

March 17th, 2024  
Revelation 2:12-17 The Church of Pergamum

### **Revelations 2:18-22**

**18** “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. **19** “‘I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. **20** 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. **21** I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. **22** 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,

Here we are in our fourth church out of the seven churches that Jesus is sending a message to the churches and believers throughout history and place. The message is this, “***Before the world ends, I want all Christians, all followers of Jesus to have ears to hear to make changes and repent, before the 2nd coming of Christ.***” God has given us this time and is wanting every believer to be ready.

When we look at the 7 churches in Asia Minor, He speaks in five different categories except for 2: **Smyrna** and **Philadelphia** because **there was no complaint about them**. And the Lord picked the number **7** to represent **perfection or the sum of all things**. Jesus is the beginning and the end, He is the Alpha (first) and the Omega (last).

### **Five Categories of Churches in Revelation**

1. Jesus' Title
2. Jesus' Acknowledgement
3. Jesus' Correction
4. Jesus' Action Steps
5. Jesus' Reward

**Jesus' Title:** As a believer, whatever season you are going through in your life, Jesus will come to you as a unique name. When you need provisions in your life, Jesus is called the **Jehovah Jireh**, "**The Lord will provide.**" When you are going through a heart ache in your life, He is called the "comforter," "counselor" and "helper." However in the 7 churches, **God himself is calling to us His own name** to be shown to the churches and to all believers. "***This is how you are to call me!***" **God is revealing His name to us.**

**Jesus' Acknowledgment and Correction:** What I love about Jesus is that He is all about encouragement, commending the things we do and He acknowledges our faith and hard work. So when He is correcting us, it is not to harm us but to get us back into a right relationship with God.

### **Hebrews 12:6**

For the Lord **disciplines** the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

The word "**discipline**" in the original language means to "**train.**" God is training us and getting us ready for His second coming. So we need to have the "ears to hear" and make changes before He comes.

The last two are Jesus' **Actions Steps** and **His Reward** for doing it.

And when we look at the last church we visited in Pergamum, the categories show as follows:

### **Church in Pergamum**

**Jesus' Title:** The Words of him who has the sharp two-edged Sword

**Jesus' Acknowledgement:** Steadfast Faith

**Jesus' Correction:** Following the teachings of Balaam and Nicolaitans (These are the people who come between you and God)

**Jesus' Action Steps:** Repent (to change one's mind)

**Jesus' Reward:** I will give some of the hidden manna and white stone with new name on it.

The key lesson about Pergamum was that if you are focused on Jesus then hold onto the **words of Jesus** and not any other teachers who teach things outside of His words. You can listen to them, but ***don't hold onto them or follow their teachings.***

Because the more you allow or you tolerate teachers like Balaam and Nicolaitans you ***ultimately end up having a different religion***, where the rules and laws of man become greater than the relationship with God. And that was exactly what was going on in Israel. The teachings of the ***Pharisees and Sadducees*** (the teachers of the Mosaic Laws) was becoming ***greater than the relationship with God.***

And this is exactly what we saw in Rome having the persecuted Christians ***becoming a State Religion*** with the ***pope leading it*** and that led to creating more laws greater than the relationship with God.

We witnessed the Persecuted Christian Church being freed by the Roman emperor Constantine in 312 AD and then few years later becoming a state religion 380 AD by the Roman Emperor Theodosius I. In the past, Christians were persecuted for their faith and millions died for over 300 years. The local persecuted church of Rome became the the official State Church.

So what happened in 606 AD is what you have today that resembles the current **Roman Catholic Church**. In 606 AD, you had the Roman Emperor Phocas, put the bishop (pastor), Boniface the III as the head of all the churches in the Roman empire.

### **What exactly is a Pope?**

Pope, (Latin papa, from Greek papas, "father"). The pope is regarded as the successor of St. Peter (Apostle Peter). The pope as bishop of Rome is thus seen to have full and supreme power of Jurisdiction

over the universal church in matters of faith, morals, as well as church discipline and government.

