

Seven Pillars of a FAITHFUL CHURCH

Revelation 2 & 3

PART FOUR

V. **Love, Faith, and Diligence in Christian Service: The Church at Thyatira; 2:18-19**

Commendation: *love, faith, service, perseverance.*

Condemnation: *tolerating false teaching and corruption*

INTRO

“One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul” (Acts 16:14)

“The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:”
(v18)

To the church at Thyatira, He depicts Himself in a way suitable to a **Divine Judge**.

“eyes like a flame of fire”

“His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude” (Daniel 10:6).

“feet are like burnished bronze”

“From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty” (Revelation 19:15).

THE COMMENDATION

“I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance” (v19)

There are four characteristics that are interrelated. Two *internal*; two *external*.

1. **Love expresses itself in service**

Those who love will express that love through acts of service for Christ and meeting the needs of others.

“It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26-28).

“For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:27).

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).

“For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them” (1 Corinthians 9:19).

We know that God loves us – not because He said so or because He felt that way – but because He served us in the greatest sacrificial act ever.

2. Faith expresses itself in perseverance

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Romans 5:1-5).

“But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (1 Timothy 6:11-12).

Having great faith allows us to persevere through trials and temptation.

“...your latter works exceed the first” (v19).

Love is a power that is meant to be turned *outward*. If not, it will turn inward, become ingrown and selfish.

A church that has more memories than goals is over.

“It should be the ambition and earnest desire of all Christians that their last works may be their best works, that they may be better and better every day, and best at last.” (Matthew Henry)

VI. *A Resolution to Pursue Purity: The Church at Thyatira; 2:20-25*

THE CONDEMNATION

“But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols” (v20).

Condemnation: *tolerating false teaching and allowing corruption*

“Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God” (1 Peter 2:16).

1. God’s Patience in His Call for Repentance

“I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works” (vv21-22).

Our God is a God *rich in mercy* who does not favor the death of anyone. He wants sinners to repent and live (Ezekiel 18:30-32). But when sinners refuse His warnings, they choose death instead of life.

“sickbed” Gk *kline* = ‘bed’ ‘couch’ ‘stretcher’ or ‘funeral bier.’

People should be careful not to mistake God’s patience and offer of mercy for weakness.

2. God’s Perfection in His Role as Judge

“and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve” (v23).

Nothing is hidden from the penetrating, all-seeing eyes of God.

“I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds” (Jeremiah 17:10).

“You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence” (Psalm 90:8).

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account” (Hebrews 4:12-13).

“But, O Lord of hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind” (Jeremiah 11:20).

“Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an end, and may you establish the righteous—you who test the minds and hearts, O righteous God!” (Psalm 7:9).

3. God’s Pardon in His Role as Father

“But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. Only hold fast what you have until I come” (v24-25).

“For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10).

4. God’s Promise in His Role as Son

“The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father” (vv26-27).

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18-19).

“Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?” (1 Corinthians 6:2).

“And I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (v28-29).

“a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel” (Numbers 24:17).

A CAUTION

Sow a thought, reap an affection.

Sow an affection, reap an action.

Sow an action, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a lifestyle.

Sow a lifestyle, reap a destiny.

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star” (Revelation 22:16).