

Revelation: Following Our Victorious King

[Revelation 2:18-29](#)

"A Letter From Jesus on Tolerance"—February 18, 2024



Introduction

What do you think is wrong with the world? Have you ever considered that each one of us is what is wrong with the world because of sin? What if we asked a group of strangers, "what do you think is wrong with the church today?" We might get a variety of answers. When people air their grievances about the church, they think it is true of every church.

Jesus sent John seven tailor-made messages for churches that addressed something. Every church is different. Jesus' first message to the church in Ephesus celebrates their theology but tells them that they left their first love. When we come to the message to the fourth church, Thyatira, we see the opposite problem. They were warm and caring, but lacked discernment, putting them at risk of losing the truth.

The book of Revelation reminds us that God's people are made strong and made to persevere by our relational knowledge of Jesus. Each letter begins with one piece of the portrait that John painted in chapter one. This truth about Jesus motivates us to live a holy life. Jesus, the Son of God, is the Davidic king that was promised in the Old Testament. ([Psalm 2](#), [2 Samuel 7](#)) He sees and knows all things. He sees the mind and hearts of all. He is a mighty King and Judge who tramples His enemies. How do we avoid simple compromises that will grieve the King of kings?

Sermon Outline

1. Grow in God's grace. Vs. 19
2. Uproot the poisonous lies that lead to compromises. Vs. 20-23
3. Hold fast to the truth. Vs. 24-29

Read & Discuss

1. Read vs. 19

Jesus begins by telling the church the good things that He sees them doing. He acknowledges their works. They are loving, warm, kind, active and busy. Jesus begins by pointing out evidences of grace that He sees in the life of the church. Do you tend to dwell on things that are wrong? Seeing only the problems causes us to miss the opportunity to give thanks, which can be discouraging to others. Thank God for the evidences of grace you see in others. Is there someone you can encourage today by pointing out the evidences of grace you see in them?

Jesus notices their works, but He also acknowledges their growth. When we plant a garden, we want to see the plants grow. Growth is a sign of life. We should expect growth even if it is slow. Are you growing as a Christian? In your knowledge of God? In your love for God? In holiness? In patience endurance?

2. Read vs. 20-23

The name "Jezebel" comes from 1 and 2 Kings. She was not a worshipper of God. She worshipped Baal. Ahab's compromise in marrying her led to his worship of idols which then spread throughout the nation. There was a woman in the church of Thyatira leading this church into compromise. Her teaching was a lie, leading the church into death.

Thyatira was a blue-collar city. Each trade had their own union overseeing their industry in the city, and each union had a patron god. Those in the church at Thyatira would have had to attend meals and meetings of the union in which they worked. What happens when you are a Christian union member? What do you do? If you opt out, you could lose your job. You would become a social outcast. Out of pressure, some members of the church of Thyatira began listening to the prophetess, Jezebel. She was subtle and cunning with her message.

Jesus' main critique was that the church was too tolerant. Tolerance is viewed by our culture as good but understanding the definition of "tolerance" is important. The meaning of the word has changed over the last generation. It is not just the **recognition** of the existence of a different view, it is the **acceptance** of that different view. It argues that all views and beliefs are valid and should be accepted as true and equal. It belittles absolute truth.

The church is the pillar and buttress of truth. ([1 Timothy 3:15](#)) We are not just proclaiming the idea of truth, but the person of truth. ([John 14:6](#)) To say all views are valid is to reject Jesus as truth. We must stand on and defend the truth of God's word. Others want to know how we know the Bible is truth. We know the truth because God has spoken the truth to us. He speaks today through His word. Jesus is the Word given to us Who has affirmed God's word.

We should be tolerant in spirit - loving and bearing up with others, but we cannot be tolerant of mind to that which God has claimed to be evil or erroneous. What do you do when you realize you are in a situation that would lead you to compromise? Going against the flow of what the world says and does creates friction, and it can be costly. "Jezebel's" message made Christianity easier – you can love Jesus and the world. This is a lie. Jesus points out the idolatry to which she is seducing the people in the church. Idolatry is spiritual adultery. Jesus stepped in here to stop it. Jesus gave this prophetess time to repent, but she refused. Jesus doesn't delight in the death of anyone. ([Ezekiel 18:23](#)) He is mercifully and graciously patient. However, His patience has an end. If you are toying with sin, making small compromises, you are missing the point of God's kindness.

3. Read vs. 24-29

Some in Thyatira had not held fast to the truth. Jesus knew that. Jesus also knew who did not fall prey to her teaching. He encouraged them to persevere. We need each other to keep going. We need other people who love us and are willing to say the hard things to us. We need to lean on each other in that way. We also need the encouragement of the church family. ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#)) Who is the brother or sister in Christ you can lean on?

Jesus refers to the teaching of Jezebel as the "deep things of Satan." Sometimes the world looks at Christianity as the "kiddie pool" of intellectualism. They mock Christians for what they believe. They think Christians are naive. There is pressure to conform, leading to temptation to compromise. The Bible IS TRUE. There is no need to be intimidated by those who don't believe.

Moral relativism may sound like a new idea, but it is the oldest trick in the book. Remember how Satan tempted Eve? (Genesis 3) What if you have been asked these questions? What if **you** have questions? The Bible has good, honest answers to tough questions. The truth will set you free. ([John 8:31-32](#)) Freedom is found in trusting God's word.

Hold fast to God's word. Why? Jesus is quoting from Psalm 2. Even though the nations rage against God, He is not bothered because in the end, Jesus wins! Jesus will crush the enemy. Jesus is the Morning Star. ([Revelation 22:16](#)) The Morning Star brings an end to darkness and brings in a new day. Do you often think that the church is "losing?" Don't give up. Hold fast to Christ. Hold fast to His word. In Christ, we will overcome.

Prayer of Response

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at fbcum.org

Next week's sermon text: we turn to Revelation 3:1-6 "A Letter From Jesus on Dead Faith"
