

The Seven Churches



The Church at Thyatira

Thyatira means *unwearied service*; it was yet another centre of trade. Lydia lived in Thyatira where she sold her fabrics.

Acts 16 v 14

A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

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Revelation 2 v 18- 28

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

1. Christ is pictured in verse 18

...The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire...

2. The commendation appears in verse 19

... I know your deeds, and your love...

3. The condemnation is in verse 20

But I have this against you...

4. A challenge, verse 25

Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.

5 A promise, verse 26

...to him I will give authority over the nations...

In this message we read of the influence of Jezebel who teaches and misleads some members of the church, see also **1 Kings 19 and 21**. The woman's' role in the church and her place of ministry is much in debate today.

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The Church at Sardis

Sardis means remnant or rest. It was a city surrounded on three sides by high cliffs and was destroyed by an earthquake in AD 17.

Revelation 3 v 1-6

"To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

1. Christ is visualised in verse 1

... He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars...

*See also **Isaiah 11** and **Revelation 1 v 4**.*

2. The commendation, although slight, also appears in verse 1

... I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive...

3. The condemnation appears in verse 2

Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain...

4. A challenge, or provocation verse 3

Therefore if you do not wake up...

5 A promise, verse 5

He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments...

The witness of this church should be challenging our faith; God wants us to be certain of our salvation by continually reminding ourselves that **we are saved!**

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The Church at Philadelphia

Philadelphia means brotherly love. It was considered to be a place of fertility; there were many vineyards and temples in the area.

Revelation 3 v 7-13

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie - I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

1. Christ is depicted in **verse 7**

... *He who is holy, who is true...*

2. The commendation is in **verse 8**

... *'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door...*

3. Again, like the church at Smyrna there is no condemnation. They are commended for using the little power that they have. It seems that only a little is enough! See **Matthew 17 v 20**.

4. A challenge appears in **verse 12**

He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar ...

5 The promise is also included in **verse 12**

...*I will write on him the name of My God ...*

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The Church at Laodicea

Laodicea means judgement of the people. It was positioned on the river Lycus, in the Roman region of Asia.

Revelation 3 v 14-22

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

1. Christ is described in verse 14

...the faithful and true Witness...

2. There is no commendation for this church

3. The condemnation is clear to the Laodiceans, see verse 15

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot...

4. The challenge takes place in verse 18

I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich...

5 The promise is included in verse 21

He who overcomes, I will grant to him...

They mistakenly thought that they did not need God, he reminds them of their true state in **verse 17** *...you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked...*

The Lord disciplines those that He loves, He is awaiting our response to His knocking at the door of our hearts.

He promises that as we overcome the world we shall rule with Him.

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