

Speaker: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor

Intro: TOLERANCE – last week we looked at the dangers of tolerating false ideas – We are called to LOVE people – YES – but we are also called to reject falsehood and SPEAK THE TRUTH.

Jesus gave the Church of Pergamum and stiff warning. Their good deeds didn't outweigh their TOLERANCE of sexual immorality & idolatry – WARNED that He (Jesus) would WAR AGAINST THEM.

Sermon: Letter to the Church at Thyatira

Each of these letters act as REPORT CARDS for specific churches. They provide a rubric for us today!

Jesus is “in the midst of” His Churches – and He evaluates them. In His rubric we see what He wants – His expectations – what constitutes failure – how to overcome and a constant reminder of what is most important – keeping our eyes FIXED ON JESUS.

Eugene Peterson, “to give ‘spiritual direction,’ to help disciples of Jesus live ‘in the world,’ but ‘not of the world.’” (Johnson, Darrell W.. Discipleship On The Edge)

A. (PLAY VIDEO #4) Thyatira’s Report Card – Intro & Encouragement! (Rev 2:18-19)

Map: Per – Modern day Akhisar (PICTURES BEFORE/AFTER)

- Located 30 miles from Aegean coast & 50 miles NE of Izmir (Ephesus)
- Center for worship of Apollo – god of sunlight
- Apollo & Ceaser were called, “son of Zeus” (Son of God)
- Known for it’s MANY trade guilds! It was a manufacturing hub of Asia Minor.
- **Sir William Ramsey**, “*wool workers, linen workers, makers of outer garments, dyers, leather workers, tanners, potters, bakers, slave dealers, bronzesmiths and shoemakers.*” (Ibid)
- **Acts 16:14** – Paul is witnessing to a group of women on the Sabbath and there leads Lydia “a dealer in purple cloth” from Thyatira , to Christ!

Revelation 2:18–29 (ESV) ¹⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. ¹⁹ “ ‘I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.

- Jesus uses the title Son of God – to contrast the son of Zeus – JESUS is the ONLY SON OF GOD.
- **Eyes like a flame of fire** – piercing through “fluff”, masks, walls, and sees the heart!
- **ENCOURAGEMENT** – “you guys are doing REALLY well!”
 - **Works** of God! They are doing good works! CHECK!
 - **LOVE** – you truly love people! CHECK!
 - **FAITH** – you trust God! Believe in Him! CHECK!
 - **SERVE** – you serve your brothers & sisters in Christ! CHECK!
 - **ENDURANCE** – you DO HARD THINGS & DO NOT QUIT! CHECK!
 - **DIRECTION > PERFECTION** – you are growing! CHECK!

B. Thyatira’s Report Card – FATAL FLAW → TOLERANCE (Rev 2:20)

²⁰ But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.

- TOLERANCE – again – just in case you thought this was a minor issue! JESUS SAYS ITS MAJOR!
- Jezebel was an OT character (1 Kings) married to Ahab.
- She was a BAAL & Aphrodite worshipper – she murdered prophets and deceived Israel!
- Tolerate – teaching of Jezebel – Leading people astray - to practice sexual immorality AND taking part in feasts dedicated to idol worship.

C. Holy Sexuality: Confronting the Sexual Ethic of our Culture

Current LIES RE: sex/sexuality that Christians TOLERATE:

- **“Try before you buy”** – equating sex before marriage to test driving a car.
- **Casual sex – “it’s just sex”** – it’s a basic physical need & act, nothing more.
- **“We committed to each other – that’s equal to marriage”** – All that matters is LOVE.
- **“Everything BUT intercourse is ‘ok’ before marriage”** – Sex = intercourse only.
- **“As long as it’s consensual, it’s not hurting anyone”** – my sin isn’t that bad.
- **Pornography & Trash Media don’t hurt anyone!** - “No one else knows or is involved.”
- **“It’s a basic human NEED”** – Humans must have sex to live (or have happiness).
- **“I was born this way”** – God made me this way. I can’t control my desires.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

“Sexual immorality” Porneuo – Porneia – MEANING: illicit sexual intercourse, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, sex with close relatives, sex with a divorced man/woman.

1. Sex is GOOD. Sex is for MARRIAGE between one man & one woman.

Genesis 2:24–25 (NIV)²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Ephesians 5:31–32 (ESV)³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Matthew 19:4–5 (ESV)⁴ He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,⁵ and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?”

- Jesus did not CHANGE the laws on sex & marriage. He AFFIRMED them.

2. Sex creates ONENESS – physically, emotionally, & spiritually

1 Corinthians 6:13–20 (ESV)¹³ The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body...¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one

flesh.”¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

- **“one flesh” flesh - Sarx (nature) body - Soma (body/family) joined - Kollao (glued together)**
- ONE FLESH is MORE than sex. It isn’t LESS than that – But it is MORE. It is physical, emotional and spiritual in effect.
- Our BODIES are made for the Lord! We are to be ONE SPIRIT & BODY WITH HIM!

SEE GOD’S GRAND STORY part 19 The Wedding Supper – what marriage represents – Gives the “why”

Malachi 2:13–16 (ESV) ...You cover the Lord’s altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering ... But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless,.... Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?

- **GOD PUTS A PORTION OF HIS SPIRIT IN THE UNION OF MAN AND WOMAN IN MARRIAGE!!!**

SPECIAL: PALM SUNDAY – KIDS JOINING US TO PRAISE JESUS!

11:00 – HELP AFTER SERVICE FOR SET UP!!!!

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! The Lord has come, the Lord is coming, Come quickly, Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024

Cruise ship → → → → → Battleship

- 1. Life on Mission:** Churchwide commitment to "Each One, Reach One"
- 2. Heart of Southland:** 500 people - Prayer Summit, Set Free! & Bible in a year
- 3. Next Gen:** ❤️ Passion for Jesus, memorization & find identity in Christ
- 4. Church Renewal:** Double funding, mentors & CRI Churches in Canada
- 5. Persecuted Church & Israel:** Salvation, hope & perseverance - MARANATHA