So in essence, Boniface the third became “**the**” **spiritual ruler** and his words have taken over the Apostle Peter and in some cases throughout history of the “popes” they have replaced Jesus and become god themselves.

### **Words of Popes Throughout History:**

***“The Pope and God are the same, so he has all power in Heaven and earth.”*** Pope Pius V, quoted in Barclay, Chapter XXVII, p. 218, ” Cities Petrus Bertanous

***“The Pope is of so great dignity, and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God and the vicar (ambassador) of God.”*** Ferraris Ecclesiastical dictionary

***“The Pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth...by divine right the Pope has supreme and full power in faith, in morals over each and every pastor and his flock. He is the true vicar, the head of the entire church, the father and teacher of all Christians. He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils; the universal ruler of truth, the arbiter of the world, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one, God himself on earth.”***  
Quoted in the New York Catechism

Side Note: [***For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.*** Ephesians 5:23]

***“That all princes should kiss his [the Pope’s] feet only.”*** (Gregory VII, Cesare Baronius, Annales, year 1076, secs. 31-33, Vol 17 (1869 ed.), pp. 405, 406, translated)

**[St. Peter statue seated in St Peter's basilica]**

The Catholics consider St. Peter or the **Apostle Peter** as the **first official Pope** of the universal church. According to most historical accounts show that he was crucified upside down because ***he didn't feel worthy to be crucified*** in the same manner as Jesus was.

The reason why, they consider Peter to be the first Pope of the universal church is because, according to historical records, **Peter died in Rome in AD 64** and he died under the reign of Emperor Nero. This is the same man, who would burn Christians alive to be entertained in their garden.

So what happened with the bronze statue of Peter seated, people who made a pilgrimage there would kiss or touch his feet, so much so over the century, the toe's on the **right toe of the bronze statue of Peter was gone**. The toe had been rubbed off.

This is what Jesus is saying to the believers of Pergamum, "***Don't place any human above Christ, or 'I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth'***" (Rev. 2:16).

Listen, I am not hear to bash any Catholics, in fact, I know many who do believe in Jesus and will be with the Lord, but when you have a pope that determines his words to be equal with Jesus' Words, or replaces Jesus, then that is a major concern that everyone needs to careful with, because ***the word "replace" means "anti" like in anti-Christ***, meaning not going against Christ but replacing Christ. That is the anti-Christ, someone who will come and replace Jesus.

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This then leads us to our fourth church Thyatira.

### **Background on Thyatira**

- Thyatira was the smallest of the seven cities, but the one that received the longest letter.

- This city was famous for its textiles, especially the production of **purple dye** and its trade guilds (labor unions).
- They had more commercial guilds or Labor unions in Thyatira than any other Roman province. they had labor unions for dyers, wool workers, linen workers, leather workers, potters, bronze smith and even bakers. They all had their own guilds or labor unions.
- Spiritually each trade or field of work had its own patron deity, its feasts, its seasonal festivities which included sexual revelry (like going to an office party, but with idolatry and sexual immorality)
- The city was riddled with idolatry [The worship of idols or excessive devotion to, or reverence for some person or thing.]

## **The Purple Dye**

If you remember a story in Acts 16 in which the Apostle Paul goes on a mission's journey and In Philippi, Paul Meets a woman by the name of Lydia. She accepts Jesus as Lord and becomes a Christian. She was from Thyatira.

### **Acts 16:13-14**

**13** And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. **14** 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.

What is interesting is the type of business she was doing in Thyatira a “**seller of purple goods**.” And it is this “**purple dye**” is what made Thyatira a rich city and they imported it to the rich people across the Roman empire. But this purple dye is not for ordinary people, but only the wealthy who can afford this purple dye.

## **The Process of making ancient purple dye:**

- They take shell fish that is indigenous from that area.

- it takes on average about 120 pounds of snails (or the shell fish) to make **one gram of purple dye powder** and it is a very heavy labor intensive process.
- This is known as the **Tyrian Purple** or **Imperial purple**. it was the most valuable shade in ancient times. At one point it was more valuable than gold.
- In ancient times, people didn't have the entire robe in purple so they just had stripes of purple. Only the very wealthy had the wider stripes of purple or most of the fabric in purple. So if you had a fabric that was entirely of purple, then you were either a king, a general, or ruler of a country.

