

The First-Century Church  
"The Church in Thyatira"

Introduction:

1. The New Testament contains information (positive and negative) that was written "about" as well as "to" various congregations in the first century.
2. By "rightly dividing" this information we can know the Lord's will for His church today.
3. This lesson is a study of the message that the Lord sent to the church in Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29).

Discussion:

- I. (vs.18) THE INTRODUCTION TO THIS MESSAGE
  - A. (vs.18a) This message was addressed to *"the angel [messenger] of the church in Thyatira."*
  - B. (vs.18b) Although John recorded this message, it was spoken by the Lord who described Himself as *"the Son of God,"* having *"eyes like unto a flame of fire,"* and having feet *"like fine brass."*
    1. This is how the Lord appeared in John's vision (1:12-15).
    2. The significance: Through His divine power as the Son of God, the Lord sees with His eyes everything that takes place in His church, and with His feet He will stamp out those things that do not please Him.
- II. (vs.19) THE LORD COMMENDED THIS CHURCH
  - A. The Lord was able to commend this church because He knew its works.
  - B. The Lord commended this church in 5 areas, including its *"charity"* [love], its *"service"*, its *"faith"*, its *"patience"* [steadfastness], and its *"works."*
  - C. The Lord further commended this congregation because it had grown in these areas -- *"the last to be more than the first."*
- III. (vs.20-21) THE LORD ALSO REBUKED THIS CHURCH
  - A. This church was being influenced by a woman known as *"Jezebel."*
    1. This woman:
      - a. called *"herself a prophetess"* [an inspired woman who spoke on behalf of the Lord]
        - 1) "Prophecy" was one of the 9 spiritual gifts in the early church (1 Corinthians 12:10).
        - 2) There were women in the early church who prophesied (Acts 21:8-9).
        - 3) Such women were to follow certain guidelines.
          - a) They were to be silent in mixed assemblies (1 Corinthians 14:32-34).
          - b) They were not to teach or usurp authority over men (1 Timothy 2:12).
        - b. taught the Lord's servants to commit fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols
        - c. would not repent, even though the Lord gave her sufficient time to repent (vs.21).
      - B. The Lord rebuked the church for allowing this woman to teach her doctrine.
  - IV. (vs.22-23) THE LORD URGED JEZEBEL'S FOLLOWERS TO REPENT
    - A. (vs.22) The Lord threatened to afflict those who practiced the things she taught.
    - B. (vs.23) He threatened to destroy her *"children"* [devoted followers].
    - C. This punishment would serve as a warning to other churches.
  - V. (vs.24-28) THE LORD EXHORTED THE OTHER CHRISTIANS IN THYATIRA TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO HIM
    - A. Thankfully, there were some members of the church in Thyatira who did not go along with Jezebel's teaching.
    - B. The Lord promised to bless those who continued serving Him faithfully.

Conclusion:

1. The Lord wants us to *"hear"* this message (vs.29).
2. He expects us to grow in areas such as love, service, faith, patience, and good works.
3. He also expects us to avoid the evil influence of people like Jezebel (1 Corinthians 15:33).
4. In restoring the Lord's church today we must follow His guidelines concerning the roles of women.