

Remnant Life Church  
March 22, 2026  
**The Seven Churches of Revelation:**  
**Thyatira**  
Revelation 2:18-29

We are continuing this morning with the letters to the 7 churches of Asia Minor found in the first 3 chapters of the book of Revelation

To this point we have read and examined the letter written to the church in Ephesus

- They are the distracted church

The second letter was to the church in Smyrna

- They are the martyred church

The third letter is the church in Pergamum

- The wayward church

What you may see developing in these letters is a progression of compromise and how sin increases when there is a willingness to embrace the world rather than the things of God

1. The first church Ephesus was testing its teachers, staying pure the early doctrine, but they lost their first love for Jesus
  - a. When you begin to lose your love for Jesus you begin to love the world
  - b. You cannot love both because they cannot exist together
2. The second church, Smyrna, held fast to the Lord in the face of persecution
  - a. They refused to compromise
  - b. And they serve as a guide of how we should respond to persecution and the world's attempt to slander and downplay our need for God
3. The third church, Pergamum, falls deeper into compromise
  - a. They are located at the seat of satan
  - b. They held fast to their faith but they compromised their moral behavior

This morning we come to the fourth church – the church of Thyatira

**READ – Revelation 2:18-29**

Thyatira

- There are a couple of things that set this city apart from the others
- It was likely established at the instructions of Alexander the Great
  - The name Thyatira means, among other things, “daughter”.
  - The story is told that approx. 300 years before the birth of Jesus, Selucus Nicator, a general for Alexander the Great, while at war, posted a garrison of soldiers at this location as a defensive line.
  - During the campaign he came to learn that his wife had given birth to a daughter.
  - And so he called this place, the Greek word for “daughter” – or Thyatira
- It was the smallest of the 7 cities where these early churches were based

- But interestingly enough, even though Thyatira is the smallest place it receives the longest letter
  - It was not wealthy or full of great libraries or the power of government
  - What this city was known for was its industry
    - It was a commercial center for weavers, leather-workers, potters, workers with bronze, wood, and most famously, for the dyeing of textiles
    - And because of that, it had the highest number of guilds in all of Asia-Minor
      - What is a guild?
      - A guild was a forerunner of the modern worker's union
      - The workers of a particular trade would gather together in the city
        - They would discuss their craft
        - Exchange ideas and new methods
        - And then celebrate or worship the god of their trade or craft
        - And according to ancient historical writings there was a lot more time spent celebrating than there was discussing
      - Herein was the problem for these new Christians
        - Because they, too, were skilled craftsmen
        - They were members of these commercial trades or guilds and expected to participate in the pagan religious rituals
          - Not only to worship these idols
          - But all of the elements that went along with it including eating food sacrificed to the idol as well as acts of sexual immorality
        - Their participation was expected and to not do so could mean the loss of their job and means of support
          - So, they find themselves at a spiritual crossroads
          - Not unlike what many Christians are faced with today
- But let's look at what Jesus says to them, both the positive and the negative
  - But first, in verse 18 Jesus refers to Himself as *the Son of God*
    - This is the only place in the book of Revelation where this is used
    - And it is likely a statement in direction opposition to the temple of Apollo found in Thyatira
    - Apollo is referred to as the son of Zeus or the son of a god
  - Jesus is in essence saying, I am the real Son of the one true God
    - And He is saying to them as well as to us, never forget that!
    - No matter what you hear from man, from government, from popular culture, Jesus is the Son of the one true God, creator of the universe!
    - And He loves you!
    - And we should find comfort, encouragement, and security in that fact
  - He goes on in verse 18 to say...*who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass*
    - Think back to the days of the temple in Jerusalem before it was destroyed in 70 AD (about 20 or so years before John writes these letters)

- This was the second destruction carried out by the Romans
  - The first one (Solomon's temple) was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC
  - There was an altar where the animal sacrifices were made and the offering would then be lit on fire by the priests and burned
  - That altar was covered in bronze a metal very similar to brass,
    - All the utensils used in the sacrificing of the animals were made of bronze.
    - And the reason the animals were sacrificed on that altar was to atone for the sins of the people and in that act the animal received the judgment of God so the person or people would not have to.
  - So, with Jesus' fiery eyes and brass feet, He's telling the church of Thyatira, I am coming in judgment.
- But first Jesus commends them
    - In verse 19 He says, *I know your works, love, service, and your patience; as to your works, your last are more than your first.*
      - IOW – they are continuing to increase the good they are doing
      - And unlike the church in Ephesus who were doing good but with the wrong motives because it led them away from Jesus;
      - This church was doing good and for the right reasons according to God's judgement
    - You see, God's judgement is righteous and just and He knows when you are doing right and living within the desire of His will for your life
      - But judgement is not only for acknowledging the good
      - It is also for calling out what is evil and harmful
      - And in this case, it was a woman within their church who was leading people away from God
  - Vs 20 – *Nevertheless, I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile My servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols.*
    - Jesus identifies a familiar name as the source of the problem
      - This could have been an actual person or it could be a reference to a false teaching movement
      - But the name Jezebel makes it clear what is happening
        - In **I Kings 16:31** we are introduced to this woman who becomes the wife of Ahab, the King of Israel
        - She was the daughter of the king of Sidon
          - A city that set the northern boundary of the land of Canaan
          - It was a pagan city that worshipped Baal
        - And as wicked as she was, her name became synonymous with evil, disorder, lying, and greedy ambition

