



# World Ministries International

3PL2/03

## I AM GRIEVED

~ *Thyatira* ~

*Part 4 of a 7 part series*



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Founder & President*

Verse 18, "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;"

Verse 19, "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."

Verse 20, "Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou suffered that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."

Verse 21, "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."

Verse 22, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds."

Verse 23, "And I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give every one of you according to your works."

Verse 24, "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden."

Verse 25, "But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come."

Verse 26, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:"

Verse 27, "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father."

Verse 28, "And I will give him the morning star."

Verse 29, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith."

In the first three articles also titled "I AM GRIEVED", we have studied Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos. In this article we will study what Jesus was saying to the church located in the city of Thyatira and to the churches that are applicable today. Always remember that Jesus Christ Himself was the true author, and that the Apostle John was acting as his secretary, recording what our Lord was saying to the churches at the time of this REVELATION. The book of REVELATION was shown and spoken to John around A.D. 95 or 96.

As Dr. Ronald E. Cottle states in "The Risen Lord Speaks to His Church", "Seven was John's favorite number... It occurs fifty four times in Revelation. There are seven candlesticks, seven stars, seven lamps, seven seals, seven angels, seven plagues, and seven vials. In the ancient world, and especially among certain Jews of the first century, 'seven' was considered to be 'the perfect number' that stands for completeness. Therefore, by writing to seven churches, John was, in fact, writing to the whole church, and that means the church of John's day, the church of history and the church today-you and me." (p 6)

It might be interesting to note that the Christians in the city of Thyatira really had nothing to worry about in regards to "Caesar worship"; since Thyatira was not a religious

center, consequently there were only small temples. The Christians also did not have to worry about persecution from the Jewish community there. Thyatira was a military center and a center for commerce. This became their cross to bear so to speak. Invading armies would destroy Thyatira during wartime as the city was geographically situated on the map leading to the biggest prize in Asia, the city of Pergamos. In the way of commerce, Dr. Cottle states, "The roads that crossed through Thyatira brought the trade of half the world to its doors. Wool and dye were the leading industries. Lydia, the 'seller of purple,' came from Thyatira, according to Acts 16:14... Thyatira had more trade guilds than any other town of its size in Asia. And the danger which threatened the church there was a direct result of these guilds." IBID (p 41)

Always remember that it does not matter where a person lives. There will be challenges and obstacles that Satan will use to tempt, attack, and if that person allows, cause them to compromise and move away from Jesus Christ. It matters little if a person lives in Los Angeles, Seattle, Miami, London, Paris or Kellogg, Idaho, the enemy of our soul will focus on and use someone or something to tempt our faith. In Thyatira, Satan used a woman and the trade guilds, which we will look at very soon.

In verse eighteen, Jesus identifies himself as, "the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire." Intuitively in my spirit, I am aware that no thing nor person can hide from or deceive the Lord Jesus Christ. On earth, men try to deceive one another, but God sees all and understands our heart and mind. He understands the motive and the intent. I am acutely aware that I need to live my life so as not to be ashamed come judgment day, because Jesus will not be

conned, confused or manipulated. Jesus, as a flame of fire, will see through all dishonesty etc. and reward me or judge me with perfect knowledge and justice. Jesus' feet are described as "fine brass", which I compare to brass which resists corrosion and has high electrical conductivity, so Jesus Christ is foundationally impeccable. He has met the criteria in the scriptures both prophetically and characteristically to sit on the throne and take the book out of the right hand [authority] of God the Father and open the seals thereof. (Revelation 5:1-14) Jesus has the authority to be in control and judge the nations and all of humanity.

Dr. Cottle states in "Revelation 2", "Christ's worthiness to break the seals of the scroll of human history was dependent upon the victory He won in His incarnation. If He had not become the slain lamb, He could not have become the conquering Lion. The Lion was the lamb. This slain lamb had seven horns. Horns stand for power and authority (Deuteronomy 33:17; Psalm 18:2; Matthew 28:18). Seven, the number of completeness, suggests that He had full and complete power. The next part of the picture John describes is seven eyes. This gives a portrait of the all seeing power of the Lamb. Nothing can be hidden from Him (Zechariah 4:10)." (p41)

In verse 19, Jesus makes it clear that He has been watching and judging the congregation's character and conduct and overall he was pleased with them. However, in verse 20-24, Jesus lays a charge, along with several accusations, against the Thyatira church. This should serve us all as a warning that each person in a congregation is being watched by Jesus Himself and if that person is involved in sin and not being corrected then Jesus has a problem, not only with that particular pastor, but also with the church (congregation) itself.

