

Thyatira

Series – God’s Score Card

- 7 Letters to 7 Churches

- 1:3 “***Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.***”

- Image of lamp stands – Christ dwelling among them

- clear about what is commended and condemned

- clear about hearing and responding to message

- bridegroom returning for bride – qualities that should be found

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City of Thyatira:

- 42 miles inland, originally outpost for military
- numerous trade guilds, organized unions
- commercial center for trade
- Lydia – Acts 16
- participation in business brought problems for church
- guardian was deity Tyrimnos – patron of the guilds
- not a huge city – important center of commerce

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"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. I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first. 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. I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. 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. I will strike her children dead.

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“Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. 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. “ Rev 2:18-29

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1. Striking Picture

- words of Jesus – authority
- ‘eyes like blazing fire’ – seeing all, knowing the truth
- ‘feet like burnished bronze’ – unbreakable, hard, solid
- don’t miss who is bringing these words

2. Commendation

- I know your deeds.....
 - seeing what they do – hearts behind it

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- love – for God and for others
- faith
- service & perseverance
- doing more today than at first
 - not growing weary or giving up

3. Condemnation

a) Tolerance

- woman who calls herself a prophetess
- Jezebel – story in 1&2 Kings
 - Married to King Ahab – Baal worship

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- Woman who was allowed influence, teaching those who would listen false freedom that would bring judgment.

- fatal compromise with secular environment

- participation in guild meals honoring false gods

- ensuing sexual immorality that was part of the feasts

- suggesting the idol is nothing – belong to God so what harm could our participation bring?

b) Unrepentance

- given time to repent – no response

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- words – unwilling
 - no humility, submission to authority, turning from
- don't miss the patience of God here

4. Results

a) Cast on a bed of Suffering

- suggest physical illness can be God's hand at work
- for her followers – those misled & participating

b) Clear that God is Doing This

- desires all the churches to see and know

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- Christ the one who searches hearts and minds
 - knows your thoughts, attitudes, desires
 - eyes like blazing fire – seeing the core, truth

c) Deeds will be repaid

- Jer. 17:10 ***“I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.”***

- Matt 16:27 ***“For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.***

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- Romans 2:6-8 ***“God “will give to each person according to what he has done.” To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”***

5. Words to Live By

- Hold on to what you have
 - what you are commended for, what you know
- Stay faithful to the end
 - authority, my presence, reward will be yours

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So what

1. Remember Who Is Talking

- Jesus – authority, high & lifted up, speaking clearly to his bride the church
- promising to bless those who hear & respond

2. Things we Need to Pay Attention to:

- what we do
- our love & faith
- service & perseverance
- continuing to be about the mandate & mission

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3. What We Need to Guard Against

- Tolerating those who would claim to speak for God & yet lead people astray
- participation in idolatry & immorality
- being unrepentant when confronted with truth:
 - about our actions that don't reflect God's heart
 - about our convictions that don't reflect scripture
- allowing sinful behavior to bring judgment in our midst

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4. Remember that:

- God searches & knows
- God will reward
- The Holy Spirit will speak when we listen carefully