

## Revelation 2:18 – 3:6

### The Churches at Thyatira and Sardis

## Introduction

- We are in the 1<sup>st</sup> Vision of the Book (1:9-3:22).
- Chapters 2-3 describe situations in the 7 churches of Asia Minor that are representative of problems that all churches from Pentecost until the Rapture will face.
- Each letter has a primary association to the local church addressed.
- Each letter has a personal application to any church anywhere as well as to the individuals in any church.

## Introduction

- We have read and endeavored to personally apply the letters to the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos.
- Today we read the letters to the churches of Thyatira and Sardis.
- Let's review their location on the following map.



## Rev 2:8-11: The Church at Thyatira

**Revelation 2:18** "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:  
<sup>19</sup> "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first.  
<sup>20</sup> "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls

## Rev 2:8-11: The Church at Thyatira

herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.  
<sup>21</sup> "And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.  
<sup>22</sup> "Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

### Rev 2:8-11: The Church at Thyatira

<sup>23</sup> "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.

<sup>24</sup> "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.

### Rev 2:8-11: The Church at Thyatira

<sup>25</sup> "But hold fast what you have till I come.

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

<sup>27</sup> "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;

<sup>28</sup> "and I will give him the morning star.

### Rev 2:8-11: The Church at Thyatira

<sup>29</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

**"This is the Word of God for the People of God"**

### Background about Thyatira

- **Thyatira** is located about 40 miles southeast of Pergamos in modern Turkey.
- It was a well-known center for numerous trade guilds (like unions).
- Potters, tanners, bronze workers, and dyers had their trade guild in Smyrna.
- **Thyatira** was famous for the manufacture of purple dye.

### Background about Thyatira

- Pagan festivals and immoral practices connected with membership in the trade guilds made living in **Thyatira** difficult for Christians.
- If Christians did not participate in the guilds, they had little to no job security.
- Thyatira was the least important of the seven cities, but it receives the longest letter.

### Background about Thyatira

- When Paul reached the city of **Philippi**, to begin his evangelization outreach there, he went outside the city to the riverside.
- **Acts 16:13**: And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met *there*.

### Background about Thyatira

- **Acts 16:14** Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us*. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

### Background about Thyatira



### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

- **Jesus' self-description (2:18)**  
 "These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass"
- It expresses the **penetrating insight** of the one who is **sovereign**, not only over the seven churches but over the entire course of history as well.
- Jesus Christ with feet of judgment is moving through His church to exercise His chastening authority upon sin and to bring comfort to the righteous.

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

- **Jesus' self-description (2:23)**  
 "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."
- "searches the minds and hearts" – knows your innermost thoughts and motives.
- Nothing is hidden from His penetrating gaze.

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

#### • Jesus' commendation (2:19)

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

- Works – active church
- Love – proper motivation
- Service – serving church
- Faith – believed the right message about Jesus
- Patience – endured in the midst of trials

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

#### • Jesus' evaluation and warning (2:20-23)

<sup>20</sup> "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.

<sup>21</sup> "And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

#### • Jesus' evaluation and warning (2:20-23)

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

<sup>23</sup> "I will kill her children with death,

- Allowed a woman named "Jezebel" – a self-proclaimed prophetess – "to teach" "to seduce" my servants.
- Her message – Christian love tolerates and allows immorality. ("Loving, accepting, inclusive")

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

#### • A Call to Faithfulness and a Promise of Reward (2:24-29)

<sup>24</sup> "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.

<sup>25</sup> "But hold fast what you have till I come.

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

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

#### • A Call to Faithfulness and a Promise of Reward (2:24-29)

<sup>27</sup> "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;

<sup>28</sup> "and I will give him the morning star.

- "rule" authority in Christ's future kingdom
- "morning star" – assurance of Christ's presence.

### Explanation of Problems at Thyatira

#### • Jesus' call to listen (2:29)

<sup>29</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

### Background about Sardis

- Sardis was the ancient capital of Lydia and was an important and wealthy city.
- It was located on a commercial trade route.
- Much of its wealth came from its textile manufacturing, dye industry and jewelry trade.
- Today only a small village known as Sart exists amid the ancient ruins.



### Explanation of Problems at Sardis

- **Jesus' self-description (3:1a)**

"These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars"

### Explanation of Problems at Sardis

- **Jesus' evaluation and warning (3:1b-2)**

"I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

<sup>2</sup> "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.

### Explanation of Problems at Sardis

- **A Call to remember and repentance (3:3)**

<sup>3</sup> "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you."

### Explanation of Problems at Sardis

- **A commendation for the faithful few and a promise (3:4-5)**

<sup>4</sup> "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

<sup>5</sup> "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

### Explanation of Problems at Sardis

- **A call to listen (3:6)**

<sup>6</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

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