The church in Thyatira had a problem child named Jezebel which used her influence to cause other Christians to sin. Many churches throughout history including today have Jezebels in their midst. Many times they hold influential positions within the church. Sometimes they give themselves a title such as the one in Thyatira, who called herself a "prophetess." Common problems in churches today are Jezebels or Ahabs who are liberal social Christians, meaning they adhere to and promote the ethics of Jesus but not the fundamental doctrine of Jesus,

which would include the dying to self-will and striving to become a separate and holy people with different values, beliefs and agendas than the rest of society. In reality they, like the first Adam, have kept self on the throne of their life, consequently becoming their own little god, or in modern terminology, they are humanists.

Humanism basically reared its ugly head in the Garden of Eden. Another classic example in the Bible is the story of the tower of Babel where mankind strived to serve and live for itself. Our space program in The United States is a modern example of humanism. NASA is filled with humanists striving to reach the heavens yet rejecting the will of God for their lives. Yes, it was a terrible tragedy for the seven astronauts to die when the spacecraft Columbia disintegrated, but remember, it was an accident. I wonder how many humanist (atheists and religious people), deeply mourned the death of the astronauts? Yet, America deliberately kills 4,000 people (babies) a day under a created name called "abortion". Why does America not mourn this loss of life? And what is even more pathetic and sick, is these deaths called abortions are not accidents, but they are deliberate acts of killing life! America the humanist nation! A humanist's will is central to their decisions, whereas Christ taught believers to die to their will and obey the will of God the father. Many Jezebels, Ahabs (humanists) in our churches continue to stretch the gospel of Jesus Christ into another perverted gospel devoid of all its power, conviction and salvation. They try to influence the life of the church into self pleasing social programs, concerts, and banquets. A twisted gospel which allows lasciviousness to flourish in our youth departments and single adult church classes. Dances and swimming parties are encouraged where emotions are stimulated by bodies rubbing against each other while dancing; boys and men watching girls naked, wearing only colored bras and panties they call swimsuits. Christian schools are filled with parents who try to influence the school to have a Senior Prom Dance even though this encourages promiscuity.

Dr. Ronald Cottle states in "The Risen Lord Speaks to His Church", "At the first General Council of the Church in A.D.49 when Gentiles, along with Jews, were admitted into church membership, four requirements were imposed upon everyone. Two of them are mentioned here: eat nothing sacrificed to idols; and do not commit fornication. These

were the very sins which characterized the meetings of the trade guilds. The trade guilds (we would call them 'unions' today), held their meetings by partaking of a common meal. It started and ended with a cup of wine being poured out as a sacrifice to the gods. This was, in fact, the heathen grace before and after meals. The meat that was eaten was always that which had been sacrificed to the gods. Usually these meetings ended with the temple prostitutes being invited in. Then, drunkenness and carousing were the accepted practice-in the name of the god!" (p 43)

The problem in Thyatira with Jezebel was that she was being allowed to promote her beliefs that the Christian businessmen should be allowed to join the trade guilds to protect and develop their business interests. I know that many of you today are aware of Jezebels and Ahabs in churches today that give the same ungodly advice. They are more humanists than true Christians and they counsel from liberal and social theology values and beliefs. They either do not believe in the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity or they are so humanistic that they are not convicted to adhere to and obey them. Consequently, they are compromising wherever it benefits their own interests (little god on the throne). Jesus was not happy that Jezebel was even being allowed the opportunity to expound her situational ethics. I believe it is fair to purport the possibility that Jezebel was not really born-again. She just attended the church to ease her conscience and use it's social aspects to meet her fellowship needs.

Jesus expected the saints in Thyatira, as well as the Christians today, to be willing to jeopardize their business careers and even commit commercial suicide and face bankruptcy before compromising their relationship with God through wrongful conduct. What a different attitude toward the sin of compromise than our consumer friendly churches teach today. Surely God will and is holding many hirelings (pastors) accountable for their lack of faithfulness. As I shared in the article "I AM GRIEVED-Ephesus", Freemasonry is a very anti-Christ secret society (fraternity-guilds etc.). It blasphemes the name of God and purposely removes the name of Jesus Christ from its Scripture quotations. I believe that Christians should not become a member of the Freemasons or any other group that causes them to sin in word or deed.

We must all remember that spiritual unfaithfulness (compromise) is adultery against Jesus Christ. Jesus goes on to warn the believers at Thyatira and believers throughout the generations of the church age, that He will bring tribulation (verse 22), meaning pressure, until they either repent or become apostate.

In verse 23, Jesus gives Christians a very strong warning that He will kill their children that refuse to repent of their spiritual adultery (compromise).

