

POISON IN THE PULPIT

THYATIRA: THE CORRUPT CHURCH

REVELATION 2:18-29

The Church At Thyatira!

“The Rotten/Corrupt Church!”



The city of Thyatira

- This was a military strong-hold for Rome which was often the first city to be attacked by the enemy, often destroyed and rebuilt!
 - ▶ Caesar's elite guard was stationed here!
 - ▶ They would hold off the enemy long enough for the other cities to prepare for battle.
- It was a trade city that was famous for it's dyes!
 - ▶ The most known of these was it's purple dyes made from a shellfish found in the river Lycus (see. Acts 16:11-15)



The Church of Thyatira!

- Very little is known about them other than what is found in this letter, and yet Jesus speaks more to them than to any of the other seven churches!
- The church was located in a city that was overrun with occult worship!
- There was a temple in the city dedicated to the fortune-telling goddess Sambathe.
 - ▶ Many historians and scholars believe she is who Jesus is referring to as “Jezebel” (Rev. 2:20)



I. Jesus Commends Their Service!

(Rev. 2:18-19)

▪ Many see Jesus being described here in three ways! (Rev. 2:18)

▶ The Saving One “Son of God”

▶ The Searching One “eyes like a flame of fire”

▶ The Sovereign One “feet like fine brass/ burnished bronze” (see Rev. 1:14-15)

▪ After addressing “who He is” Jesus moves on to “who they are!”



Their service!

- Their Ministries! “I know your works!”
 - ▶ Love, faith, service and patient endurance!
- Their Motives!
 - ▶ Love (agape) *self sacrifice, Christ-like love*
 - ▶ Faith (pistis) *conviction of truth, persuasion*
 - ▶ Service (*diakonia n. f.*) minister, waiter, deacon, server/attendant.
- Their Maturity! “Your latter works exceed the first”
 - ▶ They were developing and growing in their works!
 - ▶ The 3 bums & the \$20 bill!



II. Jesus Confronts Their Sin!

(Rev. 2:20-23)

- Jesus takes time to tell them what they are doing right, but He also makes sure to point out what is going wrong!
- Even with all the good they were doing, there was corruption at their core! The teaching in the church was corruption by allowing sin to go unchecked and large numbers of the saints lead astray!
- A similar warning to this is given in 2 John 1:9-11!



The woman Jezebel!

(1 Kings 16-21; 2 Kings 9)

- The ungodly wife of Ahab king of Israel!
 - ▶ Under her influence Ahab allowed idolatry & shameful practices, even worshiping Baal!
 - ▶ Because of this, notice what is said of this king!
 - 1Ki 16:30 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him.
 - 1Ki 16:33 And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.



The woman Jezebel!

- This term being used likely to refer to a group in the church that was supporting and promoting behavior like that of Jezebel of old! (Cf. “Teaching of Balaam” Rev. 2:14)
- Claiming to be a “prophetess” implies that they were claiming to be teaching these things by divine authority!
- Jesus states that “she/they” have been given time to repent, but refuse to do so!
- Jesus knows what is in our minds & hearts!



III. Jesus Comforts the Saints!

(Rev. 2:24-29)

- Not everyone in Thyatira had walked away from the Lord! Not everyone had taken hold of “the deep things of Satan!” (Vs. 24)
- Just because others are taking hold & overlooking sin, doesn't mean we have to!
- It is often easier to go with the flow, than to stand against the current!
 - ▶ Ezek. 22:30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.



“Only hold fast!” (Rev. 2:25)

