

# God's Promises to His People that Overcome



- Part 4: The Church at Thyatira  
(Based on the Seven Churches in Revelation)

## Statement of Purpose for these Essays

There is a sense of “spiritual” urgency in this hour, just as in the days of John the Baptist, to “...prepare the way of the Lord.” Of course in this hour it is a call for the Bride of Christ to prepare herself for the soon return of her beloved “Bridegroom” - Jesus. Just as John the Baptist, in the “spirit of Elijah,” prepared the way of the Lord with a message of “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” for us today it is, “Repent, for the Bridegroom is coming.” We must repent and “turn towards and kiss towards” the Lord like never before (return to your first love); to beware of false prophets and prophesy; to beware of seductive, “new” doctrines; etc. This is the heart of the messages that Jesus gave to the “seven churches of Revelation” found in chapters 1, 2, and 3 of that same book.

Jesus expresses His love to His Body in these chapters as He states in Revelation 3:19 and 20, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” I believe that this is the crux of Jesus’ message to the seven churches, the seven types of “hearts” of people, the seven types of leaders or leadership within the Body of Christ. He loves us so much that He will rebuke and chasten us. Jesus desires and will have a Bride that is “spotless and without blemish.” Will we “open the door to our hearts” to the possibility that maybe, just maybe, we need to have “ears to hear and heed what the Spirit is saying” - to each of us, personally, as well as corporately.

To all of the churches mentioned, Jesus states promises to those who “overcome.” As we review each church, we will break down Jesus’ messages to each of the churches into the following segments:

- A brief history or description of that particular church location
- The description of Jesus given to that particular church
- A description of what that church did well and was commended for
- A description of what that church did not do well and was chastised for
- The things that Jesus told each church to overcome
- The promise given to those who overcome

*“He who is able to hear, let him listen and heed to what the Spirit is Saying”*

## Seven Churches in Revelation

- Ephesus – Revelation 2:1-7
- Smyrna – Revelation 2:8- 11
- Pergamum – Revelation 2:12-17
- **Thyatira – Revelation 2:18-29**
- Sardis – Revelation 3:1-6
- Philadelphia – Revelation 3:7-13
- Laodicea – Revelation 3:14-22



### The Church at Thyatira – Revelation 2:18-29

- **A Little about Thyatira** - "Thyatira" is a name/word of uncertain origin. In Strong's Concordance they give it the meaning, "odor of affliction." Thyatira was located about 35-40 miles southeast of Pergamum. It was a very small city, but a busy commercial center. It was on a major road of the Roman Empire, and, because of this, many trade guilds had settled in this city. There were carpenters, dyers, sellers of goods, tent makers, etc. In the church at Philippi, which the Apostle Paul began, there was a woman named Lydia, a seller of purple (dye), who came from Thyatira. It was difficult to make a living as a Christian in Thyatira without belonging to one of these guilds or unions. These guilds were linked with the worship of pagan gods. Each guild had its particular "guardian god" and as a member, you would be expected to attend all its functions and participate in its activities of worship to that particular god which included offerings, feasts and often immoral, perverted sexual behavior. The members of the church in Thyatira were being torn between making a living on the one hand which meant having to be part of the guilds and its practices and on the other hand staying faithful to Christ and his standards.
- **Description of Jesus** - *"These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;"*

We see here for the first and only time in the book of Revelation, that Jesus very clearly declares who He is - the "Son of God." This means, of course, that he is stressing his deity. As the Son of God he has "eyes like blazing fire." Eyes that can pierce the facades, the disguises, the postures and pretensions of people and get right to the heart of what they are doing. He has feet "like fine brass" which can trample sin under foot and severely punish that which is wrong. Both aspects of the Son of God's appearance would seem to be needed as He was dealing with the church at Thyatira.

Concerning Jesus as the Son of God, we can reference Psalm 2:6-9, *"I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."* When Jesus referred to Himself in this manner to the assembly in Thyatira He was

definitely reminding them that He was the Christ, the Son of God, who had the ultimate authority over a world which was, and is, hostile and rebellious towards and against Him.

- **What that Church did well** - *"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."*

Jesus again, commends a local assembly in the "works" that they do. They did express love towards each other and they did seem to not be respecting certain people over others. It would seem that they were faithful in their service and remained loyal to their faith in Jesus as their Savior and Lord. It sounds like they were a growing church. Hey, this church again sounds pretty good. It sounds like the kind of church that any pastor, today, would love to be a pastor of. It sounds like an ideal church. What could Jesus have been angry with? What could have prompted the use of the name "Son of God" and the images of "eyes like unto a flame of fire" and "feet are like fine brass?" The answer is found in the verse 20.

