

Jezebel in the Church The Church of Thyatira

Text: Revelation 2:18-29

Introduction:

Illus.

A man came into the woods one day with an axe head in his hand, and begged all the trees to give him a branch, which he wanted for a particular purpose.

The trees were good natured and gave him one of their branches.

What did the man do but fix it into the axe head, and soon set to work cutting down tree after tree.

Then the trees saw how foolish they had been in giving their enemy the means of destroying themselves.

As in the other churches we have looked at so far, Christ has shown Himself in a special way to the church being addressed.

He describes Himself as the **“Son of God”**

This is the only place in the Book of Revelation where you find this title given to Christ.

When the Church in Thyatira heard the name **“Son of God”**, they would know and understand that Jesus had ultimate authority over the world which is hostile to Him.

The next thing we see is Jesus described as having **“Eyes like a flame of fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze.”**

Let me take you back to Daniel 10:6. The prophet Daniel saw a vision and prophesied of a man who would terrorize and persecute the people of God.

But Daniel was not to fear – WHY?

Because although throughout the ages and even today kings and nations would be hostile to God’s people and His Church – Christ is omniscient. He is All Powerful! He is Sovereign!

“Eyes like a flame of fire”

These flaming eyes of Jesus Christ sees everything. There is nothing that Jesus doesn’t see.

It gives you the picture that He is angry with what He sees.

His feet are bronze. Bronze signified judgment.

So we have Christ angry at what He sees and He is prepared for judgment.

I. The Commendation for the Church. V. 9

19" I see everything you're doing for me. Impressive! The love and the faith, the service and persistence. Yes, very impressive! You get better at it every day.

Christ says that this church was to be commended for they were a:

- 1) Loving Church
- 2) Serving Church
- 3) Faithful Church
- 4) Growing Church

And they were just doing more than they ever had.

Sounds good doesn't it. Sounds like an ideal church to be a part of, but what could Jesus have been angry with?

We find our answer to this question in verse 20, ***"Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols."***

II. Condemnation of the Church. vv. 20-23

v. 21 "I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling.

Despite the growth of the church ...

Despite the faithfulness of this church ...

Despite their love and ministry in this church, they were being misled doctrinally and spiritually.

Here is a woman who Jesus calls Jezebel who was calling herself a prophetess and she wasn't.

Illus.

There was once a farmer who walked into a restaurant and asked the owner if he could use a million frog legs.

The owner of the restaurant of course was excited about the possibility of putting frog legs on his menu agreed to this deal.

The farmer said, "My pond is overflowing with frogs. Their croaking is driving me up the wall and I'd love to get rid of them."

The restaurant owner said, "Bring back as many as you can."

A week later the farmer came back with embarrassment holding up two scrawny frogs and he said, "I was wrong about a million frog legs. These two frogs were making all the racket. I never two frogs could cause so much noise."

Folks, now listen, one person – Jezebel – was causing corruption in the whole church of Thyatira – but one was all it took.

Illus.

Like an apple with a worm in it. This church looked good on the outside, but on the inside it was on it's way to becoming rotten.

What was this woman teaching that was so upsetting to Jesus?

What she was saying was leading the people to practice fornication and eating food sacrificed to idols.

It's important for us to remember that God gave us the 10 Commandments that say,

“You shall not commit adultery.”
“You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.”
You shall not have any other gods before Me.”

And Jezebel was saying, “After all, you need to make a living and God doesn't expect you to starve. Don't be worried, God has told me it's alright – It's alright to have sex before marriage – It's alright because everyone else is doing it.”

“After all we live by Grace and we are not under the law any more!”

And folks, many in the church were duped by this false teaching coming from someone who claimed to be a prophetess.

I mean after all – they weren't prophets.

Do you see this happening in your life today?

In a subtle way believers have been affected by the Jezebels of this world.

You say – “Pastor, how is that – What do you mean?”

The world's focus especially in this nation is sexuality.

Hollywood has subtly and gradually inched its way over a period of time until the Jezebel effect has coming into the churches.

The cancer and poison of pornography that is found every where you turn. You don't even have to leave your home to get it on a computer or on PPV TV.

The fashion of today comes from Hollywood that causes the Lust of the flesh. A Hollywood woman sees how far they can go to expose themselves and society picks up on it.

The allowance of pre-marital sex – “as long as they love each other and are going to get married.”

The sin of adultery! If I get tired of my spouse then I’ll just go have an affair with another person and eventually divorce spouse and go get married to another.

TV shows that portray a false doctrine of God and Jesus Christ, His Son such as **Saving Grace – Touched by an Angel**

And I hear someone object and say, “Pastor, now that’s a little too far.”

Let me ask you this question, when have you ever heard the name of Jesus mentioned in any of those Hollywood portrayals of God?

You see – that’s where the subtleness of this slips into our churches and our homes and we get a distorted view of God, Christ and His Church that becomes false doctrine.