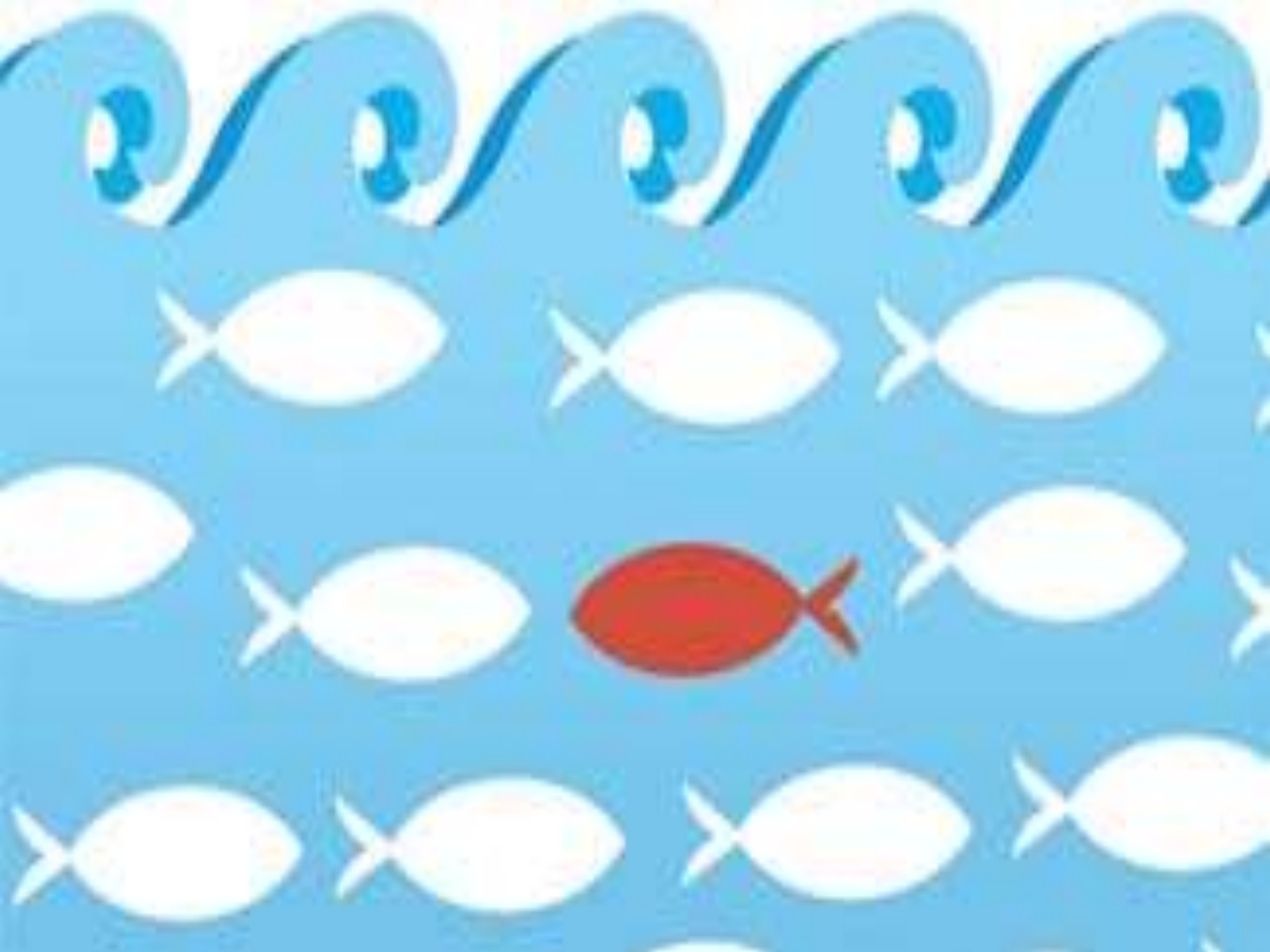
- There is a need for them to continue to maintain even in the mud!
- Notices how (Rev. 2:26 and 2 :10) relate!
 - ▶ We can not allow the challenges we face to knock us off course!
 - ▶ We must continue in the “work of the Lord!”
 - ▶ Our “works” are important!
 - Works (twice in 19, 22, 23 and 26) 5 times!
- Tit 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.



Conclusion:

- The message from Thyatira is this “we need to be concerned with both our words and our works!”
- If someone is teaching falsely, then we need to comfort them! If someone is living in sin, then we need to comfort them!
 - ▶ 1 Cor. 5:1-13
- The letter to these churches is not to hurt them, but to help them! As it is meant to help them, it is also meant to help us! “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches!”





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