- **What that Church did not do well** - *"Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."*

The Thyatira church was doing many things well, but they were being led astray by someone giving false prophetic utterances. Jesus mentions the name, "Jezebel." When we hear that name we immediately think that Jesus is referring to the Jezebel in the accounts of Elijah found in 1Kings 19-21. However, this doesn't really seem to be the case. It would seem that there was a certain woman in Thyatira claiming to be a prophetess. Whether her name was actually Jezebel we cannot be sure. Even if Jesus was implying and using the name of "Jezebel" from the woman in the account in 1Kings it would be in the reference to the point that that "Jezebel" was of the demonic influence that tried to cut off the true prophets of God - as she tried to do to Elijah and the other prophets at that time. That same demonic spirit was trying to cut off the true prophetic word of God in the assembly in Thyatira. It would be very similar to the "spirit of divination" that Paul had cast out of the woman in Philippi found in Acts 16:16-18. She was saying what seemed to be "Godly things" concerning Paul and his party. However, it was to draw attention to herself (the demonic influence) and make herself out to be the true "prophetess." It was a lying spirit of false prophecy. As a side note, in that account in Acts 16 that took place in Philippi, if we read just prior to that account that Paul had met Lydia who received the Lord and just happened to be from none other than - Thyatira. (Acts 16:14, 15)

Whatever the case may be, whether it was an actual person, or it was a "spirit" working within a woman calling herself to be a "prophetess," she was being used as a false prophet and influencing many in the church telling them that it would be okay to join the local trade guilds and participate in whatever worship to these pagan gods they would have to do to "save their jobs" and earn a living. This would also mean participation in the guild's feasts that included immoral acts and the eating of things that would be sacrificed to these pagan gods and idols.

We see the same plan of the enemy in Thyatira as in the church of Pergamum. The plan was to cause both churches, both assemblies, to enter into compromise with the society and culture they were in. The attacks may have been altered and designed differently to "push the right button" for each church but the end result would be the same - compromise. Each church could justify their actions. Each church had people that seemed to be "of God," professing to be "Christians" yet pushing the enemy's plan.

For Thyatira it was a false prophetic utterance declaring that sexual practices that were forbidden by God and His Word were now acceptable. Things sacrificed in certain rituals to pagan gods were now acceptable to be a part of. As we look at and read these things we as Christians would say to our selves - "What were they thinking?" However, let's look at some of which is happening today within the Body of Christ.

The true, pure word of God is being twisted and "spun" into saying things that it never ever was saying. Self proclaimed "Prophets" are spewing "new things" declaring "Thus saith the Lord..." As I have mention in previous essays we have teachings as well as false "prophetic utterances" that tell us that we need to update the scriptures to fit into and be more relevant to today's culture as if the Word of God is not relevant to any and all cultures in any era or time period – yesterday, today and forever. We have some leaders justifying divorce, excusing acts of fornication and saying that in some "circumstances" it is okay to now do things that the scriptures clearly tell us are not. The concept of marriage and fidelity is being cast into the dirt – not just with the "gay agenda" of "same sex marriage" - but with the church not even flinching about adultery, divorce and impure lifestyles of fornication and perversion. People, "Christians" are having abortions without a second thought, not realizing that these innocent, unborn children are being "sacrificed to pagan gods." All of the above, and more, are unfortunately becoming too "common place" within the Body of Christ.

Yes, if someone does fall into sexual impurity and immorality or falls in other ways, we should love them, forgive them and help them find their way back. We are to love them by confronting them with their sin and bringing them to a place of true repentance - turning totally away from that sin and leaving behind any and all "traces" of it within their lives. We need to encourage them and stand with them as they make those tough decisions and choices to do the righteous and Godly thing. However, many times what we do is just enable them in their sin. It may seem like this is a hard line stand, however, Jesus is taking this hard line, as well. He is very emphatic in what He thinks and will do to those that line themselves up with this incorrect way of thinking and living.

