

## Letter to Thyatira

### Rev 2:18-29

Thyatira (**thigh uh TIGH ruh**) was about twenty miles SE of Pergamum (**PUR guh muhm**) and boasts of no high-fortress land formations and, therefore, is not suitable as a major city. It was originally a military outpost town maintained to protect the road from Pergamum to Sardis. Thyatira was a “*working mans*” town with the unions being strong as a commercial center of weavers, leather-workers, potters, and bronze-workers. Sir William Ramsey observes, “*More trade guilds are known in Thyatira than in any other Asian city.*” Paul’s first convert in Europe was a Thyatiran woman named Lydia who was a seller of purple cloth in Philippi (hundreds of miles away from home).



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### To the Church in Thyatira

**<sup>18</sup> "To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:**

**These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. <sup>19</sup> I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.**

**<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup> I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. <sup>22</sup> So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. <sup>23</sup> I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he**

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who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.

<sup>24</sup> **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, <sup>25</sup> except to hold on to what you have until I come.'

<sup>26</sup> To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations — <sup>27</sup> that one 'will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery' — just as I have received authority from my Father. <sup>28</sup> I will also give that one the morning star. <sup>29</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

### I. **The Christ**

A. **Son** of God v.18

**This** is the only time when this title appears in the book of Revelation

B. **Eyes** like blazing fire v.18 (Dan10.6)

C. **Feet** like burnished bronze v.18 (Dan10.6)

D. **The one** who can give authority v.26

### II. **The Commendation**

**The** church is honored for its love, faith, service, courage, and the fact that it is growing in good works.

A. **Love** and Faith

B. **Service** and Perseverance

C. **Doing** more than they did at **First**

### III. **The Correction**

A. **The** Toleration of Jezebel — **leads** to death

The Church has perhaps been deceived by a woman who evidently claims to be a prophetess, and who, like the Jezebel of Ahab's time, is tempting the people toward immorality, and to eat the food offered to idols.

**NOTE:** **The** issue in the text is not the correctness of women as prophets in the first century church. **The** prophet Joel said, "**Your sons and daughters will**

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**prophesy...**” Joel: 2.28-32. The problem is a **false** prophet, not the gender of the prophet.

The warning to the Christians that follow her is stern, yet there is hope for those who are willing to repent. The judgment may appear to be heavy, but the judgment would only be heavy if there was no warning, or chance for change. It is a glance inside of jail without being inside (**BC in Detroit**).

Even with this impending judgment, Christ gave hope of forgiveness with the words, “**unless they repent,**” which indicates the possibility of change.



\*\* God's judgment is just and loving, that forgiveness is not a “**cheap grace which justifies the sin, but costly grace that justifies the repentant sinner**” (D. Bonhoeffer, *Cost of Discipleship*).

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\*\*The temptations that these Christians faced were interwoven into their trade skills, the success in business and the economic survival of the Christians. If they were leather-workers or bronze-workers and their families were supported by these skills and jobs, then they were up against false teachings and social pressures in their neighborhoods and pressures at the places of work. The most subtle challenge to the Christian faith does not usually originate in the public amphitheaters but in the daily places where we earn the money that we need to live.

B. The holding on to the truth — leads to promise

They need not fear the magic and spells of the devil himself. We are not informed as to what these “**deep secrets**” include, but we are assured that they are no match for the authority of Jesus Christ who is the very Son of God. The reference to “**the morning star**” (v. 28) is an Old Testament image of hope, an allusion from Old Testament messianic yearning for the morning. These “**morning**” yearnings are combined in Revelation with the word “**star**,” as in Revelation 22:16 in which Jesus Christ is called the “**bright morning star**.”

Our Christian walk must be seen in the grander context. We must see our daily task, our daily deployment, as a part of the larger goal of our lives. “**Lord, what do you want to do in me today, in my living today, in my family today and may I be of service?**”