Jesus is warning a person that if they continue to compromise their faith by engaging in activities that cater to the lust of the flesh: dancing, kissing on dates, viewing pornography, wearing short dresses and two piece swim suits etc., belonging to clubs that are geared for the cares of this world etc., then you seem to be on the throne of your life. The Lord is warning you that wherever your heart is, that is where your time and money will be given. Jesus is warning you "to flee temptation" (1Tim 6:10-12), to "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." (James 4:8) Jesus is warning you and me that if we continue to compromise then we will be attending church less and less until we are spiritually dead, as Samson was, and we will not even be aware of it. The Bible tells us that Samson shook himself not realizing that the Spirit of God had departed him. (Judg 16:20)

I remember in Africa around the year 1990, the Lord awoke me up from sleep at 0300 in the early morning and gave me the name of a woman who He said was lying about a godly Pastor. He told me to pass on a warning from him (Jesus Christ) that if she did not repent of her lies and gossip concerning this righteous pastor, then her five-year-old son would die. I immediately contacted a woman missionary living there, briefing her what Jesus told me to do and asking her to go to this lady's house and give her the warning from the Lord. The missionary gave the message from Jesus to this hateful woman but she refused to repent. One month later her child died. Some of you are questioning God's justice here but remember that God is the author of life. The children belong to God. Jesus told his disciples to "...Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Mat 19:14) I personally have a child in heaven. I was in a rebellious time of my life as an early married man and the Lord used a series of circumstances

(chastisements) to get my attention so I could repent and be used by Him. Jesus loved me, and because he loved me, he chastened me for my eternal salvation. My little child would never want to return to earth to live with me after experiencing the joys of being in the presence of the Lord. I have heard testimonies of people who came back from the dead and after having been in Heaven they did not want to return to earth. Believe me, Jesus does not do anyone an injustice by taking them to be with him. Sometimes he does this to get the attention of the selfish person left behind to cause them to start to consider their eternal destiny.

Dr. Cottle writes, "And what will be the outcome of all this? And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.' The reins are the kidneys, which the Hebrews believed were the seat of the emotions. They thought the heart was the seat of the thoughts. So, there is not a thought or a feeling that is not open to the eye of God! And He will judge us on the basis of what is within us!" (IBID p 45)

If anyone of us listens constantly to the advice of Jezebels or Ahabs we will suffer personally and our families as well. Many times by listening to these humanistic "Christians", our families become more and more "worldly". Finally the values and beliefs of atheists and non-believers have influence over their life to such an extent, that they predominately make wrong choices whether it is television, jobs, friends etc., for ourselves and our children. The end results are bad marriages, dysfunctional families, pregnant teens, drug addiction, alcoholism, abortion, marrying the wrong person, etc. We have got to get self off the throne of our life and actually place Jesus Christ on it, living our lives according to the admonitions of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

A Christian is actually suppose to live a "crucified life" where our attitude is "... not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Mat 26:39) Christian television is filled with Ahabs and Jezebels preaching and teaching their philosophies instead of the true life of sacrifice and dying to self so we can be alive in Him (Jesus). Unless the old tree (self) dies, a new one cannot take its place. True life comes from death.

Verse 25 and 26 tell us to "...hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth

my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." Once again the Christians of that era understood the analogy of athletic competition as the stadiums and arenas were filled with games and gladiators etc. It was the overcomer, the winner, whose life was spared, who took home the prize. Second place meant death.

Dr. Cottle writes, "Christianity is more than an experience. It is a life-long trust and commitment. Once I handed out a tract in a barber shop. The barber stopped me to testify to me. He began by saying, 'I really don't need your tract, I've had an experience that you've never had. I was saved once. Twenty years ago.' In his mind, this made him alright forever without any spiritual growth or an up-to-date relationship with Christ at all. Christianity is not something that happened to you twenty years ago. Christianity is walking hand-in-hand with Jesus now. 'To him that overcometh...I will give power over the heathen...'" (IBID p 45)

Ladies and Gentlemen, it takes more than one drink of water during your life to continue living. So it is spiritually! It is the one that walks and talks daily with Jesus that He will know. To all others Jesus will say, "...depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." (Luke 13:27)

The choice to be a Christian is not for a unique moment in time but it is a lifestyle choice. It is a radical decision to die daily to self; to sacrifice one's life to allow Jesus to live in and through you, so you can represent Him. Either you stay grafted in the vine, or the branch is cut off and thrown into the fire.

Jesus promises in verse 28 that He will give Himself ("the morning star") to all that overcome. In Revelation 22:16, Jesus classifies Himself saying, "...I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Jesus is all-sufficient and promises that all-sufficiency for the Overcomer!

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 KJEO - Channel 32  
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 WBII - Channel 20  
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