

## Being an Overcomer #6

### Church #4: Thyatira – the Perverted Church

Rev. 2:18-29

Jesus describes himself as “the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto fine brass.” This is the description of Jesus in fearsomeness, with eyes that pierce through every attempt to hide. He is the omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent God, with power to judge sin. Nothing can be hidden from him.

#### Commendations to the church:

1. Rev. 2:19 – “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.”  
Like some of the other churches, they seemed to be doing the right things, and even were increasing in such works, but all these commendations are outweighed by the rebukes to follow.

#### Rebukes: 2:20-23

“Nevertheless 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.”

Just because someone calls themselves a prophet doesn't make it so. Mt. 7:15-20 – we are to beware of false prophets who come in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravening wolves. How can you know? “Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

The sin of the church was allowing Jezebel to teach and seduce people in the church. Where were the faithful men (especially the “five-fold” ministries) that should have stopped her?

- Num. 25:6-15 – Phinehas turned away God's wrath from the congregation of Israel by executing a Hebrew man and his heathen Midianite wife (this was part of the trouble instigated by Balaam)
- Eli the high priest was judged by God for not preventing his sons from using their position for gross fleshly gratifications (1 S. 2).
- Many of the “good” kings of Judah got rid of the idolatrous practices that kept arising in the nation (idols, false priests and sacrifices, groves, Baal worshippers, temple-sodomites and temple-prostitutes). It is interesting how closely related was idolatry and unclean sexual practices.
- Paul commanded the Corinthian church to cast out the incestuous man, and rebuked them for not having done it already.

Who is Jezebel? While it is conceivable that there was an actual woman in the church named Jezebel, I think it unlikely. That would be like naming your child Adolf, or Judas. It seems more likely that it refers to people operating through the demonic spirit of Jezebel. By that, it is meant that the same spirit(s) that motivated Jezebel in the OT are still operating in people today.

- She was the daughter of the heathen king of the Zidonians, and married king Ahab of Israel, whom she influenced to worship false gods, and to spread idolatry in Israel. (1 K. 16:29-33)
- She slew the prophets of the Lord, and was determined to kill Elijah.
- She exercised the power of the king. I believe it is the spirit of Jezebel that motivates feminism today.
- As the OT heathen religions incorporated all manner of sexual impurity in their “worship”, so the spirit of Jezebel tries to seduce God's people to commit fornication. Sexual sin is evil in itself, and so is false religion, but what is REALLY bad is mixing sex, perversion, and idolatry,

Just like the Nicolaitanes proceeded from deeds to doctrine (2:6, 2:15), so the doctrine of Balaam (2:14) proceeded to open, shameless teaching and seduction. What starts as a seed of evil and false teaching will eventually bear fruit.

We live in a day when sexual uncleanness and fornication is not only widely practiced, but is celebrated and encouraged, in “education”, advertisement, entertainment, publishing, the internet, etc. They demand that Christians not condemn, nor even merely condone, but to celebrate their wicked perversions. They glory in their shame. Now there are churches that justify sexual uncleanness and even welcome openly-practicing and unrepentant homosexuals and lesbians as church members or “clergy”, and are encouraging “homosexual marriage”. When they say “God loves the homosexual”, what they really mean is that there is nothing wrong with it, and there is no need of repentance. That is from Jezebel.

What is “fornication”? In some people’s thinking, it means “normal” sexual intercourse between a man and a woman, as a mere description of a physical act. The Bible makes a distinction though, between the God-ordained relations for procreation and marital love, and everything else. “Fornication” is always meant in a bad sense, while marital relations are good. Heb. 13:4 – “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” Fornication includes ALL forms of illicit sex - self-stimulation, pre-marital sex, adultery, pedophilia, incest, bestiality, and homosexual practices (even if done in marriage), and now, even sex with robots.

Have we allowed Jezebel into our minds, and homes? Allowing those spirits to stir our hearts and minds to sinful desires or practices? **We need to purge out of our homes and minds every trace of sexual uncleanness.** Books, pictures, movies, internet usage, activities, and thoughts. Get rid of those evil imaginations.

#### **Warnings and Admonitions: 2:21-23**

“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”

What does this mean? Verse 21 is obvious, that God is longsuffering and does not always judge sin immediately. This “grace-period” gives people time to repent, or else it merely adds to their guilt and eventual punishment. Verses 22-23 are harder to understand, but just reading it you know it is VERY bad for those who refuse to turn. Does God threaten people with physical death? Obviously, yes.

#### **Promises to overcomers:**

1. 2:24-25 – Not every one in the church has been polluted by the spirit of Jezebel and “the depths of Satan”. He says he will lay upon them no other burden, but “that which you have already hold fast till I come.” When you are battling the world’s current, it is an accomplishment (an act of overcoming) not to be swept backward with it. Keep your eyes on the goal and continue to press onward, no matter what opposition you get from the SJW crowd (“social justice warriors”).
2. Rev. 2:26-28 – “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.”

This is referred to again in the vision of the woman clothed with the sun, in Rev. 12. Verse 5 says “And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.” That is a large subject in itself, but I believe the Sman child refers to the overcoming portion of the church, which will be raptured away from the Tribulation and will ultimately rule quite literally over the nations, in Christ’s millennial kingdom.