

Message to the church at Thyatira

Rev. 2:18-29

The message to the church at Thyatira is found in Revelation 2:18-29. To them, Jesus presents himself as “**the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass**” (2:18), signifying His omniscience and consuming fire of the wicked and also His stability and permanence.

At the outset Jesus says: “I know.” He always knows what each church and individual Christians are thinking, saying, feeling, and doing. He lets the Christians at Thyatira know (2:19) that He is aware of –

- Their Works, “the last *are* more than the first”;
- Their Love;
- Service;
- Faith;
- Patience.

Jesus knows all about the church at Thyatira. He notes their good points here. However, things are seriously wrong in this church. Jesus has severe things to say against them: “**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. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 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**” (2:20-23).

This implies that the church has a self-proclaimed prophetess who is sexually immoral (2:21). She is seriously undermining the doctrine of Christ through false doctrine and thereby causing the members (“My servants”) to sin through fornication (“sexual immorality”) and eating things sacrificed to idols (2:20). She was given time to repent

of her sin but she did not. [Her deeds may be symbolic of spiritual immorality.] The Lord then pronounces judgement on her “I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death” so that all the churches shall know that He is the One who searches the minds and hearts. [Hence He is figured as “**who has eyes like a flame of fire**” (2:18).] He “will give each one of you according to your works” (2:22-23).

Jesus calls upon the church to repent with the grim warning that if it didn’t do His bidding, He would come quickly and “fight against them with the sword of My mouth” (2:16) [cf. Heb 4:12 “For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”]

Jesus concludes His message to the church at Thyatira with a promise to those who are faithful: “**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. But hold fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations — ‘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; and I will give him the morning star**” (2:24-28). “Morning Star” is a reference to Jesus himself (cf. 2 Peter 1:19, Rev.22:16). Our Lord promises to give them fellowship with Himself; they shall share His dominion.

Lesson: The Lord “**searches the minds and hearts ... and will give to each one of you according to your works**” (2: 23). The church should not tolerate false and unauthorized leaders who lead the Lord’s servants to sin. We should hold fast the doctrine of Christ, overcome falsehood and sin, and keep Jesus’ works until the end and then we will have fellowship with our Lord and shall share His dominion forever.

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