- In all likelihood, here in **Rev. 3:20**, it is a woman within the church who Jesus is referring to symbolically as a type the people would know and recognize from their ancestral history
  - What has she done and what is she doing?
    - First, it is pointed out that she calls *herself* a prophetess
      - Just because someone calls themselves a title does not necessarily make it true
        - King of Norway?
      - In fact, there are 3 characteristics of a true prophet that must be observed at all times
        - First, to be a prophet or prophetess means that you only speak what God tells you to speak
          - Different from a prophetic gift
        - Second, what you say can never contradict the Word of God
        - And third, it can never, ever be in error or wrong
    - This woman cannot be a prophetess of God because what she is telling the people to do goes against the teaching of the Word
      - They are being told to commit acts of sexual immorality (**Rom 1; I Cor 6**)
      - And to eat food offered to idols (**Acts 15:20**)
      - In fact, these are the same two sins that Jesus pointed out to the church in Pergamum (**Rev. 2:14**)
  - But I also want you to catch something here that is important to note – because this verse has been used to support gender arguments that are not accurate
    - The sex of this person who is prophesying is not the issue
      - The NT does not forbid women from prophesying
        - Peter quotes the OT prophet Joel on the Day of Pentecost
        - *I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17)*
        - These are God’s words spoken through Joel
      - Paul writes in **Romans 2:11** that God is not a respecter of persons
        - IOW He shows no partiality
        - He judges, the good and bad, based solely on the deeds and heart of the person
      - This woman’s sex was not the basis for the judgement of God on those who follow her, it is her false teaching and sinful acts
- And the penalty for not only the one who speaks the words of false teaching but those who follow them are severe as we read in our text
  - But within that warning there is a word of hope for those who will repent
  - We are never so far away from God that when we offer a sincere heart of repentance He will not bring his mercy and grace to forgive us
    - What a beautiful promise we have in that truth!
    - The judgement would be harsh, but for their own good

- (ILL) There was a time, perhaps it still happens, where young juvenile offenders were brought before a judge and he would sentence them to spend some time in an actual state or federal prison.
  - Not for a long period but for a few days
  - The intent was to jolt them to the reality of where their bad decisions were going to lead them
    - There was a famous case of this that took place in California where a judge was sentencing repeat-offender young men to spend a weekend at San Quentin prison
    - And their eyes were opened to the brutality, the destructive, and dangerous, evil life that awaited them if they continued on the path they were on
    - Not surprisingly, it was a very effective deterrent, and many changed the direction their lives were going
  - That is similar to the intent of this letter to the church of Thyatira
    - There are intense and terrifying results in store for this church and those who are caught up in the teaching of this false prophet if they do not repent
    - But here again, we see these same words, *And he who overcomes, and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations...(2:26)*
- And we, my friends, are given that same promise today as what was given to those 7 churches...if we overcome
  - Overcome what?
    - The temptations of the world
    - The lure of compromise so that no one thinks badly of us
    - The call of the world's pleasures that are contrary to God's Word
    - The getting caught up in what we are doing and our drive to succeed that we take our eyes off of Jesus

Let me leave you with one final understanding of what happened to this church

- The people of the church in Thyatira did not feel the initial pull away from the truth in the place of false teaching
- The initial pull occurred much earlier in their places of business and work
- Their co-workers, bosses, and customers all believed in the false idols and there was pressure to conform
  - The sin did not start in the eating of the defiled meat and acts of sexual immorality
  - It began in the subtle challenges to their faith
    - It was where they earned their money, where they needed to live, and the places where they interacted with their neighbors
    - It was a one-time slip that was easily dismissed or explained away
    - It was the beginning of spiritual compromise that they were barely aware of until they were deep within its control and influence

- And so how are we to survive today in a world that is moving further and further from the truth of God's Word
  - How do we stand against the onslaught of worldly temptation?
  - How do we survive these daily tests?
- As with all things in our lives it begins with total surrender of every are of your life
- But it also means placing the activities of your everyday life upon a larger stage, and within a greater context than the small sphere of your world
  - We each live within the greater scope of the Kingdom of God as His child
  - Your life is not intended to be centered on self-gratification and the most pleasing level of survival you can obtain
    - It is first and foremost to serve and please God
    - It is to live a life that is an example to others that you do not follow the gods of this world, but the One True God of the universe!
  - It is then the understanding that what your job needs are your skills
  - What your relationships need are your sincere love and care for them
  - But your soul, your devotion, and your worship belongs only to God!
- When we learn this vital alignment of our values and priorities, we will not only do better in our work with less stress, but we will be fulfilled in a way that brings the peace, and joy that the world simply cannot provide
- Only a right and growing relationship with Jesus brings that – and He has that for you if you are willing to surrender your life and stay focused on Him and the truth of His Word