This reminds me of when Jesus was mocked by the Roman soldiers:

#### **Mark 15:16-18**

**16** And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. **17** And they clothed him in a **purple cloak** (outer garment), and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. **18** And they began to salute him, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**"

The Roman soldiers put the very expensive robe on Jesus and was a sign and confirmation that He is the King who died for our sins.

**Spiritually Speaking on Thyatira:** [One of the main power or authority they have in Thyatira is there guilds or labor union.]

One of the main god in Thyatira was the god of **Apollo who is the son of Zeus**. And all the people who were part of guilds or labor union had to go to their annual festivities to honor Apollo. As a part of the guild or labor union, for the early Christians you had only two options, either worship the god of Apollo or if you don't show up, you will get fired. This was the spiritual pressure the early Christians faced in Thyatira. "You don't show up to the party, then **you will get fired!**"

So here is Jesus' Title to the church of Tjyatira: **Jesus comes to us!**

### **Revelations 2:18**

“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has **eyes like a flame of fire**, and **whose feet are like burnished bronze**.’

Anytime you read about Jesus having “**eyes like a flame of fire**” simply means that He is upset with something and that He comes as a purification, sanctification and judgement.

“**feet are like burnished bronze or bronze glowing in a furnace**”:

Likely, the reference is to brass that has turned white in the process of burning. In the tabernacle, the bronze altar in the temple was used for making sacrifices for sin (**burning the sin away**) and for expressing in fire God's judgment on sin. In essence this is a reference to **Jesus is going to be the final judge of our sin**.

### **Revelation 2:19**

“‘I know your **works**, your **love** and **faith** and **service** and **patient endurance**, and that your latter works exceed the first.

What is interesting is that none of the first three were commented for their “love” but Thyatira was. He was given that recognition.

“**service**”: In Greek diakonia pronounced dee-ak-on-ee’-ah which means serving, ministering (especially of the Christian teacher, or technically of the diaconate or in English a Deacon or Minister).

What Ministers and Deacons do is serve in church. They are lay ministers. So Jesus is commending them for serving other people.

But then Jesus has something the believers of Thyatira:

### **Revelation 2:20**

But I have this against you, that you tolerate (hold onto, follow) 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.

Now you have someone in the church, a woman by the name of Jezebel who considers herself to be a prophetess to tell other fellow church members to go and follow the god of Apollo and celebrate with the other guild members.

Now what they do at these celebrations is that they ***eat food sacrificed to idols*** and ***have sexual orgies as part of worship***. This was the similar case with the church in Pergamum.

Now this person Jezebel can be her real name “Jezebel” or that she is like the “Jezebel” in spirit like the “Jezebel” from the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament in **1 Kings 16**, Jezebel becomes the wife of the 7th king of Israel, King Ahab. Now Ahab was already an evil king.

### **1 Kings 16:30-32**

**30** And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. **31** And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife **Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians**, and went and served Baal and worshiped him. **32** He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria.

Samaria is part of the land of Israel. So we see that the king of Israel, Ahab ***served Baal and worshiped him***. And, then on top of that he married a woman whose father was an occult priest.

The name “**Ethbaal**” means ***with Baal*** or ***Baal is with him***.

### **[Show the image of Baal]**

Baal was the supreme god of Canaan and Phoenicia, whose worship infiltrated Jewish religious life during the Judges and became popular

in Israel during Ahab's reign. Baal means “lord” and was believed to be a fertility god who helped the earth produce good crops and multiply children, (god Molech who burned children). Baal took the shape of a bull or ram and was associated with fertility.

So Jezebel is not a Jew but is a daughter of a pagan king who worships Baal. And Josephus a Roman historian said that **Ethbaal** (Ithobalos) **was a priest of Astarte** (Astarte, great goddess of the ancient Middle East and chief deity of Tyre, Sidon, Elat, and these were important Mediterranean seaport.