We get to the place where the world’s standards become our standards instead of the Word of God.

And what happens here is that Jezebel replaces God’s Word with a counterfeit one.

Listen believers – we cannot in any way replace God’s authoritative Word with a poor substitute.

The Judgment of God on Jezebel.

She was judged by Christ Jesus in verse 22-23 where it says, ***“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. Her children – those who grew up following this doctrine would eventually find punishment and death because they were following a false gospel.”***

Would you agree with me that this is serious stuff?

A ditty goes like this:

A sailor on duty got frantic
When he fell into the briny Atlantic
After hours in the sea,
He was saved Yes-sirree
And was hoisted aboard the Titanic

It is no good getting saved by a ship that is bound to sink and it is no good following teachers whose doctrines are bound to be condemned.

III. How can we tell whether a teaching or a doctrine is from God or from a Jezebel?

1) First, Jezebel taught that something evil can be good.

Homosexual marriages are okay as long as they are based on love.

Seeking after material possessions is okay as this is a sign of God's blessing.

Accepting part of the Bible is okay as long as you are in communion with God and His church.

I can commit adultery – besides everyone else is doing it and God will forgive me.

Paul warned the Church in Ephesus against such false teaching:

“I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come among you dressed in sheep's clothing and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.” Acts 20:29

2) The doctrine of Jezebel hates God's word.

This kind of doctrine never prophesizes judgment!

It's an easy kind of preaching and teaching that never upsets anyone.

It only wants to hear the good – the peaceful – prosperity.

This kind of false doctrine – is unbalanced, unbiblical and wrong.

Do you recall the Old Testament Jezebel? She once said about Elijah, ***“I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad.”***

3) The doctrine of Jezebel misleads people to thinking they are okay.

Christian believers who are bound by the Jezebel doctrine believe they are 100% right!

They can't see the deception. It's like a cult.

People even within the Church of Christ today are deceived and are not aware of their sinning against Jesus.

They simply believe they are okay spiritually and they're not concerned about missing heaven and the possibility of going to hell.

Scary isn't it!!!!

It's scary because how do we know what is right and what is wrong.

Who is telling the truth and probably more important and more critical is how do we tell what is the truth?

You see – believer friends – let me say it again – this has happened so subtly in the churches – the world has crept in and we’ve taken on the philosophy of the world instead of heeding to the Word of God.

No longer is it Holiness of Heart – but a shallow experience with God that allows this to happen.

That’s why we keep stressing the fact of getting involved in Bible study groups and reading the Bible and being in the Word of God.

When is the last time you took on a subject and studied it from the Word of God yourself instead of taking it for face value?

We can’t afford just to listen to the preacher or some teacher and take at face value what they say without studying the Word for ourselves.

III. Promises to those who Overcome. Vv. 24-29

“Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you.) Only hold on to what you have until I come. To him who overcomes and does My will to the end, I will give authority over the nations – He will rule them with an iron scepter; He will dash them to pieces like pottery – just as I have

received authority from my Father. I will also give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

There are two things God promises to those who will be overcomers:

1) He says that He will give authority over the nations.

Someday those who are faithful to Jesus and live for Him will be given authority over the nations.

Somehow I think that will be in the Millennium.

Christ will reign with all power.

And He will give the churches this authority.

We won’t have to worry about the world anymore because we have authority over it.

Right now though we have to be on guard because the world has too great of an influence on us.

2) He says that he will give us the Morning Star.

In Revelation 22:16, The morning Star is Christ Himself.

The overcomers are promised to Christ Himself.

This will be the believers greatest reward of all.

Summary:

So where are we?

Will we be overcomers with Jesus or will we be influenced by Jezebel's following?

How do you feel this morning about this?

What area of your life do you feel you've allowed sin the creep in and take control?

Do you need to confess this morning?

Let's let the following Skit speak to us and see if there is anything we need to address in our lives that would not be Christ – like.

SKIT

Choir

INVITATION:

I personally believe that all of us need to confront this issue of repentance this morning.

How long has it been since you've laid the Bible down and the dust settled on it and you held the remote in your hand ignoring the drawing of the Holy Spirit?

Are we strong enough in this church to not be deceived by false teachings?

Some years ago, musicians noted that errand boys in a certain part of London all whistled out of tune as they went about their work.

It was talked about and someone suggested that it was because of the bells of Westminster were slightly out of tune.

You see something had gone wrong with the chimes and they were out of tune.

The boys did not know there was anything wrong with the bells, and quite unconsciously they had copied their pitch.

Application:

We tend to copy the people with whom we associate with.

We borrow thoughts from books we read and the programs we watch and listen to, almost without knowing it.

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Folks, God has given us His Word which is the absolute pitch of life and living.

If we learn to sing by it.

If we learn to live by it

We will easily detect the false in all of the music in the world.