*"Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, **except they repent** of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."* (Revelation 2:22-23)

- **What to Overcome** - *"But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end..."*

There were those in the assembly at Thyatira that did not give in and fall prey to these false prophecies. There were those that did not follow after this false prophetess and her deceptive words which Jesus refers to as "the depths of satan." Wow!!! He calls it the "depths of satan." Again, this reminds me of another scripture - *"For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. **Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.** Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them."* (Proverbs 5:3-6)

There were those within the Thyatira assembly it would seem, that were willing to take whatever consequences that would occur to remain faithful to the truth. Jesus was encouraging them to "hold fast." He was exhorting them to remain steadfast until He comes. Sometimes the

pressure of “fitting in” with the culture and society we live in is overwhelming. However, we are to stand firm in our faith, trusting God to provide and to take care of us. We are also to stand firm on the truth of God’s Word and not tolerate those who would encourage us to disregard and distort it no matter who they may be, what “position” they may hold or no matter what they may call themselves. This is what we must overcome. If we have fallen prey to it, then we must repent and turn from it and turn towards the Lord. (*...except they **repent** of their deeds...*”- Revelation 2:22)

Remember, it is only the pure, unadulterated written Word of God that points to and testifies of Jesus who is the Word of God - that is the true “spirit of prophecy.” *“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the **spirit of prophecy**.”* (Revelation 19:10)

- **The Promise of Overcoming** - *“...to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.”*

The promise that Jesus gives to those that overcome is one that states that we will rule and reign with Him forever and ever. Those that overcome will rule with Jesus through the “millennial rule over this earth.”

The following is from an article by Ray Steadman concerning the other aspect of the promise that Jesus tells those that overcome will receive. Jesus tells them that He will *“...also give him the morning star.”* I believe this excerpt from an article of his explains this aspect of the promise very well.

“That is a beautiful symbol. I do not know how many of you have ever seen the morning star, but you have to get up while it is still dark to do so. In the book of Malachi, the closing book of the Old Testament, there is a great prediction by the prophet that the *“Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in his wings”* (Malachi 4:2 KJV), i.e., the Lord Jesus will return in power and great glory. He will be like the sun appearing in the darkness of this world's night. But before the sun rises, the morning star appears. In Revelation 22:16, Jesus says of himself: *“I am the bright and morning star.”* So what he is saying here is that there will be an appearing of himself for his own before he comes in power and glory, visible to the world. In other words it is a promise of the rapture of the church, the first such promise in the book of Revelation. He will appear for his own, for those belonging to him, who are true Christians, who have been held and kept by the Spirit of God from the evils of the society around. It is not that they cannot, and do not at times, fall, but they invariably recover, and **repent**, and turn back to him. That is the sign that our faith is real. Those who have real faith will **repent**. Someone has well said, “If your faith fizzles before you finish, it is because it was faulty from the first!” True faith holds on to the end.”

<http://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/revelation/thyatira-the-worldly-church>

---

As we conclude our discussion of the Thyatira assembly, we hear another wonderful promise to those who overcome. For the assembly at Thyatira, it was overcoming the deception that they could compromise within their culture and society. They needed to overcome that false prophecies being brought forth under the pretense that these “prophetic utterances” were from God. Hey! Who would not want to hear from

God that He suddenly changed His mind, changed His ways, changed His precepts to now fit into and make it easier to live within the world's ways of doing things? That would sound wonderful. The only problem with that is that God's ways are unchangeable. His Word and His ways are the same - yesterday, today and forever.

Brothers and sisters we must be very careful and on the alert in this hour for us not to yield to these same tendencies to think it is okay to compromise so that we can survive in today's culture / society. Be careful of the, "The Lord is saying..." prophecies from anyone. We are called to "prove" these prophecies and these prophets by the "plumb line" of the Word of God - not our feelings and emotions nor the ease of lifestyle it may try to present. The fact of the matter is that, the scriptures tell us very clearly that in these end times, it will be getting even more difficult for the sold out, born again child of God to walk through the journey of their lives here on this earth. The "easy Christianity" message is a deception.

However, if we hold fast and not fall prey to it, or if we have been compromising and now choose to truly repent - great will be our reward. We will behold Jesus in all His splendor and glory as the "Sun of Righteousness," that bright "Morning Star," as He breaks through the heavens and returns triumphantly. When he does, those that overcome will rule and reign with Him over the nations. *"Let everything that has breath, Praise ye the Lord!!!"*

*"He who is able to hear, let him listen and heed to what the Spirit is saying,"  
- Both, corporately as a Body of Christ and individually as the Bride of Christ.*