must oppose false doctrine - cannot tolerate or ignore it
3. If we partake of sins of wicked leaders then we also partake of their punishment
4. We shall have a reward if we hold fast till the end
5. The eyes of the Lord are in every place to see our sins and virtues!