So here is Ahab who does evil in the eyes of the Lord and who's father in law is a priest to the goddess of Astarte. On top of all this, you have Jezebel who practices idolatry and witch craft.

### **2 Kings 9:22 (NLT)**

King Joram demanded, “Do you come in peace, Jehu?” Jehu replied, “How can there be peace as long as the **idolatry** and **witchcraft** of your mother, Jezebel, are all around us?”

***When darkness marries darkness, you get darkness.*** There is no light at all. That's why when you see people who are alcoholics marry another person with drinking issue, they feel for each other because of drinking but they also hold each other with the cycle of drinking and can't get out of drinking. They are in darkness.

I remember, running into a couple who were homeless and they both had issues with drugs. I encouraged them to go to a shelter for food and clothing, but they didn't want to because they were find with each other being out in the cold. Both of them didn't want rescue, they were good with staying in depression.

Listen, ladies, ***you are a very powerful human being.*** Jezebel can turn an entire nation of Israel to sin. Did you know that you can turn even the smartest man in the world to turn away from God:

### 1 Kings 11:4-5

4 For when Solomon was old **his wives turned away his heart** after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

Did you read that, “**his wives turned away his heart**” meaning that these women in his life can turn the smartest person in the whole world to follow away from God. ***You ladies have power.***

In Genesis you have Adam and Eve. Who is the first one that ate the fruit? The name Eve is called a helper, but in Hebrew the meaning is Isha and Adam is called “Ish” and “**Isha**” means “***The one who helps Adam/Man see God.***” Not to help the man see work or a career or money, but hello your man see God. Not that you don’t co-labor with them for work or family, but spiritually, you are called as “Isha” to help your man see God.

That’s why, I am very encouraged to see many of our women here, have a good relationship with the light. “***You have a deep relationship with Jesus***” and time will come when your future husband will run into a period of darkness and you will shine your light upon him and help him see God. ***If your single, you can help your parents see God***, or your family see God, or your friends to see God, or to your co-workers or your community to see God.

As a female, you are a very powerful spiritual being. You can literally change the spiritual nature of your family, community, and your country. And that is what Jackie did to me. There was many times where I was in darkness and she helped me see the light. And she was able to do that because ***she stayed constantly in the word and prayer.***

But **Jezebel turned the king of Israel into further darkness** and also turned all Israel into sin by persecuting and **killing God's prophets** and then **putting up Baal worship all over Israel**. That's how much power she had.

So here is Jesus calling out this church in Thyratira because of Jezebel's influence. Jesus is saying, "**you are allowing idolatry in the church** similar to what Jezebel did in the Old Testament."

### **Revelations 2:20-23**

**20** 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. **21** I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. **22** 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**, **23** 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 according to your works**.

Anytime you see the word "will" it typically means a promise from God. God will judge and punish if we do not repent and He is talking to Christians.

Listen, Jesus does not want anyone to go through the "**great tribulation**" and that's why He keeps telling us to repent to the churches, to the believers.

### **Revelations 2:24-28**

**24** 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. **25** Only hold fast what you have until I come. **26** The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him **I will give authority over the**

**nations, 27 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. **28** And I will give him the **morning star**.

**“I will give authority over the nations and he will rule them”**: This is a promise from God that we the believers will rule with Christ Revelation 20:4 gives us an idea

#### **Revelations 20:4**

**4** Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. **They came to life and reigned with Christ** for a thousand years.

So one day when we die and Jesus comes again, we the believers will rule with Christ.

Who is the morning star?

#### **Revelation 22:16**

“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**.”

So here Jesus is making it clear that He is the morning star.

But what does that morning star represent or do?

#### **Malachi 4:2**

But for you who fear my name, the **sun of righteousness** shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

In Malachi 4:2 the “sun of righteousness” is the morning star and when this star rises (2nd Coming), its wings will come with healing.

A fulfillment of the promise to bring the ***ultimate healing to our souls.***